large areas of overlap such as in ballet and opera. Examining how these two fields have parsed curating as a concept and adapted it in various ways to their various disciplinary exigencies will set up a foundation for talking about what curating could mean in the field of music.

## 3.2 Reading Shannon Jackson

Performing arts festivals and visual arts biennales alike have begun to present a heterogeneous mix of theatre, performance art, musical concerts, and exhibitions, often organizing themselves instead around various themes, questions, or concepts rather than artistic medium. There has also been a rise in prominence of high-profile festivals that exhibit a strong emphasis on their capacity to mix various kinds of artistic productions, such as the Ruhrtriennale or Steirischer Herbst.

As opposed to more established interdisciplinary festivals like the Salzburger Festspiele, which has since its inception programmed the performing arts of opera, concerts, and theatre, these newer incarnations often seek to program diverse forms of artistic practice that are often more experimental, or that are more "conceptual" in their approach, meaning that their form is subservient to the idea they want to express. They are also more likely to program community art practices, as well as to exhibit a stronger relationship between their programmed performance and a larger curatorial concept for the festival.

With this strong upwards trajectory in the amount of mixing of artistic practice, the challenge is to develop an approach to understanding and describing them that is flexible enough to keep up. These new and highly dynamic modes of artistic production and presentation display a large amount of variability from one festival (or festival edition) to another, from production to production, and in how they engage with or are understood by their audience, making recourse to solely their artistic traditions not viable.

The reality is that these fields of the arts are, as theatre scholar Tom Sellar diagnoses, "blurring forms with unprecedented fluidity, and discourses … are resolutely, and freely, interdisciplinary," with the challenge emerging of how best to navigate these new waters (2014, 22). What becomes a problem is how best to characterize these practices, and how to describe them productively. If the frame of reference is itself constantly shifting, how can production and reception of these works be conceived of?

What does not seem to be a productive path forward are attempts at some grand systemization or genealogy of these intricate hybrid forms; any system would arguably only exist as a permanently-insufficient map. Rather, a more contingent and localized approach must be attempted: understanding interdisciplinary arts involves constructing tools adapted to the specificities of the event of their occur-

rence. This is more a practice of following the networks of connections that make up these events, with a crucial aspect being also the biases and blind spots of the researcher themselves.

The following section will first attempt to give a basis for this approach through a re-reading of minimalism, and through connecting together various texts by Jackson into a larger project. In doing this, it will also reimagine the core of Jackson's argument as part of a theoretical basis for a curatorial practice in music.

### 3.2.1 Theatricality as the Violation of Medium-Specificity

Jackson's first move to orient herself within the wide field of interdisciplinary artistic practices is to centre the constitution of the work on its receiver. This leads for her to a performativity of reception inherent to all artistic production, and problematizes the difference between the performing and visual arts, which in this argument also have performative characteristics. This section begins by anchoring itself to debates arising from the last significant historical intersection between performance and visual art in the 1960s, specifically centred on the concept of theatricality and its relationship to minimalism.

#### Minimalism

Minimalist artists, such as Robert Morris, but also Frank Stella, Sol LeWitt, and others, focused on large-scale works and basic shapes and patterns, foregrounding the encounter with the work over marvelling at the virtuosity of the artist's skill. Their approach to painting and sculpture was one that, hung directly without frames on the gallery wall, implicated also the spaces it occupied. O'Doherty's early analysis of minimal art saw the movement as part of a larger shift in the history of painting away from understanding a hung painting as "totally isolated from its slum-close neighbour by a heavy frame around and a complete perspective system within ([1976] 1999, 16). As art and life began to spill into one-another in various avant-garde movements, so too did artists create "shallower" paintings that relied less on an independent system of perspective marked by a frame. The edges of paintings, and photographs for that matter, were gradually softened, particularly in the 20$^{th}$ century, meaning that hanging plans, how much space a work had to "breathe," and how a work interacted with the space that it occupied would all play an ever-more important roles. By mid-century, with the advent of colour field painting, and minimalism shortly after, "[s]ome of the mystique of the shallow picture plane … had been transferred to the context of art," O'Doherty argues, meaning that the exhibition *space* became co-constitutive of the experience of the work (29). The wall participated in the work, rather than acting as its physical support: The territory that needed to be afforded to pieces for appropriate "breathing" to occur would transform the gallery space into a key part of the *experience* of art.

Art critics Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried would famously accuse minimalism of possessing what they called "theatricality," and therefore not living up to the specificity of their respective media. This was for them a repudiation of the modernist project of distilling media to their unique characteristics, and utilizing that medium-specificity in the pursuit of artistic expression (Fried [1967] 1998, 151). For Fried, in the case of painting, this meant that paintings "must be pictoral, not, or not merely, literal": what they needed was to have some aspect that distinguished them from other media (151). If minimalist painting is not perceived as pictoral, then it consists for him only of objects, and thus becomes simply literal and co-existent with the viewer in the space—for Fried a quality of non-art, and obviously not for him a positive characteristic. This lent it a quality of what he calls "stage presence" better suited to the theatre than to modernist art, which painting was to reject, should it still value purity and autonomy of image and gesture.

The work of minimalist art thus lost the ability to express any unique quality of painting as a medium for depiction, Fried argues. At the same time, as O'Doherty points out, it bled into the space around its frame, into its context, and became influenced, or even composed by, its surroundings. The viewer became co-constituent of the work's existence; there needed to be some sort of *event* of artistic production that constitutes the work as such, the experience of looking at it in which it begins to exist as such, rather than a set of objective characteristics that would persist regardless of viewer. In this way, theatricality, understood as the encroachment of "non-art," of art's context, and as the moment of encounter with the artwork, would become crucial to understanding artistic practice.

## All Media are Mixed Media

This encroachment can be related back to a theme that runs through this volume, namely a shift from a modernist aesthetic model that seeks purity and specificity, in following a line of argumentation that extends from the universal expositions of the 19th century up until Fried, to a post-modernist aesthetic model that, *a priori*, understands the image, and by extension the work of art, as inherently mixed.

The media and visual culture scholar W.J.T. Mitchell argues contrary to Fried that an image can never be pure and enduring—rather it is tied to the scopic regime of an era, and its regimes of power, which determine what is seen and made visible. At the beginning of *Picture Theory*, Mitchell names this shift in the understanding of the image the *pictorial turn*. He describes that this turn "is … a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality" (Mitchell 1994, 16).

This turn is not a rejection of the modernist approach to the image, but rather designates a shift to a new set of problems, casting the understanding of e.g. Fried as one that only holds true under a certain privileged and ideal(ized) set of condi-

tions. For Mitchell the post-modernist, a painting cannot be simply an unambiguous and self-contained sign-system capable of being read by whoever possesses the power to read it (which would be those in possession of a knowledge of art history in the traditional sense), but rather the image and its meaning is constituted by a complex of forces acting together in a given situation (Mitchell 1994, 13). In this way, the receiver of the image is taken out of a subject/object dichotomy, and is placed into a situated encounter. Rather than needing to fashion the right key to the lock, imagine instead Alice's becoming-with shrinking potions and growing cakes in the first pages of *Alice in Wonderland*: an approach that creates an assemblage transgressing subject/object divisions (c.f. Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 233ff). Mitchell's understanding implies fundamentally a lack of purity, an in-between state dependent on the nature of the encounter: all media are mixed media.

Returning to Jackson's argument, she contrasts the two different viewpoints of Fried and Mitchell, but argues that Fried's concept of "theatricality" can itself be a way of viewing Mitchell's position that the medium is inherently mixed. She points out that in Fried's view, theatricality is understood as "an 'in-between' state in which forms belonged to no essential artistic medium; to work across media, that is, to violate medium-specificity" (Jackson 2005, 172). She then takes this criticism of minimalism and turns it around, arguing that the performativity that defines theatricality, *and by extension theatre itself*, can be understood then *not* as a unique to the medium, but rather as "the means by which visual media undo their specificity," essentially drawing a bridge between Fried's criticism and Mitchell's approach via the notion of theatricality itself (173).

This undoing of specificity argued by Jackson is a disengagement of visual culture from the belief in the purity of an absolute image, which is replaced by the theatricality of a constant mixture of image and world, of media, and of sensory modes (2005, 164). Important to note is that, as argued in Chapter 2 by looking at the universal exposition as the birthplace of a scopic regime of modernism, "visuality" is here understood as an adherence to that regime in general, rather than the eye as a sensing organ.[1] The usefulness of this concept is in how it positions the concept of theatre as not a certain set of practices, but rather a state of transgression within artistic practice more generally, orienting them—in their respective contexts—towards a recognition of the inherent mixedness of their mediums, and

1 This distinction will be elaborated on in more detail in section 3.3.1 below, where Yvonne Rainer's contention that "dance is hard to see" will be understood as a rebuff of this ocular-centric regime through the practice of dance. The point being in short that while dance is obviously *received* by the eye (among other senses) in the banal sense, processurality and ephemerality are inherent disruptors of the ocular-centric regime's more general conviction as to the eye's rationality.

finally to the recognition of the various constituent actants that make up the event of performance.

It implies instead a "networked" approach, where the observer exists in some relationship with both the work, as well as all manner of other factors that act on and constitute this relationship per se. The system of inside and outside the frame is replaced with an inquiry into the forms of connection between the viewer and the framed image. This perspective shift does away with the notion of a neutral background, and instead asks in which ways that background is linked to the viewer (see also Latour 1996, 6).

This is the basis for a *receiver-based approach* to understanding perception; for what happens in this shift towards a network-based understanding of the performative event is the loss of the possibility of being able to observe from the outside, or from a vantage point that does not itself interact with the material being observed. This is a refutation of the ostensible "passivity" of the spectator's gaze, which looks on at the action from outside of the proscenium stage. In the same way that minimalist painting spilling over its boundaries into its context, into the gallery space, so too does the concept of theatricality no longer understand itself as confined to a subset, a frame, of perception, and is more all-encompassing of the specific receiver.

The inherent impurity of mediums, of inscriptions and inscribing surfaces, that comes along with this model is what allows for Jackson—in a later text—to then shift the creation of this "theatrical" situation away from the art object itself and onto its receiver. Counter to Fried's view of the dangers of theatricality, every confrontation with an artwork is argued to have a reality-producing dimension, this theatricality that he wished to avoid (Jackson 2017, 18).

This means that the concept of performativity becomes relocated from being a way of understanding certain works, such as minimalist art, to being a theory of the reception of artistic practice in general, becoming reality in the moment of a receiver's uptake of it. The moment of uptake is the taking of a specific position as actant in the network, the taking on of a perspective, which allows for interaction with it at all (once again because of the lack of an outside).

This position must be understood as complementary to the fact that many contemporary artists, in a lineage stemming from minimalism and continuing through relational aesthetics and community or activist art, employ the performative dimension of the artwork, its so-called inter-subjectivity, as their medium (see Bourriaud 2002, 22–23). To this category can obviously be counted the minimalist artists spoken about earlier, but also works in the tradition of relational aesthetics in the sense of Nicolas Bourriaud like Rirkrit Tiravanija with his soup kitchen works, e.g. at the Venice Biennale 1993 or Art Basel 2015, or more recently works by Tino Sehgal like *This Variation* (since 2012). These works create situations whereby the theatricality of the confrontation with the work of art becomes the

recursive subject of the work itself. This allows for a self-reflection on the mechanisms of the process, but is only a subset of the entirety of artistic production. To be clear, the thrust of the argument is rather that this inherent theatricality and mixedness of media is a way of approaching the perception of art in general as a situated encounter.

## Receiver Untangles Interdisciplinary Arts

Returning to the use of "performativity" as located in the receiver and their confrontation with artistic practice, the issue becomes that its various uses within the discourses of the visual arts and the performing arts prove hard to untangle from each other, and seem to exist in different amounts to each other in various projects.

If the inherently interwoven interdisciplinary arts and their various mixtures of references only complicate the ability for differentiation, then the solution is to stick by the receiver-driven model, reaffirming the importance of reception as itself a performative act across the spectrum of artistic practice. The receiver, based on their temperament and their position as a node interlinked with others in the network, is what determines how to contextualize the ambiguously-situated performative work, depending on their own particular affinities. This can be a familiarity or education in sculpture, dance, theatre, music, or other artistic genres, but also class, gender, languages, life experiences, etc. etc. Depending on how these connections are aligned within the individual receiver, a work will be read within different constellations of references and connections, effectively leaving the work of untangling references to individuals (Jackson 2017, 26).

Thinking then towards what this implies for the practice of curating within a receiver-centric paradigm, the argument is that it becomes all the more important to understand the backgrounds, different historical references, and analytical methods of the receivers as well as practitioners/producers, all of whom co-constitute together the event of performance. The point is not the arbitrary connection of disparate nodes, but rather the acknowledgement of the complexity of these networks in order to better operate and intervene in them. As Haraway says, "[n]othing is connected to everything; everything is connected to something"—which can be taken for curatorial practice to mean that its challenge is to understanding the interworkings of affinities and relationships, as well as creating new fictions that hazard new kinds of connections (2016, 31).

Jackson for her part addresses this issue by arguing that it is extremely important when analyzing the interdisciplinary arts field to acknowledge various qualifications that produce "different 'differentials'" (2005, 174). Within these mixed media, knowing what the receiver's boundaries are, and how and why they are transgressed, becomes the only way of establishing common criteria and frameworks.

This means that an understanding of origins, of backgrounds, or expectations, becomes necessary in order to avoid a homogenization of references and an oversimplification of disciplinary histories. A homogenization of this kind would only result in a loss of much discipline-specific knowledge and nuance in practice, and would simply replace it with a drastic reduction in complexity and references. Significantly, and not coincidentally, this corresponds with the work of developing a curatorial responsibility among mediators of artistic practice.

## Jackson's *Rockaby*

Examining an anecdote from Jackson's 2011 book *Social Works* will help further crystalize the idea of context and its constitution as a key actant in determining the perception of artistic practice. In the book's prologue, she describes two different encounters with Samuel Beckett's *Rockaby* (1980) in two different contexts, which produce a perceptual chiasma typical of her work and approach to interdisciplinary arts. The short, one-woman play consists primarily of a woman sitting in a rocking chair, rocking back and forth. Jackson, having been a student of theatre performance studies, describes seeing it once in a darkened theatre, with the concomitant expectation that once the lights went down *something* would occur. She was instead confronted with an unbearable slowness of the work, and in particular a drawn-out too-slow back and forth of the rocking chair. She contrasts this experience with a different encounter years later of the same work, this time at the end of an evening of walking around looking at installative performances. On that occasion, she saw and experienced *Rockaby* as a "moving spectator," and felt at ease with its speed, finding even the rocking chair's movement to perhaps be too fast. (Jackson 2011, 3)

The point is not the factual speed of the rocking, but the split created by the difference in how her "perceptual apparatus was differently attuned," measuring the first from the perspective of theatre, and the second from that of sculpture (Jackson 2011, 3–4). The example illustrates how the receiver is at the centre of determining their relation to an artistic practice, dependent both on their disciplinary background, but also on the constitution of the *performance* of the encounter with the work, or the "theatricality" of the situated confrontation with it.

The fact that the contextualization of *Rockaby* within two different situations can change so drastically how the work is perceived is what is significant here. It shows the porousness of the work, and how it is not in fact some essential whole, but rather something that is constituted in the event by a variety of factors. It shows how tailoring and intervening in the constitution of the event can change the perception of the work. Contained in presentation is the *present*, the durational moment, which is itself an articulation of the conditions that determine its realm of possibility.

As curator Aneta Szyłak argues, the practice of curating must recognize that the virtual preconditions out of which the constitution of the event is articulated, its context, reaches its roots much further than any curator could aspire to realistically grasp. The difficulty for her thus lies in speaking of a context while simultaneously always existing within one, or as has been argued here, being both part of the network and tasked with intervention into it. For her, curating becomes a task of experimenting with how to "productively engage with the context" in a way that activates it and opens the door to new possibilities, new departures (2013, 220).

The context of a curated project, the relations that it establishes with the world, far exceed the intentionality of those who operate within it; any set frame delineating inside and out inherently exists only as a construct that can be subscribed to or not, similar to the proscenium arch's relationship to theatricality, or painting's relationship to borders. However, curatorial practice is about identifying relationships, focusing on the challenge of creating as exhaustive a list as possible of relations, and attempting, with the finite connections one has, to shift and reconnect relations to create space where transformations can take place (Szyłak 2013, 221). Remembering the words of Raqs Media Collective from Chapter 2, curating thus exists in a permanent state of "guilt," meaning that though its approach is bound to fail, the value lies in the effectiveness of the attempt (see section 2.4.2).

Having now established this performative, network-based approach to the receiver's perception, as well as the role of curator-as-mediator to be one node in the network, it is now possible to shift to look more at the development of a particular *savoir-faire* for curating in this interdisciplinary arts space.

### 3.2.2 Jackson's Ten Theses

Before looking at curatorial practices in the fields of dance and theatre in the remainder of the chapter, a final aspect of Jackson's work will be examined which crystalizes a series of ten theses out the initial conversations at many early symposia and conferences that sought to grasp this new and confusing mixed field of performance as it exploded in relevance around the early 2010s. Jackson calls this collection her top ten "occupational hazards" while studying the interdisciplinary arts. The notion that these hazards can be "occupational" is what is meant by the development of a know-how for navigating the interdisciplinary arts: it is a way of flagging that this field, by virtue of its particular characteristics, must develop also specific knowledge about how to successfully navigate its material reality in the realization of the goals set out in Chapter 1 (Jackson 2014, 56). While all are interesting for better understanding the interdisciplinary arts, the four presented here are the most readily applicable to the occupational hazards of curating the performing arts specifically. The following examination will thus serve not only to

present Jackson's arguments, but also to begin to anchor it to problems specifically of performative curating and curating performance.

## "Innovation to Some Can Look Like a Reinvented Wheel to Another"

Beginning with Jackson's fourth thesis, "Innovation to Some Can Look Like a Reinvented Wheel to Another," she explains that within this new reality where disciplinary histories are being mixed and presented to audiences with various amounts of familiarity with a given kind of artistic practice, there arises a danger that "one set of eyes is seeing the reproduction of a tradition where another pair of eyes may have assumed invention," a so-called "hazard of swapped contexts" (Jackson 2014, 57).

The hazard lies in the fact that these practices are easily misunderstood by critics, viewers, and other artists when it is not clear what the focus of their artistic practice is, and made explicit what precise conventions the practice is attempting to either abide by or criticize. Jackson gives the example of artist Andrea Fraser's *Museum Highlights* (1989), which, when viewed as a visual arts practice, are calling the legitimacy of the museum as an institution into question, and when viewed as theatre bear many trademarks of very established theatre conventions: the use of a costume, a script, and a persona, without calling these conventions into question at all (Jackson 2014, 57). The significance of the work is clearly not in its use of a costume and a script, and rather in what it says about how a museum's infrastructure informs what it displays (ibid.). This reading is however dependent on its specific context of the museum of the late 1980s through which it must be viewed in order to function. Doing so requires then a specific kind of pre-existing knowledge of that situation which was most likely possessed by most participants on her tours. This does not mean that one should always take the most empathetic view towards understanding a work, but rather that it must be evaluated within its network of references in order to understand its critical or transformational potential (this also makes intervention and criticism all the more effective and/or trenchant).

## "What Happens When Virtuosity as Technical/Physical Skill Meets Virtuosity as Conceptual/Cognitive Skill?"

Jackson's fifth thesis highlights the tension between two understandings of virtuosity that are used in assessing quality of artistic production in both the visual and performing arts, and which are often confused. These two different understandings of virtuosity revolve around various disciplines' relationships to the conceptual turn of the 20th century. Fields like the visual arts have largely embraced the conceptual turn into their production, placing value on works that explore ideas reflecting on the notion of skill itself. Virtuosity is still an operational concept in the visual arts, but it has shifted to a virtuosity akin to what Paulo Virno identifies as that of the

post-Fordist worker, namely one that is measured by its ability to create the capacity for political action through immaterial production (Jackson 2014, 58; Jackson 2012, 16–17). This can otherwise be described as the ability to explain or articulate an idea or concept, or win an argument through superior rhetorical ability. It is a virtuosity understood as a "critical form of reflection on the parameters and definition of art itself" (Jackson 2014, 58). Contemporary classical music (CCM) on the other hand still values a skill-based approach, and the pleasure of virtuosic skill understood as a kind of exceptionalism, or the demonstration of a high amount of technical know-how or mastery in a specific area, such as on an instrument. Jackson equates this with the "lay" notion of virtuosity, what is still commonly held to be its main definition. For Jackson, "[s]ometimes rigor in the Conceptual sense of virtuosity looks amateur in the lay sense of virtuosity—and vice versa" (2014, 58). The point is that in conceptual virtuosity the *idea* of artistic freedom is being explored and criticized, which is what is virtuosic. *How* this is done is still important, but the technical know-how to actually do it is secondary.

Her point is that these two forms of virtuosity often become crossed. The criticism by an audience member with experience only with CCM, where conceptual work is not well-established, could for instance conceivably be that "anyone can do this," and that it is thus not "real" music because it does not live up to that understanding of virtuosity in the exceptionalist sense (because it takes little lay virtuosity to do). Conversely, an audience member interested more in conceptual virtuosity could criticize a CCM concert for its unquestioning acceptance of a certain assumed ideology or tradition, which is often associated with mastery over that same system. Such is the confusion caused by the mix of these two different kinds of virtuosity.

This once again relates to differences in the training and dispositions of those evaluating works from a variety of disciplines. It means that the works at an evening of student CCM compositions will have a very different relationship to virtuosity and to where they place value than a similar evening of music coming from the Fine Arts department down the hall, who are being trained in a totally different system of values. It should be noted that this observation does not mean that works are or should be carefully siloed, or that the dispositions and evaluation of audiences can or should not be shifted. It is rather a recognition and identification in the first instance of various territories of artistic practice.

## "Suspiciously Over-Skilled"

Jackson's two points so far can be read as examples of how to increase the sensitivity of the practice of performance curating to the nuances in artistic production that exist within the inter-performing arts field in which it acts. With her seventh thesis, she raises the point that intentional forms of mis-contextualization can help

fulfil the material goals of the institutions which house these practices while being detrimental to the artistic practices themselves. She for instances references the argument by Sabine Breitwieser that much of the current interest of museums in programming dance is as a way of "bringing back what some people are missing in the contemporary visual arts, namely, beauty and skills, which reappear in the form of perfect and perfectly controlled bodies" (Breitwieser 2014, 287).

After so much conceptual art has attempted to subvert these categories, they become reintroduced into the museum in the guise of programming works from another artistic discipline. Dance, less unwieldly than performance art, becomes a kind of trojan horse for sneaking the spectacle of beautiful bodies back into the museum—a space that has since the 1960s sought to profile itself as representing protest and the fostering of counter-hegemonic ideas, as seen in Szeemann's Documenta 5 (see section 2.3.1 ).

This is what can be called a contextualization by curators in bad faith, meaning that it goes against the ethical compass of curatorial responsibility set out in Chapter 2. The problem is that aspects of the artistic practice are emphasized that serve to increase visitor numbers to the museum through the staging of an "event," but the danger lies in when this event becomes one of pure spectacle, in other words a commodification of experience in order to meet visitor number targets rather than to engage with the material itself.

Art historian Claire Bishop offers an example of this in action: she presents the example of the recent interest in programming performance, and particularly dance, for the MoMA NYC's atrium. Bishop relates the instance of a 2012 performance of an adaptation of Jérôme Bel's *The Show Must Go On* (2001), where dancers dance as they would at a party to a slew of pop songs (e.g. David Bowie's *Let's Dance*, 1983). The group is made up of a mix of amateurs and professionals, which invite the audience to consider issues surrounding the skilling and disciplining of dancers' bodies. For Bishop, the work needs a proscenium stage and the connotations of theatre that accompany it in order to frame the tension between skill and lack of skill, between audience entertainment and anticlimax. In the MoMA, the work "played into all the worst tendencies of museum-as-spectacle," as the work devolved into "a carnival of local stars performing the 'best of' Bel's work for their peers, while the general public craned to look on from the upper levels" (Bishop 2014b, 65).[2]

2 The New York Times' Claudia La Rocco concurred with this assessment of Bishop's. Her detailed review of the performance for the paper ends with the line "The crowd certainly seemed pleased. But pushed or provoked? Not by this bonbon." ("Stars and Amateurs, Both Hamming It Up: Jérôme Bel's 'Show Must Go On' at MoMA," New York Times, 22 October, 2012).

*The Show Must Go On* was effectively transformed from a critical examination of the skilling of the dancer's body and the role of audience entertainment (delivered through pop hits) and its negation into a spectacle in its own right. This change was brought about not through a drastic change in the work (though it was shortened) but rather through a shift in its context, one that did not *care* to attempt to adapt the work's central question to a radically different context and by extension set of connotations. What happened instead was that the work became complicit in producing empty entertainment serving the museum's need to boost visitor numbers irrespective of content.

This can be the more negative side of interdisciplinary artistic practice. When works are placed within new contexts, there exists the possibility that, through the unsuitability of the venue or audience for the work, it become instrumentalized for goals other than its own, such as here with the MoMA's inadequate staging of Bel's work. There is an inherent difficulty in identifying such situations because these presentations happen almost by definition there is a lack of knowledge about the artistic traditions that they are coming from.

## "Live Art and a Living W.A.G.E"[3]

Jackson's tenth thesis espouses the importance of not losing sight of the importance of fair working conditions within the interdisciplinary arts space. She argues that the broader societal shift to a service economy, also having its effect on the arts, takes on a very different status in the traditional performing arts then it does for other forms of artistic practice.

She points out that the immaterial labour of the performing arts "have been in existence long before the experience-based economy discovered them," and because they have recourse to such a history, may also offer "resources beyond those that reify the 'Society of the Spectacle,'" forms of resistance engrained in their traditions (Jackson 2014, 55). She gives the examples—from theatre—of tours, repertoire, and unionization, which allow for workers to "avoid the itinerant destiny of … working in a temporary form" (Jackson 2012, 22). Problematically, as forms of performance in particular more away from their established spaces, place new demands on performers, and encompass new kinds of practitioners, conversations about working conditions become extremely important, as hard-won established models are frequently inadequate in responding to these situations outside of their traditional purviews.

These various non-standard forms of performance raise many new challenges in regards to basic working conditions for the performing arts as well: The concrete floors highly valued in the white cube are anathema to dancer's bodies; they

3 The acronym stands for Working Artists and the Greater Economy, a New York-based nonprofit.

also provide horrendous acoustics should any sound be needed. Marathon performances often have trouble addressing the requirements of performers, who often cannot perform for eight hours in a stretch without risking injury or needing to go to the bathroom—such a length of time also exceeds e.g. the standard shift length for musicians, posing a challenge to providing fair compensation without overrunning costs or simply ignoring former norms. Perhaps most fundamentally, project-based work is on the one hand much more flexible, allowing initiators the freedom to put together an ensemble of performers based on the particular skills needed for a piece, but on the other a threat to job security because of its predisposition towards short-term contracts that tend to also skimp on employee benefits and social security. In experimenting with formats for presentation, these considerations must also be taken into account, in order to not allow for exploitative and unfair working conditions to creep into a field that has historically been at a high risk of falling prey to them.

The situation is of course never one or the other; this interdisciplinary arts space can offer new opportunities for financing performance, such as the selling of documentation (not usually done by most performing artists, save professional musical recordings), or the notion of "collecting" performance.[4] When approached with the aforementioned understandings of the dangers of instrumentalization, and of non-standard forms of performance undoing hard-won improvements in the working conditions of performing labourers, then the interdisciplinary arts space can be an interesting area for experimentation with performing arts practices.

Taking Jackson's thoughts on the inherent performativity of the encounter with the art object as a starting point, this section has argued that a receiver-based model of artistic perception is the most adequate for navigating the many lacunae of interdisciplinary practices. It allows for a navigation of this field that can respond to the idiosyncrasies of each particular case, which due to the nature of this field are mixed and many. It also avoids having to systematize an approach to heterogeneous practices, which would not adequately serve the material at hand.

Her approach provides an effective framework for considering these fields curatorially, as it too also works at the nexus of so many other connections. The focus on the performative event of encounter, be it with an art work or a performance of *Rockaby*, is also significant, in that it highlights the *performative* aspect of curatorial practice, as a practice directly involved with assembling and influencing some subsection of the factors that come together to constitute the event of performance.

The next sections will explore curatorial practice in the fields of dance and theatre respectively. Particularly in this now heavily transdisciplinary context, Jack-

4 As has been done for instance with the works of Tino Sehgal, which have been collected by for instance the Guggenheim and the M+ Collection.

son's theses on navigating the interdisciplinary arts will in this regard also help with locating important concepts within the various fields, and locate also their historic relationships to critical knowledge creation. What remains to be explored then is *how* exactly different performing arts have been converging into an intermixed model, as well as how the concept of curating has become an important endpoint for organizational practices (such as choreographer, dramaturg, or composer) in different ways in different fields. Though the observed trend is towards a mixing of disciplines and a convergence in interdisciplinarily-oriented institutions, discrete histories and medium-specifics inform this convergence, and should be preserved in the interest of fostering a rich interdisciplinary field, rather than one overdetermined by e.g. the dogma of the visual arts.

## 3.3 Curating Dance / Dance Curating

This examination of the emergence of curatorial practice in the field of the performing arts starts with dance. Dance is a particular case due to the infatuation of museum curators with dance in recent years for various reasons that will be examined. It therefore offers if not the closest direct relationship with museum curating, then certainly the most theorized, as well as an interesting illustration of interdisciplinary exchange often falling along the lines of disciplinary background: marked differences in the interpretation of dance in the museum often seem to fall along the lines of disciplinary affiliation.

Surveying the relationship between curatorial practice and dance will be the beginning of creating a conceptual foundation for theorizing curatorial practice in music. By examining the ways in which the philosophical goals of curatorial thinking interact with the realities of dance history and dance practice, insights into the particularities of performing arts practices more generally can begin to be drawn. The issue is not just how the concept of curatorial thinking from Chapter 2 looks when applied to dance, but rather also how the specificities of dance practice themselves inform, change and interact with this thinking as well.

### 3.3.1 Dance is Hard to See

> "Dance is hard to see" (Yvonne Rainer quoted in Lambert-Beatty 2008, 1)

André Lepecki, in the introduction to a reader on dance, identifies five aspects of the practice that can help orient the discussion on its relevancy, namely "ephemerality, corporality, precariousness, scoring, and performativity." He argues that the