

**THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN EVENT AMBIENCE AND
DESIGN - A CASE STUDY DURING A FILM FESTIVAL**

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>This master's thesis dives into the connection between music planning and music resources in events that do not primarily focus on music. The theoretical framework and terminology handle music's role in event design while making connections between background music literature and event studies.</p> <p>The empirical case study was conducted at Arktisen Upeeta XXI film festival in Jyväskylä, Finland on November 2nd-3rd, 2020. The primary method was ethnographic research and participant observation, through which I pursued to gather data on the various effects of music and sound in the participant experience and event ambience. Alongside the participant observation, I interviewed two participants, the event producer and the technicians as complementary information.</p> <p>The main conclusions focus on the connection of the existing guidelines and theories, and how they were present in a real-life example. To conclude, the planning of the background music appeared to be a part of ambience design in general, whereas the planning and timing of the program as well as the audience's focus were more important in the production of Arktisen Upeeta XXI than the planning of the background music. Compared to these matters the music design was complementary but essential.</p> <p>A unique aspect in this case study is the time when it was conducted; during a restricted time in the COVID-19 pandemic, thus providing some information that will probably not be available in the future. Further research on the effects of the event restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic is warranted.</p>	
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Tiivistelmä <p>Tässä tutkielmassa käsitellään taustamusiikin valinnan suunnitteluun sekä siihen käytettävien resurssien yhteyttä ei-musiikillisten tapahtumien kontekstissa. Tutkimuksen viitekehys sekä terminologia käsittelevät musiikin roolia tapahtumien suunnittelussa luoden yhteyksiä taustamusiikin ja tapahtumien tutkimuskirjallisuuden välillä.</p> <p>Tapaustutkimuksen empiirinen osuus toteutettiin Arktisen Upeeta XXI -elokuvafestivaaleilla Jyväskylässä 2.-3. marraskuuta 2020. Pääasiallisena metodina tutkimuksessa käytettiin etnografista menetelmää eli osallistujien observointia. Tällä metodilla pyrin keräämään dataa taustamusiikin ja äänien merkityksestä sekä roolista tapahtumakokemuksessa sekä tapahtuman ambienssissa. Osallistujaobservoinnin ohella suoritin haastatteluja tapahtuman osallistujien, tapahtumatuottajan sekä muiden järjestäjien kanssa.</p> <p>Tutkielman johtopäätökset keskittyvät siihen, kuinka tietyt ilmiöt teoreettisessa viitekehyksessä olivat näkyvillä case-esimerkissä. Tulen johtopäätökseen, että taustamusiikin suunnittelu oli osa tapahtuman yleisen ambienssin suunnittelua ja sitä tärkeämpi oli itse ohjelman suunnittelu sekä yleisön fokuksen ohjaamisen suunnittelu.</p> <p>Tutkimus oli ainutlaatuinen johtuen sen tekoajankohdasta; koronaviruspandemian sosiaalisesti rajoitetun vaiheen aikana. Sen takia keskittyminen esimerkiksi sen aiheuttamiin vaikutuksiin tapahtuman kulussa on potentiaalinen aihe jatkotutkimukselle, jota tässä tutkimuksessa sivutaan, mutta sitä ei käsitellä varsinaisena tutkimusnäkökulmana.</p>	
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FIGURES

FIGURE 1	Event industry model by Getz & Page (2016, 4).....	5
FIGURE 2	“The elements of staging” (Allen & O’Toole 2005, 418) which refer to design.	7
FIGURE 3	The event program (Arktisen Upeeta 2020). Photo: Saara Sund20	
FIGURE 4	Ilokivi cinema lobby pictured on November 2 nd , 2020. Photo: Aapo Vuori.....	22
FIGURE 5	The cinema pictured before the screenings on November 2 nd , 2020. Photo: Aapo Vuori.....	22

TABLES

TABLE 1	The observation template for the empirical phase.....	25
TABLE 2	Background music setlist before “Last and First Men”	27
TABLE 3	Background music setlist between Last and First Men and Offret	29
TABLE 4	Background music setlist before Porcile.....	30
TABLE 5	Background music setlist after Porcile and before Melancholia32	
TABLE 6	Research results in the main themes	38

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK.....	4
2.1	Event studies.....	4
2.2	Event design, experience, and ambience	6
2.3	Background music and its effects in the context of events	9
2.4	Research setting and research questions	12
3	METHODOLOGY	13
3.1	Ethnographic research.....	13
3.2	Participant observation and participant interviews	14
3.3	Choosing ethnography over questionnaires	16
3.4	Interviews at the event	16
3.5	Method of analysis and research ethics	17
4	THE CASE: “ARKTISEN UPEETA XXI” -FILM FESTIVAL.....	19
4.1	About the event.....	19
4.2	The pre-planned ambience and usage of music in the festival	21
5	THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH	24
5.1	Data collection on-site at Arktisen Upeeta XXI	24
5.2	Description of the field work.....	26
5.2.1	Monday (Nov 2 nd): before “Last and First Men”	26
5.2.2	Monday (Nov 2 nd): after “Last and First Men”, before “Offret”, the conclusion of the night.....	28
5.2.3	Monday (Nov 2 nd): the conclusion of the day	29
5.2.4	Tuesday (Nov 3 rd): before “49 Years From the House on the Left” and “Porcile”	30
5.2.5	Tuesday (Nov 3 rd): after “Porcile”, before “Melancholia”	31
5.2.6	Tuesday (Nov 3 rd): the conclusion of the night.....	33
5.3	Participant interviews.....	33
5.4	Data analysis results	35
5.4.1	Background music as part of event ambience.....	35
5.4.2	Results regarding event production	37
6	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	40
6.1	Connections to the larger framework: event studies, design, and management.....	40

6.2	Music usage and planning.....	42
6.3	Additional remarks.....	43
6.4	General conclusions.....	45
	REFERENCES	47

1 INTRODUCTION

The events industry has been one of the industries that have suffered the most during the COVID-19 pandemic in Finland and other countries. Events have been cancelled, postponed, and they have taken different forms of existence. Some have managed to be organized with very differing restrictions in place, while many have been suspended altogether. Instead of handling the events industry in general during this time, this master's thesis studies how music and music-related resources are used in events whose main purpose is not music of any kind; events, where the role of the music is consistent, consciously selected, and planned but not an actual part of the main program. Because of the ongoing pandemic during this study, the effects of the restrictions and COVID-19-related matters were an additional aspect of consideration. Nevertheless, due to the limitations of this master's thesis, the matters related to COVID-19 were not included in the final research questions, but are discussed throughout the thesis.

The majority of events in Western society can be called *special events* – a term used to classify events that have a special meaning to someone or something and differ from peoples' normal weekly life routines (Quinn 2013, 37). During the pandemic, these kinds of events have been absent from people's daily lives, creating a vacuum in leisure time and cultural life. The size classification of such events can be determined with the scale presented by Johnny Allen: *local* (e.g. a small concert) – *major* – *hallmark* – *mega-event* (e.g. the Olympic games) (Allen & O'Toole 2005, 11). The events that were suitable for this study were of the scale local or major.

This empirical case study was conducted at a film festival "Arktisen Upeeta XXI" in Jyväskylä, Finland on November 2nd and 3rd 2020. The event lasted for one week and hosted around 400 participants, which was only a half in comparison to the previous year, held before the pandemic, in 2019. The event program consisted of movie screenings and additional programs such as DJs, panel discussions, and other performances. The event was small in scale indicating that the music planning was an integral part of the event experience for all participants.

Event research is a very broad field of study. Because of that, this particular research required strong classification on its goals in what was attempted to be

achieved, as well as carefully narrowed research questions. Given that there are several different handbooks and journals in the field (e.g. Page & Connell 2011; Getz & Page 2016), the interest in this research was to get tools, tips, and relevant results especially in the context of event management (see Figure 1), and to explore the role of music in special event management.

The key conceptual definitions for this research are event design, customer experiences of the studied event, and psychology of the effects of background music. Utilizing (background) music in the types of aforementioned events can influence the ambience of the event and the visitor experience. When considering ambience, visitors of events react to stimuli picked up with smell, sight, touch, taste, and hearing (Shone & Parry 2004, 141), which indicates that music influences the perceived ambience in an event. The literature in the field indicates that visitor experience in events is a topic that requires further research (Quinn 2013, 42). Event studies in general is a topic far too broad to be fully covered within the framework of this research, but some aspects of production will still be addressed to a small extent.

The utilization of music particularly in event settings has yet to be studied in detail. Stephanie Wilson (2003, 93) has insightfully stated, that the amount of money invested into music and music-related resources in commercial environments is very high while research on the topic remains relatively sparse. A similar statement was made by North and Hargreaves in 2006, that the scale towards which background music is used in various settings, and especially the financial scale of it, is much higher than the amount of empirical research data available (North & Hargreaves 2006, 119). In general, these statements contribute to the notion, that studies in humanities and musicology have indirect financial influence towards different societal settings; a detail that is often neglected in decision-making towards research funding. When considering the events industry in general, there is clear evidence that the economic impact of events is very diverse (Allen, O'Toole 2005, 42). During the pandemic, the stoppage in events of all kinds has left tens of thousands of freelancers and workers unemployed (Wirén, Westerholm & Liikamaa 2020), indicating the vastness of the amount of workforce that the events branch employs.

In previous studies on background music, a common methodology has consisted of attendee surveys and customer interviews (e.g. Damm 2012), and more qualitative methods such as participant observation (e.g. Jamaingal-Jones 2012). This research was conducted as an ethnographic participant observation. It was a fairly simple method to conduct during the COVID-19 pandemic since it was possible to be carried out under social distancing measures (the secondary method, participant interviews, were also made with proper safety distances). Since the nature of participant observation is to accept a considerable amount of unpredictability, an integral part of ethnographic studies is, that the researcher has to be open to observing all kinds of

information. In this study, it meant that the role of music at the film festival had to be put under question in total, and answer its objective as a part of the event ambience.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

The theoretical background combines theories from three subfields which are in hierarchical order with each other. *Event studies* are the broadest definition of the field, which includes everything event-related. Included in event studies are studies of *event management*. A part of event management and production is *event design*, which depicts practical matters related to organizing events. A part of event design is event *sound, ambience, and background music*, which receives special attention in this research due to it being the main focus of the research.

2.1 Event studies

The typical matters that are studied in the field of events usually involve practical frameworks, guides, and definitive step-by-step books on the practical management and production of events, each with a distinct viewpoint to complement the study field (e.g. Shone & Parry 2004; Quinn 2013). The semantics of event studies can be classified into three different categories, which are *event studies*, *event management*, and *event tourism* (Figure 1; Getz & Page 2016, 4). Most of the journals of event management do not handle music-related resources nor the usage of music in their publication histories (Acordia 2016; International Journal of Event Management Research; Journal of Venue and Event Management; International Journal of Festival and Event Management). Overall, the field of event studies is a multidisciplinary field and individual studies in different fields usually do not focus on any particular events themselves (Getz & Page 2016, 19).

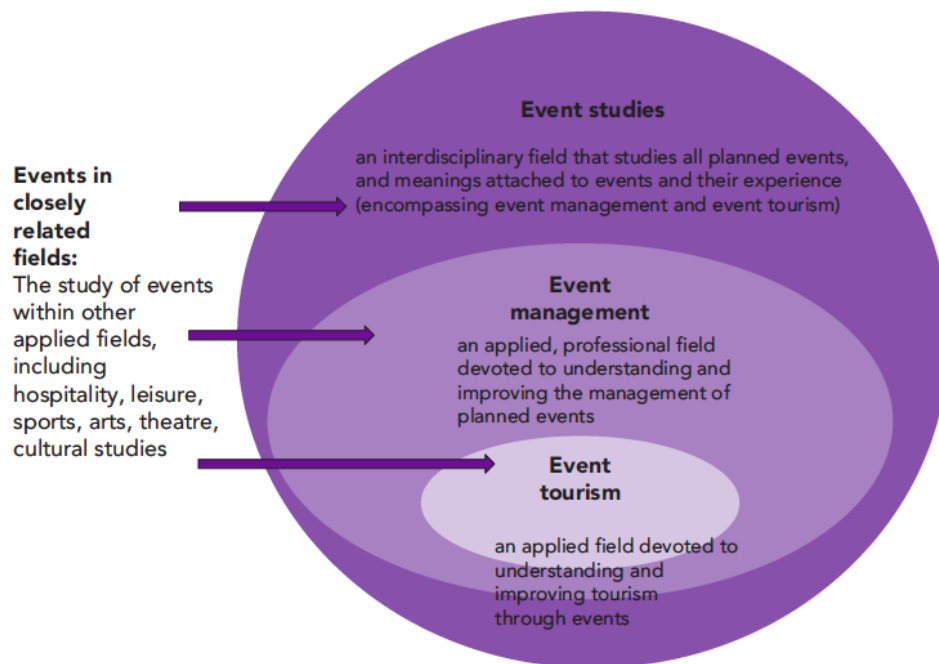


FIGURE 1 Event industry model by Getz & Page (2016, 4)

The term ‘*special events*’ is coined in much of the literature and appropriate texts. According to Getz (1997, 4), events can be defined as “temporary occurrences, either planned or unplanned” and the term ‘special’ further indicates the nature of the event not being a part of the daily life routine. This is the common terminological detail in the literature, after which ‘*special events*’ are often simply referred to as ‘*events*’. In this thesis, I use this term similarly.

The literature in event studies and event management generalizes events in many ways, but when distinctions about different kinds of events are made, music tends to be associated and mentioned mostly in the context of festivals or concerts (e.g. Yeoman et al 2014, Getz & Page 2016, 18). Event management is discussed in a generalizing fashion so that it would cover as many kinds of events as possible. The entire events industry is a very diverse field, which cannot be combined under one specific field, but an umbrella field (Shone & parry 2004, 20). Alongside this, events are most reasonable to be studied compared to peers in their so-called event genre (Shone & Parry 2004, 33), which means that only specific types of events (e.g. film festivals) should be compared to one another.

For this framework, it is reasonable to define the different titles that are related to event production. The terms of event *manager* and *producer* are often interchangeable, but it is seen, that the event *manager* holds the utmost responsibility for an event, and the title of *producer* is more often associated with practical planning and responsibilities of an event. A producer can therefore be employed by a manager.

(Matthews 2008, 8-9.) In the case of smaller-scale events, one person is often responsible for both the utmost responsibility as well as the practical planning, therefore making the titles synonymous in practice.

2.2 Event design, experience, and ambience

The practical element which can further be derived from event studies is *event design*. Alongside the term “*design*” the term “*staging*” is also used, which originates from the staging made in theaters. In this thesis, I shall use the term “*design*” as the primary term. According to Allen and O’Toole the synonym for design - “*staging*” - can refer to the following matters in event planning:

- theming and event design
- programming
- choice of venue
- audience and guests
- stage
- power, lights, and sound
- audiovisuals and special effects
- catering
- performers
- crew
- hospitality
- the production schedule
- recording the event
- contingencies

(Allen & O’Toole 2005, 417.)

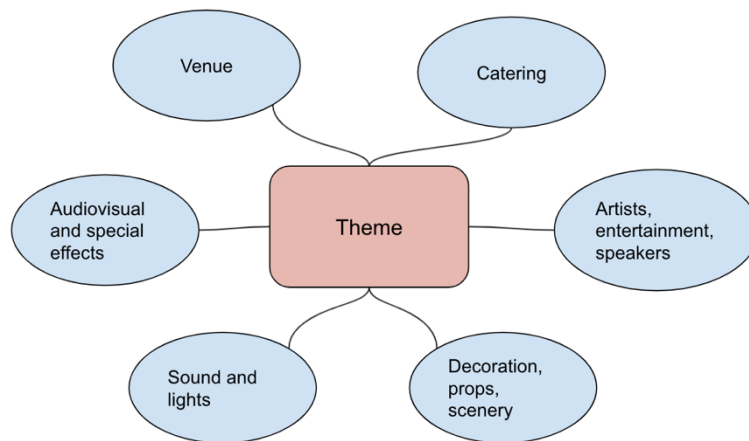


FIGURE 2 “The elements of staging” (Allen & O’Toole 2005, 418) which refer to design.

An event and its design are always made for a certain purpose, but each participant of the event experiences the event in a different way. It is possible, that there exist the so-called prime stakeholders that are the key target group of any event. (Berridge 2008, 277.) Morello (2000) proposes an argument, that by anticipating event experience through previous proficiency, event design becomes a tool for the managers/producers to predict the future; meaning that they could predict the outcome of the event through skillful design. Nonetheless, Graham Berridge (2008, 277) further argues that this is not possible considering all the variables and multiple experiences that occur in the groups of people attending the event. In other words, in the eyes of event managers, it is possible to design an event very carefully or even predict the exact outcome, but there is always a subject of change and risk.

When designing an event and its experience, creativity is most often associated with the event’s design, and design is seen as the creative part of the event’s overall look and feel (Berridge 2008, 281). Designing an event experience beforehand reduces risks in unwanted experience outcomes which can occur if an event is not designed to deliver any specific experiences (Berridge 2008, 284). In these factors of event design and experience, it is very important to note that every event participant is an individual part of creating and morphing the event experience (Getz & Page 2016: Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 51)

As to what is important in terms of (background) music is *event ambience*, and event design includes the design of event ambience. In their book “Successful event management - a practical handbook” Anton Shone and Bryn Parry state that event ambience can affect events in numerous ways, and that reaching for a certain ambience can have positive and negative effects. They state, that ambience comprises of various factors, and use an example of Glastonbury festival, where the constant feeling of live music is complemented by, for example, inviting campfires and a close feeling of togetherness. However, if the ambience is not what is sought after in the

design, then it is very difficult to improve. (Shone & Parry 2004, 139-140.) The planning of background music and sound itself can be a part of designing an event and its ambience but is not usually considered as a crucial part in the entirety of the design. It alone is not important enough to force the manager to decide whether an event shall be organized or not, which is why the planning of background music is not necessarily individually included in guidelines for event management (Allen & O'Toole 2005, 117). This could also explain if resources allocated to some elements of event design are smaller than the resources allocated to other, more significant matters.

As a concept, event ambience combines different kinds of factors that attract many senses. According to a definitive guide of event design made by Yeoman and colleagues, event design is the most crucial sector in the planning of events on which the entire concept of an event should be built (Yeoman et al 2004, 59). Yeoman's guide does not focus on musical design, but on visual and physical design. Visual design, décor, and its implementation also have literature of their own (e.g. Monroe 2006), implicating that detailed academic literature about different matters of event design has demand in the broader context of event studies.

Yeoman gives a guideline for specific design principles, which are *scale*, *shape*, *focus*, *timing*, and *build*. *Scale* refers to the actual planning of physical space and different sized rooms and objects in the event: the program and essential matters of the event should be clearly visible to the audience, but also taking into account for example the spatial dimensions of the event and the feeling of enclosure. *Shape* refers to the audience's behavior and their sightlines in the event: planning every bit of physical infrastructure, so that there is a clear line of sight towards the main program, and predicting the movement paths of customers. (Yeoman 2004, 60.) The design theme of *shape* was noted also in Joanne Mackellar's study: in order to serve and understand traveling groups in events with event design aspects, the groups need spaces to just sit down and decide on their actions in the event, since many groups divide their 'responsibilities' on who will be in charge of scheduling, eating, studying the program, etc. (Mackellar 2013, 62).

Focus means planning how the audience's perception and focus are handled in the event: what draws their attention in the event, how the human mind reacts psychologically to different stimuli, and how these can be affected by the event's shapes, structures, and lighting. When planning how the audience's focus should behave, it is beneficial to be aware of the psychological response to different kinds of stimuli. *Timing* is also mentioned as a crucial part of event design. Ideally, the timing of an event should feel spontaneous to the audience and have a feeling of a relaxed 'flow', although design-wise the reality can be very different, and timing can even be planned to the second if desired. The human mind perceives time differently in events and the attention span of participants is very limited which has to be taken into

account in planning. The *Build* -section refers to the limited resources when it comes to creating and designing events; how to best utilize every resource such as finances, time, space, program for the event. (Yeoman 2004, 60-61.)

In this research, I observe design in the context of a film festival, and research concerning film festivals specifically has been made as well. A case study by Andrea Báez and María Devesa surveyed film festival visitors and their prime motivation to attend the Valdivia film festival. Alongside the actual program displayed in the festival, the other motivations of attendance were the aspects of visiting the city where the festival was organized and the program including films that usually are not displayed in normal cinemas. Therefore – unsurprisingly – the prime motivation for attendance was the program itself. The researchers note, that it is of great importance to make distinctions and event-specific factors to a film festival to differentiate the festival from others and to attract festival attendees. (Báez & Devesa 2014.) Even if the prime motivation of attendance were the program, there still are many additional reasons for participants to visit events, such as social reasons (Shone & Parry 2004, 33).

2.3 Background music and its effects in the context of events

Given that music and *sound* play a part in forming an event ambience – which is part of event design – music, and its effects should be observed more closely. It is fairly clear, that background music, in general, has various effects on human behavior. The mere existence of music has positive effects on customer patronage (Hargreaves, North & Krause 2018, 790), and background music consistently makes waiting time seem shorter (North & Hargreaves 2006, 114-117), only to name a pair of examples of the effects of music. In this chapter, I highlight studies relevant to event ambience design.

When considering music processing in the human mind, it would seem that music as a phenomenon is universal and part of each human culture, but sound as music is very culture-dependent (Stevens & Byron 2009, 19-20). In the case of events, it makes it much more difficult to explicate the psychological effects of music since event surroundings hold a plethora of different kinds of sounds that blend with the possible background music constantly. In event settings, there are the sounds of the participants, the performers, the ambience, and many more. North and Hargreaves (2006, 103) define the theoretical processes of background music into two sections which are *knowledge activation* and *psychobiology*. Of these two, psychobiology is defined as follows: "Whenever a piece of music varies in terms of tempo, volume, complexity, or familiarity, for example, it influences the degree of arousal in the listener's autonomic nervous system" (North & Hargreaves 2006, 111). In a hectic

event surrounding the brain processes all kinds of sounds, and attempting to achieve a certain kind of ambience and feeling with (background) music can easily be disrupted by all kinds of unwanted sounds.

Another relevant process in this context is knowledge activation which refers to conscious information in the brain activated by the background music. One example of knowledge activation is the theory of *musical fit*, which is linked especially to the information that is attempted to be conveyed with the music. Musical fit is a concept of intuition in the listener. For example, in advertisements and stores, a specific piece of background music might give the listener a cultural intuition or association. Musical fit can be broken down into different associative processes. The intuition of (North and Hargreaves use the example of) Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band by the Beatles might first relate to the band itself, then on to 1960s pop music, and then on to the hippie movement, etc. If this music is played in an advertisement that relates to any of these musical intuitions, it has the so-called musical fit. (North & Hargreaves 2006, 106; Hargreaves et al 2018, 796-798.) Musical fit in commercial and social environments relates especially to events, that have a special theme. With the correct musical choices, the design of the event ambience can benefit from musical fit.

Many events have specific themes, and how their background music fits musically in the sense of musical fit, or how it is decided not to fit at all, was of substantial interest in this research. Music design and musical fit can be applied to many physical settings to differentiate a setting from other similar places, such as commercial environments, stores, or events (North & Hargreaves 2006, 111). Musical fit in itself is not a part of the physical shape-design of an event, but an integral part of the designing of sounds. Nevertheless, it can be applied to emphasize different details in the event design.

An important factor in background music settings is that people want to have control over the music that they hear (Krause, North & Hewitt 2014), which is not possible in events that play music selected by the event manager/producer. If the musical preferences of the participant are the exact opposite of the (background) music, the reaction to the music can be of a very unwanted kind. One example of the effects of different kinds of musical styles on customer behavior was made by North and Hargreaves (1998), as they found out that pop music in a café makes it seem upbeat and youthful, whereas classical music makes it feel sophisticated and upmarket. Music selection can therefore have contradictory effects over what is originally attempted with the music. Every participant can potentially dislike the musical choices in an event or another setting and would prefer to listen to something else. Or in the worst case choose not to attend the event, or exit immediately after arriving.

Adding to the previous theories, there are several supporting factors for this research context. One important factor is music's tendency to increase pleasure in any environment (for example a business environment) and by doing that it makes people more sociable and willing to engage in social contacts (North & Hargreaves 2006, 109-110). This kind of music can be referred to as *milieu music* – which is the opposite of background music that people choose according to their own preferences or for their personal enhancement (Brown & Theorell 2006, 127). Milieu music is a form of background music that is meant to be heard but not listened to. Faster music also speeds up customer activity (e.g. Hargreaves et al 2018, 791). Also, the setting of the event – and therefore the setting in which the background music is heard – affects the listeners' reaction to the music being played (Krause, North & Hewitt 2016).

These factors in turn contribute to the decisions of how to plan music in event settings, and how the producer wishes the music to be understood and displayed. Hargreaves and North found out with a simple experiment of students visiting a stall in a student cafeteria (North & Hargreaves 1998; 1996) that when they played pop music, which had a moderate amount of complexity, the students tended to visit the stall more often than if there had been no music at all. The researchers also found out, that when there was undesired music present, the music had a more negative effect than the stall having no music at all. This further implicates the connection that undesirable music can have drastic effects on an event's experience as well.

A contributing study, which ties into these matters, was made in 2003 by Stephanie Wilson. Her study, which was conducted in a restaurant, focused on the effects of music on a restaurant atmosphere and visitor experience. To figure out the opinions of the restaurant's customers she used questions that required the customers to describe the atmosphere of the restaurant with certain adjectives like "upmarket", "sophisticated", "happy", "fresh" etc. on a scale of 1 to 11. Wilson discovered that having any kind of background music as opposed to having no music at all significantly affected customers' willingness on the amount of money they were ready to pay for their meals. (Wilson 2003, 96-102.)

Overall, the prospects of music usage in events have lots of possibilities and they have a strong role in the ambience design. Its effects can be complex or simple and it can have strong and unwanted results if the visitor decides to leave the event due to poor ambience design. An event requires a lot of time resources and pre-planning, which means that losing a visitor due to poor ambience design is a very unwanted result and a waste of resources.

2.4 Research setting and research questions

The research questions can be defined as such:

1. What is the role of background music in the event experience of Arktisen Upeeta XXI?
2. How does background music contribute to the event ambience and the customer experience?
3. Can any essential productional details be found when designing the role of background music and ambience in relation to the overall event design?

The research setting derives from the hierarchy of the theoretical background: event studies include event design, the design includes the event ambience and the ambience includes the background music. Therefore the research setting focuses on a specific detail in a fairly large framework tree. Indirectly, the setting partly focuses on all of these matters, but the emphasis on the conclusions shall be, whether the role of background music and ambience design can be compared to the roles of other, larger productional matters, and how this setting is apparent in practice. The role of background music in the case event shall be observed and compared to other matters and resources. The goal of the study is also to find practical information for event producers to use in their productions.

3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the methodology used in the research. Due to various reasons, *ethnographic research* was chosen as the primary direction of methodology and *participant observation* as the practical method, which was complemented by two separate participant interviews as well as an expert interview with the event producer. The empirical phase shall take a philosophical stance of empirical philosophy – meaning that the empirical findings are considered as the truth. Because the study is qualitative, I do not attempt to make generalisations about the studied matters.

3.1 Ethnographic research

The key definition of ethnographic research is that it is centered around people and culture and the phenomena around them. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi, in traditional anthropological research, the purpose is to understand a phenomenon through observation. The point of the research is not to attempt change nor to interfere with the matters happening; the researcher has to arrive at the site with the attitude of trying to learn and not to influence anything. Participant observation is a useful method when the studied phenomenon or research problem is previously largely unknown or unstudied. In these kinds of situations, participant observation can be combined with a selected second method, which might bring very effective results in the post-analysis. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 70-71.) According to Robson, one key aspect is that nothing is ever trivial information in ethnographic research (Robson 2002 in: Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 42). Ethnographic research can rarely be implemented in larger settings, which ties into the notion, that qualitative research in general aims to describe only individual aspects of phenomena with an explanatory approach and not explain larger entirities or effects (Cormack 1991, 29 – in: Damm 2012, 55). It is also suggested that using experimental methods to study psychological matters in

event settings is often overlooked (Benckendorff & Pearce 2012), but this study was conducted with existing methods.

Ethnographic research in events covers only the time of the event itself, which is merely a fraction of the whole time used to make the event possible. An event's pre-production can last several months or even several years. Studying the influence of (background) music in different event settings is therefore marginal in comparison to the studies of event management and event studies in general. The exception here are festivals and other events devoted to music, where the music itself is the key part and building block of the design. Nonetheless, this study focuses on music as a complementary part of the event ambience, and not a part of the main program.

Performing artists, DJs, and musicians do ethnographic "research" all the time. They carefully plan each part of their performance. The song selection, the order of the songs, the length of the songs, the feeling of each song, the length of breaks or speeches are all factors that they have to note when constructing a feeling to their show which, in the case of live music, optimally has a constant feeling of going forward and reaching a pinnacle at the end. Artists observe and make judgments about the audience at each part and evaluate how well each part of their set reaches the goals that they want to achieve. Similarly, if music is used in an event setting to complement the event ambience it can play a large role in giving a feeling of either "going forward" or "slowing down".

3.2 Participant observation and participant interviews

Since this research aimed to achieve results that could be helpful for event managers and producers, it was reasonable to choose participant observation as the primary method; both observing the managerial/productional setting as well as customers and technicians. Observation of event participants is a very useful way to oversee the customers' engagement with one another, their conversations, and perceived emotions by not interrupting the flow of their experience (Mackellar 2013, 57). This is determined as *passive participation*, and it is characterized as the researcher not being an actual part of the participatory process at all and not having contact with the participants (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 43). Alongside passive participation, I was also an *active participant* in taking part in the program by watching the films. Overall, participant observation is one of the most used methods among event research. It has several benefits and potential especially in psychological and social settings, such as events (Mackellar 2013, 63). Participant observation is also done on behalf of the event producers and managers themselves to improve and evolve their events (Mackellar 2013, 61).

In the actual event Arktisen Upeeta XXI, my point of view in the data collection was that of a *passive participant*; meaning that I was there the entirety of the two research days as an observer of the event and the participants' experience, which also meant taking part in watching the films. This can also be described as shifting between *active and passive participant observation* (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 43-44).

Alongside the customer observation, I attempted to observe the managerial and productional processes during the event itself in as many ways possible, which is also advised by Sven Damm (2012, 67). The purpose of this research was not to observe the entire productional/managerial process of an event but to observe the results of productional choices on the event day. In other words, the pre-production was a secondary focus of observation. The results were aimed to potentially be of good use when planning similar future events

As a method, participant observation is very effective at gathering information that is previously unknown or undocumented. Like ethnographic research in general, it is always open to new information and therefore does not have the problem of forming unprecedented hypotheses before the actual research (Mackellar 2013, 58). However, there is the issue of assumptive bias on part of the researcher; the biases of the researcher can affect how the findings are interpreted, documented, and analyzed, and some observational findings can be left completely unnoticed due to biased assumptions (Mackellar 2013, 59). Acting as a *complete observer* – which means not necessarily being on-site at all – is also prone to misinterpretations, because then the researcher can falsely interpret the participants' feelings and/or intentions when on-site comprehension is not occurring (Walsh 1998, in: Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 43). Later in the analysis phase, the observation material should also be interpreted with the notion of questioning all information that is understood on-site (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 83).

Combining participant observation with other methods such as interviews can be very beneficial since participant observation is a very time-consuming method, but interviews not that much (Šindlárová, 1999 - in: Damm 2012, 59). According to Jamaingal-Jones, the participant interviews conducted during the event itself have the benefit of the participant(s) having the deepest positive and negative emotional experiences fresh in mind, and that it is a good time to reflect on expectations and how they are realized during the event (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 51). When done this way, the secondary method has a significant and effective role in the data collection.

3.3 Choosing ethnography over questionnaires

Studies of this field have frequently analyzed information from customers specifically, in attempting to monitor customer behavior, preferences, or the reception of certain qualities of (background) music. The usage of questionnaires (see for example Damm 2012, 68) is very commonplace due to their practicalities and direct hands-on data, which is available for interpretation very quickly after the data collection. Alongside the method of participant observation, questionnaires are equally dominant in this field of research.

The research questions differ when doing an ethnographical participant observation in comparison to a quantitative survey. Quantitative data is most suitable for giving information about an event's economic details and demographical features of its visitors, but in terms of qualitative questions of how or why some phenomena occur, quantitative (survey) data cannot always provide that kind of information (Mackellar 2013, 57). The largest disadvantage of participant observation is that, as it produces qualitative results, it cannot be generalized to other events of the same nature, since the results are specific to the event in question (Mackellar 2013, 58). They can however act as a very prevalent reference to other event managers, which was also one of the goals of this study. Also, because of the pandemic, and at the time of this empirical research, it was assumed that people can behave differently due to restrictions and new behavioral habits, that have made their way into societies in the COVID-19 era.

3.4 Interviews at the event

Alongside participant observation, becoming "immersed" in the event and the site can benefit the research. This can be done by using additional methods of data collection, such as interviewing the participants (Holloway, Brown & Shipway 2010). On-site at Arktisen Upeeta XXI, I conducted two kinds of interviews that serve as complementary information for the observational data. Firstly I inquired the event producer Mikko Järvinen about the event's technical details, the history of the event, the target group, the usual amounts of participation, and most importantly the planning and usage of music in the event, and how the ambience overall was envisioned. This initial interview was an unstructured expert interview, and I simply inquired the producer about the details that were necessary to know for the observation. Because the event producer Mikko Järvinen could not be guaranteed full anonymity, he was asked compliance to be addressed by name in this thesis.

Secondly, I conducted two different participant interviews about the matters that were of interest in the research. The interview questions handled the perceived ambience, the background music, the primary motivation to attend the event, and the willingness to stay at the venue after the main program. Personal information about the participants was not gathered, since the point of the interviews was not to attempt any kinds of generalizations. Personal traits were not of interest in the interviews, since they were not relevant to the research questions. The point of the interviews was to inquire the participants, if the attempted ambience and opinions matched that of what was planned in part of the producer.

3.5 Method of analysis and research ethics

For the analysis of the gathered information, I applied a similar qualitative approach as with the participant observation. The analysis can be categorized as a content analysis of witnessed information (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 78). The observed material is very unstructured, so therefore an inductive content analysis is a prevalent option, by attempting to generalize and summarize the phenomenon in question (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018, 86).

According to the instructions of Tuomi and Sarajärvi, the findings should be categorized, classified, and jointed into different sections (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018, 79). In the case of this research, this guideline had to be applied according to the content: the findings made on-site – while being as objective as possible – are still very specifically narrowed according to the research questions. This means that virtually everything in the content was relevant for the analysis. I tried to prioritize gathering details that were indications of certain larger phenomena, which was also advised by Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, 79). In other words, attempting to group different kinds of findings into possible themes.

This makes the type of the analysis inductive and abductive; in the analysis, I shall focus on analysing the content in correlation to the theoretical framework, but also make conclusions that cannot be derived from the theories directly, since – for example – background music specifically has hardly been studied nor mentioned in the context of event design. The main conclusions were made based on both of these matters.

The ethical guidelines in this study were centered around the ethics of observation, interviews, and the involvement of study participants. Since there was no need to gather any personal information from the participants, and the gathered material did not involve, for example, depictions of any strong personal emotions and was voluntary to the participants, there was not a need for ethical reviews from The

Finnish National Board of Research Integrity in the research plan phase nor the empirical phase. Also, the event website and additional paper printouts informed the participants that this study was going on in the event.

4 THE CASE: “ARKTISEN UPEETA XXI” -FILM FESTIVAL

There were several reasons why this particular film festival was selected to be the target case study for this research. The initial plan before the pandemic was to search an event in Finland and implement the research by making a customer questionnaire to observe different effects (or lack thereof) of background music in the event attendees. Because of governmental and district-specific restrictions, most of the events were canceled after March 2020. Some events in Finland were able to be organized during June-November 2020 before restrictions were again put into place. After March 2020, it was also clear that if any events could take place during the pandemic, they would have some restrictions in place, which – for instance – would have made practical matters with questionnaires more difficult. Arktisen Upeeta XXI was an event that had several days of program, many kinds of art, and most importantly the music in the event was mostly used for background and ambience-contributing purposes.

4.1 About the event

Arktisen Upeeta XXI (Engl. “fabulous of the arctic” roughly translated) was a one-week long local-scale (see Allen 2005, 11) film festival organized in upper downtown of Jyväskylä in a student establishment’s bar converted into a cinema. Despite the location, the target group of the festival included everyone interested in cinema and not only students of the University of Jyväskylä. The year 2020 held the 21st consecutive instance of the festival – and unlike many other annual festivals and events around the globe – it was able to hold its unbroken streak even during the pandemic. 2020 was the third year that the festival was organized under The Film Center of Central Finland.

The film festival lasted for six days in total from Sunday to Saturday, with most of the days containing showcasings of at least two films, accompanied by additional programs such as live discussions, performances, and live DJs (see Figure 1). Some of the programs were accessible free of charge, but most of the programs had a typical admission fee for a movie screening, which was 10€/12€. The main theme in this particular festival was “Maailma palaa” (= the world is burning). Tickets to the festival were sold only in advance in order to achieve as much social distancing on-site as possible, so people had bought their tickets for the movie screenings beforehand. In total, the festival attracted about 400 event-goers. In recent years the number had been higher, with 2019 attracting 700 event-goers. The daily average of event-goers had been close to 100 per day, but during COVID-19 -restricted times a realistic and hopeful turnout was around 50 event-goers per day, which was also ultimately achieved.

Sunnuntai 1.11.	Maanantai 2.11.	Tiistai 3.11.	Keskiviikko 4.11.
14:00 Sorcieres, mes soeurs + Sorcière Queer + Starhawk + Riikka Ala-Hakula: Noidan poliittinen hahmo	17:30 Last and First Men	17:30 49 Years From the House on the Left (L) Sikolähti (35mm)	15:30 Ilmainen: Maailma X + Seija Hakkarainen & Jukka Kaikkonen Q&A
17:30 Anerca - elämän hengitys	19:00 Uhri (35mm)	20:00 Melancholia	17:30 Shorta
19:30 Walkabout	ARKTISEN UPEETA XXI MAAILMA PALAA		20:00 Koirat eivät käytä housuja
Torstai 5.11.	Perjantai 6.11.	Lauantai 7.11.	
15:30 Ilmainen: The Vasulka Effect	17:30 Waste no.4 New York, New York + New Yorkin rutto + Kalevi Helvetti LIVE	13:00 EAT MY SHORTS lyhytelokuvia + vegaanibrunssi	
17:30 Teenland + Psychosia + Marie Grahtia Q&A	19:30 NIMBY	16:00 Grab Them (L) Fucking With Nobody + Hannaleena Hauru Q&A	
20:30 Space Dogs + Elsa Kremser & Levin Peter Q&A	21:30 DJ Jones Gloomy + Nykypost LIVE	19:30 Lost Boys	
WWW.ARKTISENUPEETA.NET 1.-7.11.2020 ILOKIVI, JYVASKYLÄ	35mm = filminäytös L = lyhytelokuva	21:30 DJ Jones Gloomy + Draama-Helmi LIVE	

FIGURE 3 The event program (Arktisen Upeeta 2020). Photo: Saara Sund

Like in any other festival, the program is selected according to a target group (e.g. Kim, Uysal & Chen 2001). The movie selection for Arktisen Upeeta XXI was centered on cinema outside of the mainstream. Movies selected for the festival were sought to be challenging, marginal, and open to interpretation. During the first year under the Film Center of Central Finland, the movie selection was taking more of a “something for everyone” -type approach also including movies that were more geared towards the mainstream, but this kind of approach was ceased after one year.

In 2020 the festival had to implement several safety measures due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. During the time – in early November of 2020 – Finland reported roughly 100 confirmed cases of the disease per day with the city of Jyväskylä reporting 1 to 10 per day. Since the start of June 2020, small events like these were allowed to be organized if they followed the necessary safety regulations. For Arktisen Upeeta XXI this meant safety distance implementations, hand sanitizer stations, disinfection of seats between screenings, and a decreased attendee capacity. Each event organized locally would be individually observed and permitted by the local authorities (= aluehallintovirastot in Finnish) and the permissions were given individually according to the legislation of infectious diseases (Finlex 2021). On a global scale, any kinds of events during the pandemic were very rare, and the possibilities in Finland were achieved due to the pandemic being well taken care of in the larger picture.

4.2 The pre-planned ambience and usage of music in the festival

This festival functioned under one person: the main event producer Mikko Järvinen, who was responsible for each section of the festival, like its planning and production. On the event days, he was assisted by a handful of people such as a technician for the films, a technician for sound and lighting, cleaning personnel, and separate bar staff. The producer was also responsible for the planning of the program and the usage of music at this festival. According to them, in practice this meant the following matters:

1. Background music is played whenever there isn't any other program
2. Live performers are taken to complement the cinema program
3. DJs are booked to finish up the last two nights of the festival (Friday and Saturday)
4. The producer planned each movie-preceding segment of background music according to the feeling of the movie; the playlist is measured to last only for the time between the audience's entrance and the beginning of the movie

Alongside the music, the producer was mainly responsible for the other settings of ambience in the festival spaces. He had ambience ideas which he forwarded to the technician, who then, in turn, made the ideas into reality. This had mostly to do with the light setting in the cinema room and the lobby (See figures 4 & 5).



FIGURE 4 Ilokivi cinema lobby pictured on November 2nd, 2020. Photo: Aapo Vuori



FIGURE 5 The cinema pictured before the screenings on November 2nd, 2020. Photo: Aapo Vuori

This information was gathered in order to get acquainted with the productional goals that the producer and the team had. They were necessary to know so that the behavior

of the customers could be observed and mirrored to the goals of the production. Also, they indicated, what kind of design was possible to be made with the resources available.

5 THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This chapter depicts the research in detail. First, I shall explain the pre-planning of the data collection, then the phases on the research days themselves and finally, I will attempt to bring to light all the relevant details for the analysis. This data includes the pre-planned matters of observation as well as all the additional findings made on-site. The complementary participant interviews are also explained. The analysis of the findings can be found in 5.4 and the conclusions are depicted in chapter 6.

5.1 Data collection on-site at Arktisen Upeeta XXI

The data collection took place on Monday the 2nd and Tuesday the 3rd of November; on the second and third day of the festival. These two days had fewer programs than the other days and focused only on the movie screenings. These particular days were chosen because the program was structured similarly on both of them. They had a similar setting in terms of ambience and planning, which in turn narrowed down the type of collected data and the research focus very effectively.

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, my role in the event shifted between *active* and *passive participation*. Mainly, I observed how the participants behaved and I tried to interpret the music and its role. Alongside this, I also watched the films as an active participant. I tried to observe all spaces in the venue because alongside the primary space in an event, the other spaces are equally important for interaction and discussion between event participants and everyone else involved (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 48). Because the venue was fairly small, I was not able to stay totally out of sight from everyone else, but I had to try to be as “invisible” as possible which was not easy due to my laptop being rather visible and all other participants were simply enjoying themselves either with each other or by themselves. I was therefore unintentionally standing out from other participants slightly.

Especially at this event, a quantitative survey would not have been a suitable option, since the audience was very small, which would have made it difficult to produce statistical generalizations about the participants' opinions. Also, it was fairly easy to take notes of the ambience in total, since I was able to observe the entire space from one spot.

TABLE 1 The observation template for the empirical phase

Timestamps according to the minute	Track	Attempted ambience with the selected music	How the attempt was realized in the ambience	Amount of people present	Conversations	Perceived laughter	Distance between people	Other notes

For both of the research days, the observed details were reported to a specific Excel sheet (See table 1). Based on the theories that I had found at the time, I considered these matters to be the most viable to observe in this event. My main point of attention was to observe the ambience and vibe in the room, and if the selected background music matched the ambience that it was trying to build. Additionally, Mackellar's article noted the customers' tendency to not engage in social contact with other visitors in some events, unless, for example, the other visitors were breaking the event's rules (Mackellar 2013, 62). In this case, I set up a list of which matters to observe closely as well as different assumptions and expectations.

The observed matters were:

1. Comparing the ambience in different spaces of the venue
2. How the different visitor target groups had been taken note of in the planning of the event
3. Proxemics and the social and physical distance between people, as advised by Jamaingal-Jones (2012, 43)
4. Trying to listen to possible conversations between visitors; if the actual content of the conversation is inaudible, then the feeling of the conversation can be attempted to be understood (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 43)
5. What happens between the transitions of the songs; how the different songs support each other and the ambience
6. What categorized this event as a special event
7. Trying to describe all the actions in general by observing action, activities, and the people in the event (Lofland 1971, 4, in: Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 49)

Background notions

1. In participant observation no information can be considered trivial: the researcher has to observe all kinds of matters at all times. (Robson 2002 in: Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 42).
2. The researcher's own bias can have negative effects at all times since it is impossible to predict what is going to happen, and because of biases, the researcher can focus too much on irrelevant matters (Mackellar 2013, 59).
3. Every event participant is part of making an experience in any event

All of these were attempted to be observed and noted at all times. These were based on the information derived from the literature, that I had studied at the time, and alongside them, it was important to observe all kinds of matters that had not been noted in the literature as well.

5.2 Description of the field work

This chapter describes the research days in detail; what happened at which phases of the days. I have broken the different phases down individually and listed specific details about the background music setlists alongside short descriptions of the songs and the ambience they conveyed.

5.2.1 Monday (Nov 2nd): before “Last and First Men”

Monday the 2nd was the second day of the festival in total and it depicted two movies: *Last and First Men* by Jóhann Jóhannsson (Last and First Men 2021) and *Offret* by Andre Tarkovsky (Offret 2021). As the doors opened at 5 pm for the first movie, the space was ready with lights and the background music was playing. 11 people were present – including staff – as the doors opened.

TABLE 2 Background music setlist before “Last and First Men”

Track length	Track	Composer	Musical details and perceived ambience on-site
02:35	Prelude	Jóhann Jóhannsson	A silent start to the night. The opening song of the soundtrack of the movie captured the participants’ attention immediately
03:40	A Minor Astrological Event	Jóhann Jóhannsson	A significant increase in bass, a strong ambient feel
03:48	A Move to Neptune	Jóhann Jóhannsson	The musical intensity reduced, but the ambience remained similar
04:37	Physical Destruction of the Last Human Beings	Jóhann Jóhannsson	Introduced stringed instruments: a shift towards a more positive feeling
05:01	Architecture	Jóhann Jóhannsson	A turn towards a quiet ambience. More ambient sounds and fewer large chords.
01:48	Supreme Monuments	Jóhann Jóhannsson	(similar to previous)
02:00	Telepathic Unity	Jóhann Jóhannsson	A slight increase in vocals
05:36	Childhood / Land of the Young	Jóhann Jóhannsson	A more hopeful feeling, large changes in dynamics

The first pre-made setlist was the soundtrack of the movie that was scheduled to begin: *Last and First Men* (see Table 2). The purpose of this setlist was to set the ambience up for the upcoming film *Last and First Men*, which was an atmospheric science fiction film. The film experience itself was mysterious, heavy, and thought-provoking but also soothing at the same time. The film did not have any characters, and it was narrated by a calming voice, Tilda Swinton.

The soundtrack for the film could be categorized to be atmospheric ambient with soothing transitions between different sections. The playlist followed the soundtrack album from the start on; it started with the song “*Prelude*”, which captured the attention immediately from the start. After this, the second song “*A Minor Astrological Event*” immediately raised the atmosphere more, and it had a lot more bass which was vibrating in the room’s PA systems nicely. The first visitors arrived at this point. I noted pretty early that when only individual people were present, they would most likely scroll their smartphones on their own spots. As the number of participants grew slightly, more conversations started to arise.

The following songs “*A Move to Neptune*” and “*Physical Destruction of the Last Human Being*” had significantly less bass, which was among the few noticeable differences in this setlist’s songs and their feeling. This was the first time that the soundtrack introduced stringed instruments which shifted the mood to a more hopeful direction. During the song “*Architecture*”, the music took a turn towards an

even stronger ambient feel with fewer harmonies or large chords. When more people arrived at the site, the amount of conversation in small groups grew slightly from 0-1 to 2-3 separate conversations at times. The feeling during the songs "*Supreme Monuments*" and "*Telepathic Unity*" was not drastically different from the previous songs, but at those times noticeable and heightened conversations between participants occurred. The last preliminary song was "*Childhood / Land of the Young*", which was the first song that had several shifts in dynamics, which generally attracts a lot of attention from the listener (North & Hargreaves 2006, 111) - a characteristic which is at most times undesirable from the perspective of a soothing ambience. The number of participants had steadily risen to 22.

At this point, it was time for the movie to start. The music was faded out and lights were put up in front of the screen for the producer to hold a welcome speech. In the speech, the producer said his thanks to the audience for showing up to the event especially at such a difficult time. The speech made the event feel much more than a simple movie screening, and a humane and warm feeling filled the room. After this, the movie "*Last and First Men*" started. Because the movie itself was slow-paced and a heavy and emotional experience, people likely had lots of thoughts they wanted to share with one another after its conclusion. In the room I could strongly feel that people wanted to reflect on what they had just seen; after such a long and daunting movie experience and staying quiet, people looked around and stretched, indicating that they wanted to interact with someone after being immersed in a long movie and staying quiet. I also got a very strong feeling that during these kinds of situations the music played after a movie has a big role in how the ambience will be formed after a screening.

5.2.2 Monday (Nov 2nd): after "*Last and First Men*", before "*Offret*", the conclusion of the night

Between the films was a 30-minute break during which all the seats and tables were cleaned and handled with disinfectant; one of the necessary security measures implemented due to COVID-19. About half of the people left at this time and the rest vacated the theater to the lobby. In the lobby the participants were in closer proximity to one another, most likely discussing the recent film experience.

TABLE 3 Background music setlist between Last and First Men and Offret

Track length	Track	Composer	Musical details and perceived ambience on-site
08:01	The Navigators	Jóhann Jóhannsson	(played on top of end credits) – a similar ambience than before, but conversations took over the ambience
01:30	The Sun	Jóhann Jóhannsson	
02:54	A New Doom	Jóhann Jóhannsson	
01:50	Task No. 1: The Scattering of Seeds	Jóhann Jóhannsson	The similar ambience continued, but conversations increased and the overall feeling was more positive than before the first film. The musical connection to the following starting film was not that prevalent.
01:05	Task No. 2: Communicating With the Past	Jóhann Jóhannsson	
02:11	The Last Office of Humanity	Jóhann Jóhannsson	
04:36	Slow Destruction of Neptune	Jóhann Jóhannsson	
05:36	Childhood / Land of the Young	Jóhann Jóhannsson	

Several people entered the theater for the second film – more than to the first. They came at once since the schedule was slightly delayed due to the disinfection process. It was at this point that there were several conversations, and the ambience was much more energetic than before the first film. Many of the conversations were positive and induced with laughter. This was during the tracks “*A New Doom*”, “*Task No. 1: The Scattering of Seeds*” and “*Task No. 2: Communicating With the Past*”. I quickly noted, that if a similar ambience was sought than before the first film, it was not successful due to the positive vibe in the room. The producer did seek a similar feel with this music because the starting film *Offret* was also very slow-paced.

The ongoing conversations dimmed the music both in the sense of volume as well as the perception of the music itself. This feeling continued along during the tracks “*The Last Office of Humanity*” and “*Slow Destruction of Neptune*”, after which the music was turned down once again for the producer to make the welcome speech. The timing of the speech was nearly not as smooth as before the first film.

5.2.3 Monday (Nov 2nd): the conclusion of the day

The film “*Offret*” was a very heavy and anxious experience, and the event participants were very tired and exhausted after the screening. As the film was about to conclude, it could be felt in the room that people wanted to start talking about the film and reflecting on the experience. Similar to the ending of the first film, I could notice that the starting music after a film screening can influence the ambience greatly because after a long movie there occurs a shift in the viewers’ attention. Since this movie did not have any end credits, the technician slowly faded the lights in, and people started to talk about the film a little (three conversations were going on). The following music was still from the same setlist; the track at this point was “*Slow Destruction of Neptune*”.

Because of this, the feeling remained similar to the film and encouraged the viewers to reflect on their film experience. However, it was clear that the event night was over after this, and the participants slowly left the theater.

5.2.4 Tuesday (Nov 3rd): before “49 Years From the House on the Left” and “Porcile”

November 3rd had three films in the program. A short film “49 Years From the House on the Left” (49 Years From the House on the Left 2021) and the main program included “Porcile” (Porcile 2021) and “Melancholia” (Melancholia 2021). Similar to the first day, the doors opened to welcome the viewers of the first film at 5 PM. Both films were again preceded by a 30-minute waiting time and a setlist that was measured to last that time. Before the first screening of the day, the musical ambience was chosen with the movie “Porcile” in mind. The producer strived for an ambience that was fancy and upmarket while simultaneously being somehow twisted and even horrific (See table 4). This kind of background music was again tied to the film that was about to start. According to his description; as a film experience, “Porcile” is very stylistic but very terrible at the same time. The producer wanted Italian music since the movie was Italian as well.

TABLE 4 Background music setlist before Porcile

Track length	Track	Composer	Musical details and perceived ambience on-site
06:00	Luna	Giovanna Marini	A choral piece with a generally positive feeling
06:00	Fantasia in C Minor BWV 562	J.S. Bach	The song introduced an ambience of expectation
05:10	Carmina Burana: primo vere: veris leta facies	Georg Orff	A very quiet song at times which brought down the conversations
06:03	I due prigionieri - Version 5	Ennio Morricone	A very depressing 12-tone piano piece that was played too loud
03:30	Dove Sei Amore - Instrumental	Ennio Morricone	Soothing classical pieces, which complemented the expecting ambience of the upcoming movies
02:32	Lugete Veres	Trad	

During the first ten minutes after the doors were opened, there were no customers present, but only six members of the organizing crew. After 18 minutes – at 17:18 – there were 9 customers present, and 13 customers at the start of the first film at 17:30. The room setting was lit with red lighting which was very suiting to the inner furniture and decoration. Unlike on the previous day, this time the playlist started with choral music which gave a positive atmosphere to the room, even though there weren’t any customers present. Then the setlist continued with organ music by J.S.

Bach (although the composer was not Italian). Compared to the ambient sounds of November 2nd, the attempted ambience changed since now the music drew more attention to itself, and it almost felt like it made people more aware of their surroundings; many participants were lifting their gazes and letting their minds wonder on all the details of the event space.

After the first two songs, the playlist followed with more classical music with Georg Orff's composition. The track "*Primo vere: veris leta facies*" from the famous piece *Carmina Burana* was fairly silent, and the shift in dynamics forced the conversation in a group to drop their speaking volume. The technician had to raise the volume since the song was very quiet at times. The following song "*I due prigionieri*" captured the attention immediately since it started very loud and with a 12-tone playing piano part. The song was very depressive and there were no conversations at this point. The piano was so loud at times, it made the feeling in the room almost uncomfortable. Towards the end of the song, the feeling improved because the track introduced strings. The technician went to reduce the volume towards the end of the song another time.

Five minutes before the film the tracks "*Dove Sei Amore*" and "*Lugete Veres*" – piano and choir pieces – gave the feeling that the film was about to start. People were looking around the event space and expecting the film to start. After the songs, the music was faded out and the pre-speech of the film was made. The short film *49 Years From the House on the Left* was a warm-up for the longer film *Porcile*. It required deep interpreting skills from the viewer but did not awake strong emotions. *Porcile* was a brutal but very artistic film.

5.2.5 Tuesday (Nov 3rd): after "Porcile", before "Melancholia"

As a movie, *Porcile* was not as heavy as an experience as the two movies of November 2nd. It required a large amount of concentration from the viewer and strong interpretation skills. Hence, the people were maybe somewhat phased out and tired after the movie. All the customers again left the cinema, there were no conversations at this point. The music for the exit was "*Volcano Songs*", which was quite eerie for an exit song. There was only one small conversation among the customers, and quickly the disinfection procedures were made for the second screening.

TABLE 5 Background music setlist after Porcile and before Melancholia

Track length	Track	Composer	Musical details and perceived ambience on-site
03:12	Volcano Songs	Meredith Monk	(Was planned to be played before Porcile, but the playlist did not reach the last song; was played after Porcile)
07:50	Concierto for harpsichord, strings, and continuo No.1 in D minor, BWV 1052: I. Allegro	J.S. Bach	The harpsichord sound shifted the mood completely, starting the classical phase before Melancholia
08:46	Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op 92: II. Allegretto	L. van Beethoven	
02:09	Haunting & Heart-breaking	Angelo Badalamenti	The Lost Highway soundtrack was intended to bring the mood towards a more modern mood
03:43	Dub Driving	Angelo Badalamenti	A very smooth beat for the first time during the setlist
02:32	Fats Revisited	Angelo Badalamenti	(halt in observation)
03:01	Fred's World	Angelo Badalamenti	(halt in observation)
04:45	Next Heap With	Aphex Twin	During this song, there were the most occurred conversations of the whole data collection phase. It was apparent that the music did not correlate to this, since the song was fairly depressing in terms of its ambience.
06:07	Icct Hedral	Aphex Twin	The song complemented the expecting atmosphere and people started to end their conversations and shift the focus towards the screen

“Melancholia” by Lars von Trier was the final movie for this day. The music preceding the movie was again planned to be stylish but it also included dark classical music. This kind of ambience was sought with the music as well: the goal was to build up the feeling towards the start of the film. The closer the playlist got to the start of the film, the more modern the music turned into. The first song was a part of J.S. Bach’s harpsichord concierto. This song was the only time that I overheard anyone openly commenting on the music: one member of the organizing team commented that the song sounded like a song from the Harry Potter movies.

At 19:33 four customers were present and the first conversations started, and the number of customers increased steadily up to 30 at the start of the film. This was the

largest amount of customers during these two days of data collection. The song that started at this point was a part of Beethoven's 7th symphony. Like Georg Orff's song on the previous day, the piece did not blend that well into the background because of large shifts in dynamics. There were two conversations at this point, and I overheard some topics which did not handle the music nor the following film.

At 19:41, the music shifted to the soundtrack of the movie *"Lost Highway"* which is composed by Angelo Badalamenti. The mood shifted from the classical feeling of Beethoven towards a modern direction, and especially the track *"Dub Driving"* brought a very smooth feeling to the room since it was the first song to introduce a drum beat. During the next song *"Fats Revisited"* I also went to have a small conversation with a customer, and the observation halted for a few minutes. During the next song *"Next Heap With"* the ambience was somewhat more cheerless, but it did not put down the conversations. In fact, during this song occurred the loudest moment in terms of conversation during the whole evening, even though the ambience did not change drastically, in part because of the music.

At 19:58 the conversations slowly dampened, and people started to note the movie screen, which portrayed a poster about the following movie *"Melancholia"*. The last song before the film, *"Icct Hedral"*, was not very fitting to start a warm welcome speech, which was again given before the film.

5.2.6 Tuesday (Nov 3rd): the conclusion of the night

"Melancholia" was a very heavy experience as a film. Its conclusion was very powerful and left the viewer feeling empty. This film clearly had the largest impact on the ambience and feeling than any other film in this data collection. Even though there were the most customers in the film screening than before, the room was dead silent at the end credits. The technician did not put the playlist on anymore, but let the end credits roll. The music that played on top of the credits was a very silent stringed piece. *"Melancholia"* gave the perfect example, that the main program of an event is the dominant aspect of design, which is the main factor for the ambience as well. If music had been played after *Melancholia*, it would have felt very unfitting. This concluded the collection of the observational data.

5.3 Participant interviews

During the two days of the data collection, I conducted two interviews with randomly selected participants. The first interview took place between *"The Last and the First Men"* and *"Offret"* and the second interview after *"Offret"* on Monday the 2nd. The questions were open and formed into a free interview, and the intent was to inquire

the event participants themselves about the ambience, the restrictions, and the background music. The first four questions involved the inquiring of the research questions, and the fifth was included – in part – from the wish of the event producer, who was interested if the participants were interested in staying in the event space after the movie screenings. He had mentioned it being an issue in the previous years that people had left the venue prematurely when there still were upcoming programs left in the event.

The questions were:

- How would you describe the event ambience?
 - o = Miten kuvailisit tapahtuman tunnelmaa?
- Do you feel that the restrictions regarding safety affected your event experience?
 - o = Vaikuttivatko turvallisuusrajoitukset tapahtumakokemukseen?
- How did you perceive the music played before and after the movie?
 - o = Mitä ajatuksia tapahtumamusiikki herätti ennen ja jälkeen elokuvan?
- What motivated you to attend the event?
 - o = Mikä oli ensisijainen motivaatio tapahtumaan tulemiseen?
- Are you willing to stay in the event to spend time after the movie?
 - o = Oletko halukas / olitko suunnitellut jäämään paikalle varsinaisen ohjelman jälkeen?

The first interview involved two persons, that had come to the event together and had not visited the film venue before. They were waiting for the screening of “Offret” to take place. The tracks that were playing in the background were “A New Doom” and “Task No. 1” They perceived the ambience to be ‘mystical’ and ‘expecting’. When inquired about the restrictions they noted that they did not feel affected by them and that the face masks even amplified the mystical feeling of the evening. When inquired about the music, the pair said that they had a feeling that “something is about to happen” and that the songs reminded them about the movie *Halloween*. Their primary motivation to attend the event was to get a new experience, the reasonably priced movie ticket, and the movie that was about to be screened - Offret. The pair was willing to stay in the event after the movie screening, had it been possible on that particular day.

The second interview was made with one customer and two members of the organizing staff, who had not taken part in the music planning. The songs playing at the moment were “The Slow Destruction of Neptune” and “Childhood / Land of the Young”. The customer provided most of the answers and the staff members mostly gave complementary comments to the customer’s answers. They answered fairly thoroughly to each question. According to them, it was fairly difficult to define the

ambience of the event, since it was context-dependent on everyone's own feelings and expectations about the event. Since this customer came alone, they also had a very inward and introverted feeling from the start on. The design – such as the lighting, smoke machines, and the placing of the movie screen – and the ambience was however seen as well done: the interviewees mentioned that the entirety gave a very cinematic feeling and that the smell of popcorn and beer complemented the mystical feeling.

The customer of the second interview experienced a stronger impact on the event experience from the COVID-19 -related restrictions. They felt that it was confusing how to move and how it felt to try to maintain a safe distance from other people, and the feeling of wanting to avoid coughing which was also difficult for the interviewee due to allergies. All three felt that these matters were entirely new things that were unheard of before the pandemic. Wearing face masks, the restrictions, and reminders about safe distance gave the feeling that one can never forget COVID-19, and the customer felt that they had to try not to make anything socially unacceptable during the event.

When I inquired them about the music, all interviewees felt that it fit well with the program and guided towards the feeling of the movies, and also nicely upheld the atmosphere after the movie. The sole motivation of attendance for the customer was the program and they very much liked the idea of staying in the venue after the movie for refreshments, if they attended the event on those particular days. They felt a need to share thoughts about the movie also afterwards.

5.4 Data analysis results

This chapter focuses on the different results and findings of the participant observation. The two different research days made it possible for me to analyze and compare different kinds of details. As mentioned before, the analysis method is a qualitative analysis that is similar to the research method of the data collection. The analysis is inductive and abductive in nature. The themes that I attempted to address with the findings were associated with the role of background music, and which findings indicate its role. I also observed the actions of the producer and the organizers and how the implementation of design planning was done in practice in the event.

5.4.1 Background music as part of event ambience

The pre-planned background music was strongly in connection to the main attraction of the event – the films. This was supported by several factors in both the observation and the interviews. The playlists and the songs in them were selected in an attempt to form an ambience according to the main program on each movie screening. I used the

word 'attempt' here and in the whole research because planned playlists do not always induce the desired ambience. The selected music was either directly film music or had a strong connection to cinema. Other musical choices exist, that can form a similar ambience as these tracks, but the connection to cinema was a good reason to include this particular music. The producer knew what he was doing and was very insightful in these genres of music.

For the most part, the ambience was as planned and the playlist worked as intended. The main point was to wish the customers welcome and offer them a different context than their daily routines might otherwise have offered: the music's role was to distinguish this event as a special event. The music selections had ambient parts which did not attract much attention in the listeners/participants, but also very lyrical music that did attract much attention. Both of these types did seem to be in place with the attempted ambience, and as an observer, I do not have any criticism towards the musical choices themselves. According to my judgment, the genres of ambient and classical were fine choices for background music altogether. All kinds of songs have predictable and unpredictable elements in an event context, and nothing can be entirely planned in advance. That being said, the musical choices were very fitting for this event's purpose.

As for detailed observations, all of the playlists had a wide range of dynamics between different songs. Even though Spotify playlists balance the dynamic between songs, the balancing did not function well enough. As mentioned in 5.2.4, the technician had to separately go adjust the music volume down, or up according to the music. Almost all of the songs - regardless of musical style - had large shifts in dynamics. In the end, this was a calculated issue on part of the producer since he had specifically handpicked the songs that would match the starting movies. The issue did not have any visible significant negative outcomes which are also possible to happen (North & Hargreaves 2006, 111).

Most of the observation focused on how the music appeared to influence the conversation and behavior of participants. I observed the number of conversations and amount of laughter, but there did not seem to be any relation to any type of music having a significant impact on the conversations in this event. For example, the point where the most conversations occurred was during the song "Next Heap With" by Aphex Twin, and there did not seem to be any connection that songs of its kind would have had similar amounts of conversation. Also, any of the other musical styles present in the playlists did not have any indication of higher amounts of conversation in the venue than others. Some songs did however induce a very negative feeling: like "I due prigioneri", during which there were no conversations. It could be felt and interpreted from subtle facial expressions, that this kind of feeling also contributed to the reduction in the willingness to engage in social contacts.

The music was not discussed among the customers, or at least I did not overhear such instances. This was an expected result since the music was not the main attraction of the event. Furthermore, the mandatory face masks in the event made it harder to notice conversations and facial expressions. These research results do not have another point that they could be compared to, such as a movie screening in a more regular cinema, or a movie screening without music.

The ambience made with the music was paired with spatial design. The event space had several details, which formed a coherent overall design meant to amplify the event experience and enhance the customer patronage (Hargreaves et al 2018, 790). The musical ambience was complemented with colored lights in the whole space. Some walls were also decorated with posters about movies, music, and other cultural curiosities (See figure 4). The inner decorations have a strong connection with event design, whose importance was noted by Berridge (2008). One good instance was that the stage in front of the main screen was lit with basic lights for the introduction speeches. Since the room was dark at all other times, it created a feeling of a warm welcome and bred the distinction that this is not a typical movie screening, but a special event (Quinn 2013, 37; Getz 1997, 4). This effect was also amplified with strobe lighting and smoke machines before the start of the films.

5.4.2 Results regarding event production

Some of the results relate more specifically to event production: the producer's decision to pre-plan the playlists in advance was a useful tool to save time from controlling the music constantly on-site. As mentioned before, this bred a caveat that the music volume can be unpredictable and have unwanted effects at some points. It also was prevalent to plan the ambience according to the movies, which increased the emphasis of the actual festival program. The background music was not that inviting in the big picture, but the main point was to guide the participants towards the ambience of the film. The music had also some seemingly unplanned positive effects, such as in the first session the song "Land of the Young" was played at a perfect time before the welcoming speech. This is tied to the feeling of a relaxed flow proposed by Yeoman (2004, 60-61). At some times, the different song parts were very good background music for conversation as well, but this was not consistent.

One of the most drastic findings was, what happened after the film "Melancholia". Since the film's ending was a very heavy and dominating experience, and there was not a smooth transition to the end credits, the room was almost dead silent. This strongly indicates that the main program of any event sets the ambience up, and if background music is a secondary way to form ambience, it alone cannot set the ambience up, if it is not in coherence with the main program. Melancholia was unique in this sense because the other movies did not have such a drastic effect on the

after-ambience. All other movies had different kinds of conversations between participants during the end credits and the aftermath of the movies.

Regarding the COVID-19 restrictions and the results that can be made from the data, their connection to the event ambience was present in some findings. The most significant finding was the participants' compliance with the restrictions, and how one of the interviewed participants felt that the restrictions simply could not be ignored during the event. The participants were carefully watching where they were moving and how they placed themselves so that a proper physical distance was possible to be maintained. The participants also did not tend to cough at all which had been normal before the pandemic. They possibly were afraid of doing so, unless necessary. This phenomenon has made its way into other places in many societies and social situations. All of these matters were a part of the ambience, but not in the hands of the producer.

TABLE 6 Research results in the main themes

Theme	Findings
Background music as a part of event ambience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The music style did not seem to have a connection to the number of conversations or the amount of laughter - mostly instrumental music overall – the choices were suitable - the music could have been described rather as ‘sound’ and therefore complementing other activated senses - The music was not discussed among the participants – it did not attract attention most of the time - The music served as a part of the event ambience design in general - The different songs supported each other and the ambience very well - According to the interviews the ambience was experienced as very soothing
Productional decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The decision to plan the background music according to the program: the songs replicated the ambience of the upcoming films - Setlists done in advance in order to prioritize focus for the starting film → the event producer knew which songs were on the upcoming playlist - No music was put after the film <i>Melancholia</i> since the ambience and feeling were so heavy after the film - The light design supported the designed feeling

Proxemics (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 43) were also observed, but they remained relatively similar throughout each screening, also due to people abiding by social distancing guidelines; small groups, pairs, and individuals remained in their own social groups. When considering the observation of proxemics (Jamaingal-Jones 2012, 43) and how it benefited this research, the results are underwhelming. The event participants moved and behaved very cautiously, being very aware of their surroundings and respecting the space of others. This made the event experience a bit antisocial, even

though it was not the intention of the event producer. After a short time of observation, it was fairly clear that the proxemics and distance between people would remain roughly the same during the event, hence making any conclusions based on proxemics difficult.

Alongside the main themes that could be gathered from the different findings, some could not be grouped into these themes, as expected. These were the observation of proxemics and the planning of music according to the target group. These do however help with making the conclusions. According to the interviews, the music setting was seen as a positive matter, and the interest in the event was prevalent in both interviews. All of the participants were interested in staying afterwards, indicating that the ambience design had been successful in attempting to be inviting.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I discuss the meaning of the research results. First I shall handle the connections that can be made regarding the theoretical framework and second I shall further complement these with additional remarks.

Arktisen Upeeta XXI was a very unique festival in all its details and the data collection did not cover all the aspects that could have been observed on-site, simply due to the nature of the ethnographic research method. All matters observed and collected in the observatory data have to be questioned afterwards due to the possibility of biases on part of the researcher. That being said, the matters observed on-site: the number of conversations, proxemics, and the ambience, as well as the participant interviews and the additional information from the event producer, were based on the theoretical framework and narrowed according to it.

6.1 Connections to the larger framework: event studies, design, and management

Arktisen Upeeta XXI was a festival, where the tree of event management details was prevalent. The event *management* included the event's *design*; the event *design* included the event *ambience* and the event *ambience* included the *background music and sounds*. As mentioned before, according to the model of Allen and O'Toole, (See figure 2) the planning of *music/sounds* is part of the event design in general. The part of ambience design was allocated between the event producer himself and the light technician.

When considering event ambience and background in the context of the *elements of staging*, this research focused on the following elements (Allen & O'Toole 2005, 417):

- theming and event design
- audience and guests
- power, lights, and sound

- audiovisuals and special effects
- performers
- the production schedule

These were only roughly half of the matters mentioned by Allen and O'Toole (2005, 417). This distinction indicates that the role of ambience and sound is only a small part of event design in general and further suggests why design in background music and ambience receives limited resources in events management. In Arktisen Upeeta XXI, the amount of time used for planning the ambience and the background music was sufficient for that particular event's goals, but this research did not gather any information as to how much resources were used to these elements of design compared to other elements of design. Based on this, a conclusion can be made that the theory of background music being only a part of event design, was supported based on the collected data. In the so-called "hierarchy" of event design, background music can be argued to be of lower priority when compared to the planning of the event program.

Yeoman's event design principles *scale*, *shape*, *focus*, *timing*, and *build* (Yeoman 2004, 60-61) were not all taken under closer observation in this research. The *scale*-design of the event did not require many resources since the venue had been the same for several years and it had been deemed fitting for the concept. As for the *shape* design, the venue did not have places where the main program could not have been visible, so in an event as small as this, this kind of design does not require that many resources. The *build*-section also comes into question more in larger events and not here, because the overall resources in use for Arktisen Upeeta XXI were fairly limited, so in the end, it was fairly clear how the overall resources were allocated in the event design.

The relevant matters for Arktisen Upeeta XXI in Yeoman's design principles were *focus* and *timing*. The focus of the audience was planned very thoughtfully, which involved many auditory, visual, and even scent-related (the smell of popcorn and beverages) elements. The focus was planned to be captured from the moment that the audience stepped into the room with beautiful lighting, the background music, posters, plants, popcorn, the cinema screen, and later even smoke machines. The focus for the movies was also drawn with the help of the opening speech. The music itself was not planned to be an element of substantial focus, but rather background sounds. The *timing* of the music, the opening speeches, and the program were simply but carefully designed, and made a feeling of a relaxed flow (Yeoman 2004, 60-61). I would argue that these two matters are more important elements of design than the ambience, or at least they should be prioritized first in event planning.

6.2 Music usage and planning

The overall role of music in Arktisen Upeeta XXI can be described as *sound* and not necessarily as music since it was not part of the main program and was meant to complement the ambience. This connects to the question: which sounds are processed as music and in which situations (Stevens & Byron 2009, 20). I would conclude that the music planning had the ambience in mind first, and not the musical details of the individual songs; not only according to the producer but also according to the practical observational data. The music was closer to the classification of *milieu music* than *background music for personal enhancement* (see Brown & Theorell 2006, 127). Since this was a case study, the question as to what is the role of background music in the event experience, cannot be answered directly, but the results indicate a supporting role in the ambience and overall event design.

Knowledge activation and musical fit (See North & Hargreaves 2006, 106; Hargreaves et al 2018, 796-798) was a key factor in the selection of the background music. With each song choice, the producer wished to convey a certain feeling/setting/ambience. As for associations in the brain, the ambient soundtrack music of the first day, as well as some tracks of the second day, were not very well-known musical pieces. Therefore they served as better background music, and the musical fit of those pieces was much broader than contemporary hit songs for example, which activate many different kinds of thoughts in the listener(s). It was also a very intrinsic part of the design to use film music in the music design of a film festival, both in the sense of ambience and cultural associations. The sounds in the songs selected often remind the listener about film music and experiences in cinemas. Another indication of musical fit was the usage of classical music to make give an upmarket feeling before certain films being displayed.

Considering all of the possible conscious and unconscious effects of background music – such as customer patronage (Hargreaves et al 2018, 790), the will to engage in social contacts and the psychobiological effects caused by musical variations (North & Hargreaves 2006, 111) – it was relevant to observe the customer's behavior in the venue. The actual effect of the background music could have been better interpreted from further interviews with customers and/or surveys, where the viewpoint of customer patronage and ambience could also have been more critically evaluated. Still, these were not conducted to a larger extent due to the reasons mentioned in chapter 4.2.1. Also, to fully understand the effect of background music, more quantitative data is needed to support any conclusions.

Based on the observational data, there did not appear to be any clear evidence, that the background music in this event would have made the event participants feel more sociable and willing to engage in social contacts. This theory (North, Hargreaves

2006, 109-110) does not take into account any restrictions or social distancing, both of which were present in Arktisen Upeeta XXI. The number of conversations from different phases of the two evenings did not seem to shift according to any specific musical genre since the variation of genres was not very broad in the event. It did not seem probable, that during certain types of songs or music the pace, loudness, or the number of conversations would have shifted rapidly. The one case that conversations did occur in large numbers – which was before the film *Melancholia* – was in a situation in which the number of people was larger than in other situations, which in itself also breeds more conversations naturally.

Additional conclusions on the theories of background music were supported based on the data. There were no visible implications that the background music would have made the ambience worse for any participant(s) in comparison to there not being music at all (See North & Hargreaves 1998; 1996). The planning of the ambience and its implication on behalf of the producer and the technician were very carefully carried out, even though there were unwanted dynamic variations in the songs. The background music supported a feeling of a good flow in the event overall (Yeoman 2004, 60-61).

From the productional point of view, I would say, the guidelines of planning background music as part of the event experience are very context- and program-dependent. In the case of Arktisen Upeeta XXI, it was a definite complementing element for the program. The main program can be said to have dwarfed the impact of the music, making the distinction of background *sound* a more suitable description in this case. These conclusions, therefore, suggest that the best way to plan background music for an event's ambience is to focus on the main program of the event and plan the design accordingly.

6.3 Additional remarks

The producer's decision of making the playlist beforehand and not adjusting anything music-related spontaneously is a decision that displays efficiency; if the music doesn't have to be constantly monitored, the time can be spent otherwise. However, the music didn't necessarily suit each section perfectly in Arktisen Upeeta XXI, so adjusting the setlist "on the go", could have solved this issue to some extent, even though the musical choices were on point. The key factor was that this issue was not very large, so those kinds of timely resources were not necessary to be used in this event. The producer did have a clear understanding of the music that was in the playlist(s), but the planning wasn't extremely detailed or specific. This can be explained due to the scale of the event: in smaller events, the producer has to take care of many segments

of planning and organizing before, during, and after the event, which means that there probably simply was no time to plan many details to the playlists, nor the time to direct them.

One of the main deficits in the fieldwork was the similarity of the data collected; both of the research days had similar programs, and it would have been better to answer the research questions if the data collection had been possible to be done on different kinds of festival days, which were organized later during the festival week. Studying the different days would have given different kinds of data, which would have complemented the already obtained data.

Even though I didn't manage to find any instance of it being mentioned in the literature / theoretical framework, I would argue that the event experience of participants can be influenced by intrinsic event design in general, regardless of the form of design. This was supported after witnessing the drastic effects that the film *Melancholia* had on the participants, the ambience, and the feel of the entire event. In that case, it was not the music that had the notable drastic effects, but the actual program. One instance of positive consumer behavior was the opinion of the interviewees to be able/willing to stay in the event after the movie. The design and the program influenced the participants in such a positive way, that they felt engaged in the event.

As a method, ethnographic research and participant observation was informative and made it possible to obtain many kinds of material from the event. Further studies could be implemented with the same method in similar case studies, but research with larger resources could benefit from additional methods, such as customer surveys.

The key conclusion in the whole research was that during this event it would have been much more academically relevant to focus the research more on the effect, scale, and execution of the hygiene protocols and COVID-19 related restrictions since they were the most relevant and unique topic in recently organized events. Planning and executing social distancing measures in events is a part of event design, and therefore they also contribute to the ambience and feeling. It poses the most significant aspect of further studies in the future, in case events still have to be organized with these kinds of restrictions. During the Fall of 2020, the public conversation in the Finnish society often questioned the need for events like these to eventually be suspended altogether, when there was no evidence of new infections happening in any event in the entire country. Later in 2021, events could again be organized more freely due to vaccinations against COVID-19 being rolled out in Finland.

6.4 General conclusions

Overall, this research served the purpose to provide additional insight on event studies, event design, background music, and productional details. As mentioned before; since the event was unique in the sense of being allowed to be organized during the COVID-19 pandemic – a very rare feat in the global scope – it would have been a good opportunity to highlight the effects of the restrictions. It can take many more months or even years before the event industry in Finland and the world can go back to pre-pandemic times, and there is very much room for more research in this field and these implications. At the time of finalizing this report – December 2021 –, events are already being organized again in Finland and Europe. Most of them have had restrictions, but for example, the Finnish authorities will not enforce event managers to have social distancing in events anymore, partly due to vaccinations being underway and in good progress in Europe. Many events also have enforced proof of vaccinations, which has various consequences and prospects for each nation's events industries.

As mentioned in the theoretical framework (see Shone & Parry 2004, 33), these conclusions should only be compared to peer events in this genre; film festivals. Therefore these conclusions made here should possibly only be utilized in film festival event design. As for other kinds of events, the issues of resource use for background music and ambience can be referenced, but not too substantially. By this, I mean that events are unique in their design, but some main principles still exist that handle all kinds of events, such as my proposed conclusion that the *timing*- and *focus*-design are a more important priority to be planned than the ambience and background music. For example, Arktisen Upeeta XXI was excellent in its design of drawing the attention of the customer from the start on with different senses – including the background music – and these measures could be utilized in other events as well. Still, the number of resources that were required for music usage and planning was unique to this event.

The academic journals of events and event management research provide a good platform for this kind of studies. Events, as well as event tourism, have clear geographical differences, but similar studies as this could also be featured in the large journals referenced in this thesis which have a strong base in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. In the end, the phenomena that these studies handle are global in many ways, so they could be executed and referenced all over the world.

Further research on the differences in time resources used for designing event ambience in comparison to other matters of design, or the various effects of event restrictions is warranted. However, the unique ambience of the first events organized during the pandemic can hardly be replicated since people may have gotten used to the restrictions at this point, or they are no longer necessary. Since events have been

reopened without restrictions (with or without the requirement for vaccinations), the productions have been very close to times before the pandemic. The industry's future looks a little brighter after the very dark 20 months of COVID-19.

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