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Landscaping the gaze in Norwegian visual art and Grieg’s Op. 66 folk songs

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The nineteenth century witnessed a revolution in visual experience through technological advances and radical social changes that shaped, as Jonathan Crary claims, a ‘new kind of observer’ and a ‘new subjective mode of vision’.¹ The development of a modern visual culture was underpinned by the rupture of vision from the ‘realist strictures’ that had persisted since the Renaissance.² Although realist representation, through the use of mimetic codes, continued to exist in visual art, such as paintings and photography, the modernist breakthrough was manifested by the increasing abstraction of vision and the liberation of a viewing subject from a fixed or stable spatial referent.³ Mass visual culture, which comprised a fast shifting consortium of material artefacts ranging from paintings and photography to optical devices, operated more directly on the body of the experiencer and created a sense of realism that was actually produced through the abstraction and reconstitution of optical experience.⁴

In 1888 the first diorama exhibitions took place in Christiania, the capital of Norway now named Oslo, which boasted the first purpose-built diorama building. As Gunnar Iversen recounts, the person behind this historic event was Wilhelm Otto Peters, whose most notable diorama

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¹ Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1990), 1-24 (esp. 3, 5, 6 and 9). See also Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, ‘Visual Culture’s History: Twenty-First Century Interdisciplinarity and its Nineteenth-Century Objects’, in Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (eds.), *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), 3-15.

² Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 4. For a definition of modern visual culture, which encompasses both material artefacts and the dynamic processes of social experience, see Michael L. Wilson, ‘Visual Culture: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis?’, in Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (eds.), *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), 26-34.

³ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 1-24 and 112-14. See also Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 131-80 and 211-40.

⁴ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 7 and 9.

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3 paintings included the 'Lyngenfjord' (1888), 'Romsdalen' (1891) and 'Jotunheimen' (1892).⁵ As their
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5 names suggest, these dioramas depicted the rural Norwegian landscape and continued to capitalize
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7 on the grand theme of national Romanticism which had been expounded since the early nineteenth-
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9 century by leading Norwegian landscape artists such as Johan Christian Dahl. Peters's first diorama
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11 painting, the 'Lyngenfjord', depicted an itinerant man staring into the spectacular distant mountains,
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13 illuminated by the shimmering light of the midnight sun, and portrayed the symbolism of the lone
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15 wanderer amidst the awe-inspiring Nordic wilderness.⁶ In 1892 another diorama company opened,
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17 this time in Trondheim, Norway's third largest city. Although not much information survives about
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19 the two diorama companies, exhibitions continued throughout the early 1890s. The Norwegian
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21 dioramas attracted large crowds and were a popular form of public entertainment and education.⁷
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23 Unlike the allegedly static two-dimensionality of landscape paintings, dioramas supplied a more
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25 immersive and multisensory bodily experience, and facilitated the close-up encounter with remote,
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27 inaccessible locations.⁸ The changing lighting conditions used to illuminate the diorama, which
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29 emulated different times of the day (dusk, dawn or midday), re-animated the landscape with
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31 extraordinary realism and exposed the observer to the temporal unfolding of landscape views and
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33 images. As a type of optical illusion device, dioramas exemplify the modernist repositioning of the
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35 observer outside of the fixed relations of space and time, which Cray and other scholars have
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45 ⁵ Gunnar Iversen, 'Inventing the Nation: Diorama in Norway 1888-1894', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 9/2
46 (2011), 123-29 at 124 and 128. As Iversen explains, dioramas, panoramas and small cosmoramas had been
47 exhibited in Norway since the early nineteenth century; however, these were landscape paintings of foreign
48 places. It was not until the late 1880s and early 1890s that Norwegian diorama buildings and paintings were
49 created.

50 ⁶ Ibid. 125-26. According to Iversen, none of Peters's original diorama paintings have survived. For some, like
51 the 'Lyngenfjord', we know what they depicted from reproductions in souvenir programmes.

52 ⁷ Ibid. 124-25.

53 ⁸ A painting can still implicate the perceiver both temporally and spatially in the way he or she pays attention
54 to particular points of the scene in succession, thus putting together a narrative with a temporal dimension.
55 Paintings invite the observer to move around them and inside the depicted scene. Landscape paintings assert
56 the 'fiction of an arrested moment' by enfolding the beholder within this dialectical tension of time arrested
57 and a successive temporal narrative. See Anne Leonard, 'Picturing Listening in the Late Nineteenth Century',
58 *The Art Bulletin*, 89/2 (2007), 266-86 at 270.

identified as pivotal to the transformation of visual experience.⁹ By blurring the boundaries between an external reality, its representation, and internal sensation in the observer, these visual encounters with the landscape subverted the traditional strictures of realism.

The compositional genesis of Grieg's 19 Norwegian Folk Songs, Op. 66 (written between 1891 and 1897), is contemporaneous with the late nineteenth-century diorama exhibitions in Norway,¹⁰ and the work bears specific geographical links with the Norwegian landscape—the Jotunheim mountains where Grieg and his friend Frants Beyer encountered and collected these folk songs. These piano arrangements present a curious, dreamlike sound world and are permeated by a musical discourse which often verges towards temporal-spatial displacement and a sense of tonal decentredness. In Grieg's Op. 66, the original folk songs are styled by a strikingly rich harmonic idiom which, as previous commentators have long observed, invariably effectuates a 'veiled tonality'.¹¹ Even the composer himself had admitted, specifically about this work, the alluring mystery of the harmonic possibilities afforded by Norwegian folk music, and alluded to constructing a 'dream world' with these piano pieces: 'The realm of harmony has always been my dream world [. . .] In my arrangements in Op. 66 [. . .] I have tried to give expression to my sense of the hidden harmonies in our folk tunes'.¹²

In this article I investigate how the music's allusion to a hidden or veiled realm in Grieg's Op. 66 corresponds with broader social-cultural precedents and practices of the experience of the Norwegian landscape through contemporary visual culture. As a set, these pieces, possibly more than any other of Grieg's folk-based compositions, can be approached through the hermeneutic lens

⁹ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 24 and 112-14, and Schwartz and Przyblyski, 'Visual Culture's History', 3-14.

¹⁰ Although Grieg does not mention in his diaries or letters that he had visited any of the diorama exhibitions, this need not prevent us from considering contemporary visual art in general as a relevant interpretative framework for his music.

¹¹ Finn Benestad and Dag Schjelderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: The Man and the Artist*, trans. William H. Halverson and Leland B. Sateren (Lincoln NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 335.

¹² Finn Benestad *Edvard Grieg: Letters to Colleagues and Friends*, trans. William H. Halverson (Columbus, Ohio: Peer Gynt Press, 2000), 229. In a recently published study, Benedict Taylor explores the development of Grieg's late-Romantic tonal practice as epitomized by Op. 66, offering a theoretical systematization of Grieg's musical language; see his *Towards a Harmonic Grammar of Grieg's Late Piano Music: Nature and Nationalism* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, RMA Monographs, 2017).

of the transformation of nineteenth-century visual experience, especially the type of sensory engagement it afforded. Optical illusion devices, like the aforementioned Norwegian dioramas, created, as David Clarke and Marcus Doel put it, 'a voyage through the abstract fabric of space and time'.¹³ This coincided not only with technological innovations but also more fundamental changes in subjectivity and the relationship between seer and seen, self and other, and, ultimately, the conscious and unconscious.¹⁴ The particularly short length of the majority of the Op. 66 pieces with their suggestive titles lends a strong visual orientation to the set, which, by resembling shifting vistas, shares strong parallels with the centrality of landscape image flows that became abundant during this period in Norway through material visual culture. Their heterogeneous texture potentially alludes to an observer encountering different landscape views or images and experiencing different moods created by the affectivity of the rural terrain, as Grieg would have experienced during his trips to the Jotunheim mountains or as visitors at the diorama exhibitions would have done. Yet, the ambiguity of the musical discourse and the propensity for regressing into a distant realm, conceal symbolisms, allegorical meanings and deeper psychological states beyond the pictorial referentiality of the set. Although Grieg's Op. 66 has received attention in recent scholarship,¹⁵ these less accessible layers of latent meaning still require further critical interpretation and necessitate tracing connections between the subjectivity that Grieg's music constructs and its wider contemporary cultural context. The ambivalent sound world of Op. 66 compels us to interrogate what might lie beyond an apparent reality, such as a jolting folk tune, a melancholy lullaby or a miniature mood picture. Similar tensions between illusion and reality, as I will discuss, can also be traced in contemporary visual culture, and emanated from the changes in realist representation that challenged the epistemological certainty of an external truth as accessed

¹³ David B. Clarke and Marcus A. Doel, 'Engineering Space and Time: Moving Pictures and Motionless Trips', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 31 (2005), 41-60 at 41.

¹⁴ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, and Vanessa R. Schwartz and Jeannene M. Przyblyski (eds.), *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2004).

¹⁵ See Daniel Grimley, *Grieg: Music, Landscape and Norwegian Identity* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, 2006), and Taylor, *Towards a Harmonic Grammar of Grieg's Late Piano Music*.

through vision and visual means. In this article I use nineteenth-century visual culture as a critical hermeneutic framework to re-envision indexical aspects of the listening experience in Grieg's Op. 66. By considering close parallels between visual and musical representations of the Norwegian landscape, I examine how these art forms, but especially music, function as a revelatory medium of ostensibly hidden truths and psychological dispositions beyond the immediately visible.

Since the Norwegian landscape in the nineteenth century was enacted and consumed through different media and materials, its experience through music, I propose, was part of a broader current of performative culture. If a new subjectivity of modern vision emerged from a plurality of means of recoding an external reality, the observer was encouraged to create connections between different media and, consequently, between different domains of experience, such as visual, aural, spatial and kinaesthetic. A performative approach to meaning, as the one that underlies the broader scope of my investigation, shifts the focus away from seeking a strict homologous mapping between signifier and signified, or in this case musical and cultural texts. Performativity, instead, places emphasis onto more nuanced matters of experience that foreground a phenomenology of meaning in embodiment, materiality and agency.¹⁶ Material things, whether these are the materials of the physical landscape, of a musical composition or the material properties of an optical device, have a form of agency that prompt the human body to enter into a social relation with them. For example, the arrangement of the objects in a painting may elicit the impression of perspective and depth inviting the spectator to wander in the depicted scene, the invocation of distance through musical means in a composition may encourage an immersive way of listening, or the size of a small, hand-held photographic box may prompt its user to bring it closer to their eyes and engage more intimately with it. This view that art works and objects have agency

¹⁶ See, for example, Karen Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward and Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Signs*, 28/3 (2003), 801-31 at 802, and Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 3rd edn. (New York: Routledge, 2013), 123-70. Performativity, as Schechner asserts, is hard to pin down in a single definition, and often the term is used to describe how meanings emerge from socially construed interactions in real-life contexts. Many aspects that define human behaviour and quotidian existence, such as identity, race or gender, are performative constructs; in other words, these are socially constructed, or socially performed, through every-day practice and discourse.

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3 extending beyond their bounded surface to impact on a perceiver or recipient is now a well-
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5 accepted tenet in humanities and social sciences discourse.¹⁷ Undoubtedly, we can neither speak of
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7 the nineteenth-century observer as a single entity nor assume that material visual culture during this
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9 period was a homogenous medium. For this reason, my discussion, and use of selected examples
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11 from visual culture, does not seek to delineate a strict chronological narrative. Given the fast shifting
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13 consortium of representational practices and the increasing mobility and exchangeability of optical
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15 media, the nineteenth-century observer might be more profitably conceived as a 'distribution of
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17 events located in many different places' and sites of experience; in other words, visual experience
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19 became reconfigured through a form of distributed agency between a human observer and material
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21 visual culture.¹⁸
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27 **Visual representations of the Norwegian landscape: Towards a performative iconography**

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29 Throughout the nineteenth century, perceptions of the Norwegian landscape underwent a
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31 significant Romantic re-evaluation as part of a broader cultural shift that elevated the Norwegian
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33 landscape and mountain-scape to emblems of national-cultural difference and essential vessels of
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35 spirituality and health. Both Daniel Grimley and Annika Lindskog concur that this rediscovery of the
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37 local landscape had a dual purpose. First, it served individual benefit since the rural landscape
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39 provided an indispensable site of recuperation, reinvigoration and creative wellbeing. Second, the
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41 landscape helped to re-focus collective national pride by functioning as a cultural signifier of political
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43 independence.¹⁹ Nineteenth-century discourses pertaining to the importance of the Norwegian
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45 landscape implicated the exchange between individual experience and narratives of collective
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47 identity. Grieg's life and creative output strongly encapsulate this cultural-aesthetic dialogue.
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52 ¹⁷ See, for example, Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), and Tim Ingold,
53 'Materials against Materiality', *Archaeological Dialogues*, 14/1 (2007), 1-16.

54 ¹⁸ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 6. Although Crary does not use the term 'distributed agency' *per se*, this is
55 strongly implied in his discourse.

56 ¹⁹ Grimley, *Grieg*, and Annika Lindskog, 'Composing Landscapes: Musical Memories from Nineteenth-Century
57 Norwegian Mountain-Scapes', *Landscape History*, 34/3 (2013), 43-60.
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Grieg was an ardent devotee of the Norwegian landscape favouring especially the western region of Norway during his lifetime—the area known as Jotunheimen.²⁰ The western Norwegian landscape represented for Grieg a form of *Körperkultur*, and he frequently rejoiced in the jubilation of the unique physical and spiritual wellbeing that he experienced there.²¹ Writing to his friend Frants Beyer on 9 February 1891 Grieg remarked: ‘Therefore: to the mountains, to the mountains! There alone is the cure’.²² During excursions to this area Grieg came into direct contact with folk music which provided an inspiring resource for composition.²³ In their 1887 walking trip to the Jotunheim mountains, Grieg and Beyer encountered a herding girl, Susanne, who played for them the goat horn, a small instrument which only has three notes. Grieg transcribed the simple but hauntingly beautiful melody he heard and later used it in the *Ku-Lok* song in his song cycle *Haugtussa*.²⁴ In his letter to the Danish composer Niels Ravnkilde on 17 October 1887, Grieg gave an animated description of this particular trip to the Jotunheimen:

. . . I must tell you about one marvellous, clear sunny August day amid the Skagastøl range. . . . Two farm girls appeared on the mountain pasture . . . they offered to lead us over the mountain. . . . When the girls bid us farewell . . . Frants and I stood absorbed over the beautiful scene as we watched them wander along the mountain edge . . . with the blue horizon as background—suddenly they

²⁰ Lindskog, ‘Composing Landscapes’, 50-1.

²¹ The *Körperkultur* movement (literally translating from the German ‘body culture’), as Grimley discusses, was a broader phenomenon across other North European countries. The promotion of physical health was linked to a nationalist ideology for preserving, often through reviving, folk customs and country-side activities, such as mountain walking. Grimley, *Grieg*, 70-1.

²² Benestad, *Letters to Colleagues and Friends*, 63.

²³ The notion of direct contact with folk music is not an ideologically neutral one. Contact between Western art music and folk cultures may invoke the idea that folk music’s authenticity and purity are due to its geographical isolation and separateness, while the processes of cultural transmission and cross-fertilization have invariably been perceived through a hierarchical system of Western colonial appropriation. Such ethnocentric prejudices, however, have long come under sustained scrutiny in ethnographic discourse. See, for example, Margaret J. Kartomi, ‘The Processes and Results of Musical Culture Contact: A Discussion of Terminology and Concepts’, *Ethnomusicology*, 25/2 (1981), 227-49.

²⁴ Grimley, *Grieg*, 79-81.

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3 stopped, Susanne set the goat's horn to her mouth— . . . and we heard a gentle,
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5 melancholy sound, as if from the mountains around us.²⁵
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8 Apart from the strongly visual narrative, Grieg's full account conceals deeper feelings of nostalgia, a
9
10 sense of his own creative isolation and an acute sensitivity to the disembodied quality of the goat
11
12 horn's enchanting sound emerging from the mountains.²⁶ Elsewhere Grieg describes the Hardanger
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14 region in western Norway in vivid anthropomorphic terms, where 'the waterfalls' immense
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16 symphony can be heard, the glaciers shimmer, the air is filled with an aroma . . . and the whole
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18 existence is like a fairy-tale.²⁷ Such written testimonies of private experiences attest to the
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20 corporeal existence of the landscape in terms of the images, sounds, smells or memories impressed
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22 upon the sensibility of the beholder. Although these episodes relate specifically to Grieg, they
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24 exemplify a broader signifying practice; the role of vision and visual representation in both the
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26 construction of the viewer's subjectivity and narratives of collective identity. Vision is a culturally
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28 and historically mediated practice, and a mode of perception which is synaesthetically in tune with
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30 the other senses; although in the Western philosophical tradition of the Cartesian mind-body split,
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32 vision has been afforded a special status in the way we tend to describe experiences. The filter of
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34 vision, moreover, inevitably becomes a politicized act, whether operating directly or through the
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36 faculty of memory. Simon Schama, in his seminal work, 'Landscape and Memory', sets nature and
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38 culture as building closely on one another, especially through the power of memory.²⁸ In the context
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40 of landscape functioning as a cultural-national ideology, what is depicted or described as being
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42 present or absent from the Norwegian landscape and its experience has consequences for the
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44 construction of personal and collective identity. In 1891 Grieg travelled again to the Jotunheim
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46 region with his friends Beyer and the Dutch composer Julius Röntgen, and it was here that he
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53 ²⁵ Finn Benestad, *Brev i utvalg 1862-1907*, vol. 2 (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1998), 225. Translated by and cited in
54 Grimley, *Grieg*, 80.

55 ²⁶ Grimley, *Grieg*, 79-80.

56 ²⁷ Letter to August Winding dated 28 June 1896, in Benestad, *Brev*, vol. 2, 279. Translated by and cited in
57 Grimley, *Grieg*, 69.

58 ²⁸ Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Harper Collins, 1995).

encountered the singing of another peasant girl, Gjendine Slaalien. Many of the folk songs she and others sang were captured in transcriptions by Beyer, which Grieg used later for his Op. 66 folk-song piano arrangements. The last piece in the set, 'Gjendine's Lullaby', Op. 66 No. 19, is a reflective epilogue that bears her name. The trip also provided inspiration for other piano compositions, such as the Op. 54 *Lyrical Pieces*.²⁹

Representations of the Norwegian landscape in nineteenth-century material visual culture, such as paintings, photographic images and optical illusion devices, often depicting unspoiled wilderness and overpowering monumentality, contributed greatly to the collective narrative of nature's significance in defining Norwegianess and inventing the nation. Yet, as Iversen critically observes, the centrality of visual culture in the creation of Norwegian nationalism has been rather overlooked by influential theorists of nationalism, most notably Benedict Anderson, who have privileged language and print media instead.³⁰ Prominent Norwegian artists, such as Hans Gude or Johan Christian Dahl, took their easels to the country side to capture the beauty and ethos of the Norwegian landscape and mountain-scape, thus not simply responding but helping to actively construct the significance of rural life in a nationalist context.³¹ Pastoral scenes, with or without human presence, served not only as Romanticized images of the sublime, bewildering, nostalgic or erotic but also as realist ethnographic studies of the nation. Celebrated paintings of the Norwegian landscape include Adolph Tidemand and Hans Gude's joint work, 'Bridal Crossing in Hardanger' (1848), Johan Christian Dahl's 'View from Stalheim' (1842) and Thomas Fearnley's 'The Old Birch Tree at the Sognefjord' (1839) among many others.³² Pioneering photographers, among them Knud Knudsen and Marcus Selmer, who were active during Grieg's lifetime, also captured the rural

²⁹ Lindskog, 'Composing Landscapes', 53, and Grimley, *Grieg*, 92-3.

³⁰ Iversen, 'Inventing the Nation', 123. For Benedict Anderson's brief reference to Norwegian nationalism rooted in the construction of a new Norwegian language, see his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd edn. (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 75.

³¹ On the visual arts as a type of national art, see Athena Leoussi, 'The Ethno-cultural Roots of National Art', *Nations and Nationalism*, 10/(1/2) (2004), 143-59, and Timo Huusko, 'National Art and the Nation of Artists in the Nordic Countries', in David Jackson (ed.), *Nordic Art: The Modern Breakthrough, 1860-1920* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2012), 197-206.

³² For these and other examples, see Torsten Gunnarsson, *Nordic Landscape Painting in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Nancy Adler (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 79-115.

landscape and its ethnographic character in their work. As Sigrid Lien discusses, photography in Norway played a major role in the crystallization of a 'nationally anchored pictorial rhetoric'.³³ Visual depictions of the Norwegian *sæter* (the mountain pasture) and of the monumentality of fjord mountains in both paintings and photography became a popular theme in representations of Norwegian cultural identity in the second half of the nineteenth century, alongside other pastoral topics such as the folk wedding to which a number of Grieg's piano compositions are indebted. Optical devices based on landscape paintings, such as the diorama, cosmorama and panorama, provided another popular medium for the dissemination and consumption of landscape in nineteenth-century Norway.³⁴ Norwegian dioramas, as already outlined in my introduction, intentionally depicted natural pre-modern rural landscapes as part of re-awakening national ethos, and offered a journey through both space and time: from industrial to pre-modern times. Relations of space and time were being radically transformed under the spell of modernity and modernization. Optical illusions also circulated in the form of smaller portable peep-show boxes, stereoscopic viewers, stereo cameras and photograph display boxes.³⁵ Figure 1 shows a wooden photograph display box equipped with a roll of pre-loaded stereo photographs and turning wheel mechanism. Although this particular box is tentatively dated to the early twentieth century, given that the format of the stereo cards and internal mechanism are akin to that used by the firm 'Atelier KK and Knudsen

³³ Sigrid Lien, 'The Wild Duck and Other Stories: The Discourse of Photography in Nineteenth-Century Norway', *Konsthistorisk tidskrift/Journal of Art History*, 74/2 (2005), 82-95 at 87. Photographs by Marcus Selmer and Knud Knudsen are held in the Picture Collection, University of Bergen Library (*Universitetsbiblioteket i Bergen*, accessible through <http://www.uib.no>) and the National Museum of Photography, Preus Museum, Oslo. A search in Norwegian using 'Knud Knudsen Jotunheim' or 'Marcus Selmer Landskap' on the University of Bergen Library site www.uib.no/ub yields many digitised images of their photography depicting landscape views from the Jotunheim and Hardanger regions of Norway. I am grateful to Nina Lager Vestberg for bringing these digital collections to my attention.

³⁴ Iversen, 'Inventing the Nation'.

³⁵ Many such objects have survived and are held in collections at the Preus Museum, Oslo, the Norwegian Museum of Technology, Oslo, and the Picture Collection, University of Bergen Library. From personal communication with curators Hanne Holm-Johnsen (Preus Museum) and Marthe Tolnes Fjellestad (the Picture Collection University of Bergen Library), between October 2016 and January 2017. For an indicative sample of stereo photography artefacts, see <http://preusmuseum.no/eng/Discover-the-Collections/Our-history-of-photography/Stereoscopy> (accessed 10 April 2017).

& Co', devices of a similar concept had been in circulation much earlier and were used to demonstrate stereoscopic images to the public.³⁶

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1. (a) Photograph viewer box (approx. 60 X 20 cm); (b) close-up of viewing screen and turning wheel; (c) roll of stereo cards. Reproduced by kind permission of the Picture Collection, University of Bergen Library, photo by Morten Heiselberg.

Photography radically altered the observer's relationship to the experience of truth. Stereoscopic imaging, in particular, uprooted nineteenth-century visual experience to a viewing position of closeness and greater tangibility coupled with the illusion of perspective and depth.³⁷ Hand-held optical devices re-animated the experience of remote, inaccessible locations, creating a more personal and haptic encounter with the distant landscape. Apart from the search for a distinctly national iconography, the evolving tradition of optical landscape devices across Europe and the Western world at large, as Veronica della Dora concedes, was fuelled by modernity's increased ocularcentrism and changing attitudes to visual experience, the fascination for travel to the mysterious spell of distant lands, and the anticipation of modern transportation and accelerated connectivity.³⁸

By the later part of the nineteenth century, the popular view of the Norwegian landscape and mountain-scape as 'sublime temples of nature' and emblems of cultural identity was not underpinned solely by a Romantic nationalism but was also promulgated by the anti-urbanist reaction to the emerging modern city-scape with depictions of Nordic nature functioning as strong

³⁶ From personal communication with Marthe Tolnes Fjellestad, 9 January 2017.

³⁷ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 59, 118-26 and 129-36.

³⁸ Veronica della Dora, 'Putting the World into a Box: A Geography of Nineteenth-Century Travelling Landscapes', *Human Geography*, 89/4 (2007), 287-306 at 288. Similar positions on modernity's ocularcentrism are also echoed in Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*; Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918*; Schwartz and Przyblyski, *The Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture Reader*; and Clarke and Doel, 'Engineering Space and Time'.

counter-images to modernity.³⁹ Urban middle-classes travelled to the mountains to escape the hassle of city life. For those less able to afford this luxury, the distant landscape travelled to urban centres in the form of visual art, including landscape paintings, diorama contraptions and photography, as well as in the form of music inspired by the sights and sounds of the rural landscape and amenable to public consumption. Grieg's piano miniatures fulfilled the latter role. The *Lyrical Pieces* are permeated by mountain melodies and other topics or gestures drawn from the Norwegian landscape, while the piano arrangements Opp. 17 and 66 and the peasant dances Op. 72 are based on actual vocal and instrumental folk tunes respectively. Representations of the landscape also travelled in other ways, such as written accounts of oral testimonies, illustrated newspaper and periodical articles, postcards, text books and atlases.⁴⁰ Landscape representations, therefore, formed part of a broader mobile material performance of cultural identity, and in the context of urbanization and modernization these objects served a dual purpose: popularizing the folk and folklorizing the urban masses. Escapist, pastoral topics in paintings, photography and other popular illustrations, come under the rubric of modernity since these media constructed the rural as an object, or social group, for urban spectatorship and consumption.

Through circulating material visual culture, the Norwegian rural landscape functioned both as an idealized *topos* of primeval existence in the search for ethnocultural roots and the construction of collective national identity, and as a mode of escapism from the realities of modern life. The performativity of the rural pre-modern landscape was enacted in the tension between landscape as a distant geographical entity—accentuating landscape as an object of desire hidden from the immediate field of vision—and landscape as re-imagined, lived-in experience in a present moment through the consumption of material visual culture. In the given historical context, which firmly places responses to the Norwegian landscape within a multiplicity of cultural practices, the

³⁹ Lindskog, 'Composing Landscapes', 44, and Peter Nørgaard Larsen, 'With and Against the Modern: Nordic Counter-Images to Modernity', in David Jackson (ed.), *Nordic Art: The Modern Breakthrough, 1860-1920* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2012), 207-15.

⁴⁰ della Dora, 'Putting the World into a Box', 288.

performativity of visual experience invites us to engage with more than one analytical mode. As Vanessa Schwartz and Jeannene Przyblyski assert, the recognition that ‘textual utterances and visual artefacts are the material residues of social performances encourages us to pursue comparative readings which transgress disciplinary boundaries’.⁴¹ Visual culture is not merely a collection of objects but adumbrates the social processes of the relationship between the seer and the seen, and prompts a critical questioning of the ways in which we inhabit and make sense of visual images and the phenomenal world at large.⁴² Material visual culture is enmeshed in quotidian existence, and as a category of analysis and criticism inevitably expands the purview of art historical approaches, which gravitate more strongly towards aesthetic value judgements rather than issues of meaning and experience, to encompass other modes of inquiry. Psychoanalytic approaches offer a way to read images and the viewer’s predisposition towards imagery as manifestations of covert meanings that can reveal hidden dispositions linked to the primordial stages of human existence. In Grieg’s Op. 66, the music’s propensity to adumbrate a distant sound world and a state of regression into the past renders these pieces suitable material for such a hermeneutic framework, although inevitably its use in the space of this article is largely heuristic in scope.

Through the looking glass: Lacan and the constitution of the self

In a world of increasing abstraction and illusion, as mediated by modern visual culture, the subject has to come to terms with the reality of the image’s unreality in order to progress towards, and gain access to, some level of truth. For Jacques Lacan, illusion is ubiquitous in the world of sense perception. Illusion and the realm of the imaginary are integral to Lacan’s theory of ego-building; the process by which a sense of selfhood is constructed through the identification of oneself with the other.⁴³ Whereas for both Lacan and Freud, ego-theory is based on the quest for the primordial in

⁴¹ Schwartz and Przyblyski, ‘Visual Culture’s History’, 5-6.

⁴² Wilson, ‘Visual Culture: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis?’, 27.

⁴³ Malcolm Bowie, ‘Inventing the ‘I’’, in id., *Lacan* (Cambridge MA.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 17-44 at 32-3.

human experience, Lacan situates that primordially in the infant's 'mirror phase' which shapes the subject's visual perception beyond infancy into adulthood and throughout life.⁴⁴ The mirror stage is the identification of the self as 'I'—the child staring bemused at its image and grasping 'this is me'—and constructs the infantile ego as fundamentally dependent on external objects, an 'other' or 'others'. The mirror phase is formative to the individual's progress towards the mature social and linguistic self, but heralds the impending rupture, or alienation, of the infant from its mother—the infant's first object of desire and also first identification with an 'other'.⁴⁵ The mirror image symbolises the constitution of the self (the 'I') as the subject's projection of itself onto the phenomenal (social) world, but at the same time prefigures the subject's alienation through the harbouring of those illusions and phantasies that the mirror image induces and which become part of the subject's ambiguous relation with the world.⁴⁶ The child's delusion with its image, which triggers the initial impulse to self-identification, sets in operation the mechanisms that will affect all subsequent acts of visual perception. In a picture, therefore, the viewing subject, which includes the artist, tends to search for a reflection of their ego in the wholeness of the perceived thing, and to be intrigued by the illusions of that picture just as the child is joyfully bemused with the lure of its image at the mirror phase. But the reflected ego is also fabricated by the phantoms of desire that were triggered by the inevitable separation from the mother around the time of the mirror stage. These phantasies and desires that besiege the adult ego have their roots in the sphere of infantile existence.

Lacan elaborates on visual perception as a process of self-identification and a locus of desire through the concept of the gaze. For Lacan, beyond appearance—beyond what is immediately apparent to the path of vision—lies the gaze of the other.⁴⁷ Any pictorial image is not an inert

⁴⁴ Ibid. 33 and 36. The original essay by Lacan, as discussed in Bowie, is titled 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience' (1949).

⁴⁵ Ibid. 17 and 21-2.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 24-5.

⁴⁷ Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller and trans. Alan Sheridan (London and New York: Karnac, 1977), 103.

surface traversed by the eye in only one direction, but an interface that ‘looks back’ at us through the gaze of both animate and inanimate objects located in it. To look at something would imply only a single source of agency—the onlooker—but the returning gaze, which is often hidden, effectuates the introjection of being looked at by another. This is what Lacan means by the ‘antinomic scopic field’: the gaze in the picture becomes the subject of representation to ‘me’ the observer, while ‘I’ the observer reciprocally turn into an image under the scrutiny of the gaze.⁴⁸ For art works, the gaze also belongs to the artist. The gaze of the ‘other’ is revealed obliquely through a distorted or elusive object (*objet a*), which serves as a symbol of desire for something that is lacking, lost or repressed (*minus-phi* [- ϕ]) in the observing subject. For Lacan, following Sigmund Freud, *minus-phi* (- ϕ) corresponds to unfulfilled (sexual) desire, because ‘absence always enters into a relation with desire’.⁴⁹ The gaze is always presented to us through a play of ambiguity or an illusion (*trompe-l’œil*), and as spectators we are drawn into any picture that fosters a ‘lure’ or ‘trap for the gaze’.⁵⁰ This propensity towards a play of ambiguity is triggered at the infant’s mirror phase as manifested by the infant’s enjoyment with the lure of the mirror. Lacan uses imagery to do psychoanalytic work and his writings make frequent references to, or analogies with, visual art. He specifically discusses the pulsatile revelation of the gaze in terms of the oblique object in Hans Holbein’s painting of 1533 ‘The Ambassadors’.⁵¹

Landscape paintings, too, confront the Lacanian dialectic of appearance and its beyond. In the context of nineteenth-century Norwegian nationalism in visual art, the realism of landscape paintings is seemingly rooted in the visible but seeks to express something beyond it—the yearning for another time and place, an idyll rural past which stands for an object of desire (*objet a*). Within the movement of national Romanticism, the portrayal of nature’s realism was not confined to strict fidelity to external forms, such as topographical exactitude, but was underpinned by the artist’s

⁴⁸ Ibid. 106 and 109.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 103-5 and 108 (quotation at 108).

⁵⁰ Ibid. for Lacan’s elaboration of these terms see esp. at 89, 96, 102, 104 and 112.

⁵¹ Ibid. 88-9.

impulse to subvert that reality. This was at the core of the aesthetic ideals of German Romanticism, which leading Norwegian landscape painters, such as Johan Christian Dahl, had been influenced by through their training or residency in Germany. Dahl, who taught Fearnley and whose paintings later inspired Peters's diorama paintings, was part of the Dresden circle.⁵² Within nineteenth-century discourses of landscape painting, as James Herbert expertly confers, the materiality of the paint and the artist's brushstroke were some of the key expressive means through which nature's realism was conveyed with artistic volition.⁵³ Similarly, the composer constructs a sonic canvas and captures impressions of the landscape through their particular harmonic palette and artistic persona. The experience of the landscape, thus, emerges from the subjective qualities that the artist and viewer project onto its representations.

In what follows, I will consider how Norwegian landscape painting from this period does not function merely as realist depiction but as a medium of revelation, and I will explore common themes in Grieg's Op. 66 discussing how the music constructs the 'listening gaze' in the way it reveals an ostensible 'other' obliquely. David Schwarz uses the analogy of 'listening look' and 'listening gaze', and although, as he concedes, there are no strict musical equivalents to Lacan's eye/gaze binary, Schwarz explains the 'listening gaze' as the 'music listening to us'.⁵⁴ Since the gaze both absorbs and returns the look, this implies the agency of (or in) the music to construct a particular subject position. My use of the term 'listening gaze' refers to those qualities in the music that reveal an alternative scenario, a hidden 'other', or a concealed object of desire. A growing number of musicological studies have drawn from the psychoanalytical theories of Lacan, and the range of approaches is undoubtedly diverse.⁵⁵ Although as Kenneth Smith concurs, a systematic

⁵² Gunnarsson, *Nordic Landscape Painting*, 88-9 and 94.

⁵³ James D. Herbert, *Brushstroke and Emergence: Courbet, Impressionism, Picasso* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

⁵⁴ David Schwarz, *Listening Subjects: Music, Psychoanalysis, Culture* (Durham NC. and London: Duke University Press, 1997), at 17 and 97.

⁵⁵ For selected examples, see Schwarz, *Listening Subjects*, and id., *Listening Awry: Music and Alterity in German Culture* (Minneapolis MN. and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Lawrence Kramer, 'Chopin at the Funeral: Episodes in the History of Modern Death', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 54/1 (2001), 97-125; Michael Klein, 'Chopin Dreams: The Mazurka in C# Minor Op. 30, No. 4', *19th-Century Music*, 35/3

Lacanian methodology for analysing tonal, or post-tonal, music is yet to be evidenced in musicological discourse, certain Lacanian concepts share a close homology with compositional strategies. Specifically, Lacan's notion of desire can be mapped onto the rules of tonal grammar pertaining to the organisation around the tonic.⁵⁶ For Lacan desire operates within the symbolic order constituted by language, and since music is a type of language its rules can express unfulfilled desire and longing when tonic resolution is not conventionally satisfied.⁵⁷ While the primary impulse of psychoanalysis is to trace the individual's regression into the past as a means of elucidating their specific pathology, it can also make inferences about the broader social-cultural determinants that modulate the individual's state. The premise of the ensuing discussion is that by examining how the beholder's subjectivity is constructed in Norwegian landscape visual art and Grieg's music, we may trace how the individual's self-identification (here the artist's) with the 'other' relates to a wider cultural condition: a collective gaze that looked at the Norwegian landscape as a place of origins.

Gazing at the landscape and the phenomenology of beyond appearance

In Fearnley's the 'Old Birch Tree' (Fig. 2a), two solitary figures, with their backs turned to the observer, are enfolded by the affective landscape which is drenched in the soft golden glow of the evening light. The painting elicits a sense of abstraction since we cannot know exactly where the two figures are looking or what sounds they are hearing, while being at once near and far away merge seamlessly. The picture also plays tantalisingly with the theme of an epic past shining through solitude and absence. At first glance, the composition looks relatively empty and devoid of action. The setting, however, conceals great national-historical significance since it depicts the Hydnes burial mound on the shore of the Sognefjord which is where King Sverre fought triumphantly in the

(2012), 238-60; Charles Dill, 'Rameau avec Lacan', *Acta Musicologica*, 80 (2008), 33-58; Carolyn Abbate, 'Opera or the Envoicing of Women', in Ruth Solie (ed.), *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (Berkeley CA.: University of California Press, 1993), 225-58.

⁵⁶ See Kenneth Smith, 'The Tonic Chord and Lacan's *Objet a* in Selected Songs by Charles Ives', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 136/2 (2011), 353-98.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 354-58. Although as Smith points out, desire can be articulated musically through other parameters besides harmonic discourse (at 357).

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3 battle that won him the crown of Norway in 1184.⁵⁸ The protruding shape of the mound and its
4
5 central position do not fail to capture the spectator's eye. While the picture appears to suppress
6
7 time or action, through the portrayal of tranquillity and stillness, the mound 'reveals itself' as an
8
9 enigmatic object, an ostensible *trompe-l'œil*, which stands for something else—historical time.

10
11 Landscape painting is not merely a depiction of the physical world but also a manner of
12
13 engaging the human body and the senses with the scene—an expression of feeling and being in that
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15 space. The musical representation of landscape also entails an embodied response to invocations of
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17 space and time. In seeking to move beyond the opposition between 'the naturalistic view of
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19 landscape as an external backdrop to human activities and the culturalistic view that landscape is a
20
21 symbolic ordering of space', Tim Ingold approaches landscape from what he calls a 'dwelling
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23 perspective': how the landscape is 'constituted as an enduring record . . . by the lives and activities
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25 of past generations who have dwelt within it'.⁵⁹ Consequently, to perceive the landscape is not
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27 merely a case of calling up external images, or their internal mental representation, but actually to
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29 'carry out an act of remembrance . . . engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself
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31 pregnant with the past'.⁶⁰ In Grieg's Op. 66, the treatment of the folk material often invokes the
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33 memory of an antique sound world positing landscape as a pre-modern dwelling. Plagal cadences
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35 that deny the decisive leading-note pull of the dominant to the tonic, incomplete triads, hymn-like
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37 textures in unison or parallel thirds (e.g. Nos. 7 and 12), decorative cadential suspensions recalling
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39 church hymnody (e.g. No. 18, bb. 2-3, 8-9 and 17-18), and other archaic stylisations such as the
40
41 *tierce de Picardie* (e.g. No. 4, b. 22, No. 12, b. 12 and No. 15, b. 51) frequently emerge through the
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43 more ambiguous diatonic-modal mixtures, effectuating a kind of *trompe-l'œil* by alluding to
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45 something beyond the present.
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55 ⁵⁸ Gunnarsson, *Nordic Landscape Painting*, 100-2.

56 ⁵⁹ Tim Ingold, 'The Temporality of the Landscape', *World Archaeology (Conceptions of Time and Ancient Society)*, 25/2 (1993), 152-74 at 152, and a similar argument permeates Schama's *Landscape and Memory*.

57 ⁶⁰ Ingold, 'The Temporality of the Landscape', 152-53.

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

Figure 2. (a) Thomas Fearnley's 'Old Birch Tree at the Sognefjord' (1839), oil on canvas, 54.5 X 66 cm, photo by Frode Larsen; (b) Johan Christian Dahl's 'View from Stalheim' (1842), oil on canvas, 190 X 246 cm, photo by Jacques Lathion. Both images are available in the public domain through the Norwegian National Museum, Oslo.

Paintings like Fearnley's the 'Old Birch Tree' stimulate reflection on a disguised historical past by drawing the perceiver to inhabit the scene and adorn it with other figures, historical or invented.⁶¹ Similarly, characteristic musical styles and topics alluding to an epic past, such as bardic gestures or an action-driven narrative that index balladry, stimulate acts of cultural memory by enticing the listener to inhabit a landscape which has borne the deeds and stories of others. The penultimate piece in Grieg's Op. 66, which is the longest in the set, 'Jeg gaar i tusind Tanker' (I Wander with a Thousand Thoughts), resembles a small ballade and alludes to an epic oral genre that is indigenous to the landscape.⁶² Op. 66 No. 18 begins with a rhapsodic rising arpeggio figure, and although it has a solemn *religioso* character it is imbued with a lot of internal drive in the way it grows texturally and through dynamics. In this piece, the listening gaze is potentially manifested in the wandering harmonies which evince a narrative of something lost yet not easily found, as the words of the folk song indicate (Ex. 1c).⁶³ Folk ballads are stories with a retrospective character.

⁶¹ This is a point Thomas Grey also makes about landscape paintings, see his 'Tableaux Vivants: Landscape, History Painting and the Visual Imagination in Mendelssohn's Orchestral Music', *19th-Century Music*, 21/1 (1997), 38-76 at 56.

⁶² A lot of ballad tunes survived in church hymnody, as the one Grieg used for his Op. 24 piano Ballade. For further discussion on the oral and written transmission of ballads, see, for example, David Atkinson, 'The Ballad Revival and National Literature: Textual Authority and the Invention of Tradition', in Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin (eds.), *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 275-300, and Joep Leerssen, 'Oral Epic: The Nation Finds a Voice', in Baycroft and Hopkin (eds.), *Folklore and Nationalism*, 11-26.

⁶³ Frants Beyer's transcriptions are held in The Grieg Archives, Bergen, Norway. I am grateful to Jorunn Eckhoff Færden for making these transcriptions available to me for my research. The hand-written text accompanying Beyer's transcription of song No. 18 reads: *Jeg gaar i tusind Tankar, og elsker den jeg ei kan faa. Skjønt jeg i glæden vanker, stor sorg jeg bare maa. Stor sorg var det, jeg deg ei fikk, som jeg har havt saa kjær. Men mange falske mennesker dertil, var sorgen er.* 'I walk with a thousand thoughts, and love the one I cannot have. Although I in joy wonder, great sorrow I must. Great sorrow there was, I did not get you, who has been so dear

While the music appears to be centred in D major it persistently makes detours through secondary dominants, exploiting especially the mediant relations of F sharp major and B minor/B major (III-VI). The first cadence in bar 5 (Ex. 1a) is an elusive stepwise approach to the mediant, F sharp major, via a decorated subdominant (IV-III). We could also hear this gesture as a flattened supertonic in F sharp major ($\flat$ II-I), which is an obscure species of plagal cadence. Elsewhere the presentation of a dominant is not immediately fulfilled by the corresponding tonic, but the latter is often delayed through the interpolation of other harmonic progressions both diluting the gravitational pull of the dominant and suspending its resolution. In the second strophe, for example, F sharp major is stated in bars 22-23 setting up the expectation of B major/minor which is not properly reached until bars 28-30 (Ex. 1b). In the intervening stretch of music harmonic gestures of arrival are enacted via the V-I movement in D major (bb. 23-24 and 26-27) but any sense of a true home is blurred by another intermittent resounding of F#⁷ that resolves to B minor (bb. 27-28). The B major which is reached via a diminished seventh chord in bar 29 is immediately shaded with a momentary chromatic tinge of D sharp minor prior to becoming a B major seventh chord on the last beat of bar 30 anticipating the key of E. Although E minor is stated in passing on the third quaver beat of bar 31, an E centre is never adequately fulfilled only partially implied in bar 34 by the E pedal in the bass whilst a D major triad is superimposed on top as the music sways back to D major again. These unfulfilled, or partially fulfilled, mediant relations suspend the narrative action befitting the wandering ambience of this piece. While the third strophe in Op. 66 No. 18 culminates in a *fortissimo* climax at bars 57-58, it finishes in a reticent manner with a progressive *diminuendo* and *ritenuto* framing an oblique approach to the final tonic via a plagal cadence (IV-I); a quasi-religious gesture that leaves something to be desired in its fading trail.

to me. But many false people there, what sorrow is'. (It is unclear what exactly 'many false people' refers to, but it could be an allusion to a distant reminiscence or even ghostly visions.) I am grateful to Angela Shury-Smith for assistance with translating the text.

[Insert Example 1 about here]

Ex. 1. Grieg, Op. 66 No. 18, 'Jeg gaar i tusind Tanker': (a) bb. 1-5; (b) bb. 18-35; (c) Beyer's transcription reproduced by kind permission of the Grieg Archives, Bergen Public Library.

For Ingold, whose ultimate aim is to overcome the persistent dualism between object and subject, material and ideal, etic and emic, the landscape is not merely a collection of symbolic representations of nature, or a picture to be surveyed by the beholder's eye. Landscape as a 'domain of our dwelling is within us . . . becomes a part of us, just as we are a part of it'.⁶⁴ John Wylie, too, concurs that the distinction between 'looking at' the landscape and 'inhabiting' is a tenuous one since observation is an act of inhabitation.⁶⁵ This notion of landscape, as embodied, lived-in experience, puts emphasis on the temporality of landscape. Temporality is intrinsic to lived experience. As Ingold further explains, temporality and historicity merge since each event 'encompasses a pattern of retentions from the past and protensions for the future'.⁶⁶ The temporality of the landscape is manifested in the 'activities of those who carry forward the process of social life': those indigenous to the landscape and those who are not, the craftsman and the perceiver alike, the composer who draws from folk materials and the performer and listener who co-create and co-inhabit the composition.⁶⁷ The landscape, therefore, is experienced through the merging of social and chronological time. Whereas chronological time is purely quantitative and goal directed, social time is fundamentally qualitative and psychological—it makes detours and can be ensconced in memory entering the realm of nostalgic contemplation and retrospection. Music effectuates the temporalizing and sociality of the landscape as embodied, lived-in experience. Through the passage of musical events, the gathering of the past into a present projected onto the future and the historicalization of chronological time, we experience social time in music not as mere

⁶⁴ Ingold, 'The Temporality of Landscape', 154.

⁶⁵ John Wylie, *Landscape* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 4-5.

⁶⁶ Ingold, 'The Temporality of Landscape', 157.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

observes but as participants. Concerning a temporalizing process in Op. 66, while the individual pieces might appear like disjointed miniature vistas, there is a sense of growth and accruing time throughout the set. Longer arrangements are located in the second half of the set alluding to a process of expansion.⁶⁸ The narrativizing technique of 'leaping and lingering' can be traced across numbers invoking a continually changing trajectory of action moving forward or held back respectively.⁶⁹ Motion and action mark time. Long sustained pauses at the end of pieces, such as Nos. 1, 6, 8, 14 and 15, effectuate lingering gestures which expand clock time into expressively resonant moments that enfold the listener. Elsewhere, *attacca* indications, such as at the end of Nos. 4, 7, 9 and 12, denote leaping onto the next piece, and additional tempo changes from *Andante* to *Allegro* across or within pieces elicit more contrasts (although the precise expressive effect of these markings is dependent on performance interpretation).

In another iconic painting, Dahl's 'View from Stalheim' (Fig. 2b), the local and the distant co-exist as nationalist exemplars of pastoral life. Dahl conjures up a sense of awe by combining the raw wilderness and striking monumentality of the imposing mountains in the distance with solitude, serenity and the realism of social life—the village community and herding activities which were at the core of rural existence. In this painting, depth is accentuated by the alternation of lighter and darker colours and the visual assemblage is endowed with enough detail to entice the onlooker's attention away from the grandiose mountains that frame the picture. In the middle, a small village is illuminated by the patch of sunlight and poeticized with colourful local detail drawn from the ethos of Norwegian folk life. As Torsten Gunnarsson notes, 'the multiplicity of detail invites the viewer to wander around the landscape . . . and to discover a picture within a picture'.⁷⁰ Grieg emulates this technique musically in the Op. 66, which can be heard as a sonic travelogue recounting a succession

⁶⁸ This process is not unique to Op. 66 but can be found in earlier works, especially Grieg's piano ballade Op. 24 where it is exploited more fully.

⁶⁹ Leaping and lingering is a characteristic technique of the ballade genre. See James Parakilas, *Ballads Without Words: Chopin and the Tradition of the Instrumental Ballade* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1992), 46, 52 and 66. Although in Op. 66 we cannot speak of a fully-fledged narrative plot in terms of thematic transformation and development, a narrative causality could still be invented by the listener thus creating a continuous scene throughout the set.

⁷⁰ Gunnarsson, *Nordic Landscape Painting*, 91.

of small picturesque moods as Grieg himself would have encountered on the Jotunheim mountains. Throughout the set, the alternation of darker, dissonant or mellow modal pieces (e.g. Nos. 3, 6, 9 and 19) with brighter or more fully diatonic ones (e.g. Nos. 10, 16 or 18), emulates in sonic form shifting scenery views or patches from a landscape canvas. As the listener relives the artist's point of view, they are made aware of a continually changing visual orientation, which resembles the progressive revelation of the landscape as might have been experienced through other artefacts, such as photographic images or a set of myriorama cards.⁷¹ This type of experience also corresponds with the modernist breakthrough in visual culture which redefined the very act of looking by dissociating it from any notion of a fixed referent or a unitary viewing position. As Grimley concedes, Grieg's music is less concerned with exact pictorialism but instead seeks to evoke a sense of abstraction, disorientation and even alienation.⁷² Alienation implies isolation, but in Lacanian thought it also denotes the subject's confrontation with the illusions and phantoms of the (infantile) past, which are triggered at the mirror phase and are perpetuated as fears, anxieties or even frightful dreams in later life. I will consider both notions of alienation in what follows.

Concerning the first meaning of alienation, Dahl's realism in 'View from Stalheim' evokes a sense of solitude and isolation in the manner it deflects the relation between the subject ('I') and the gaze ('other'). To the bottom right of the painting a herding girl, turned sideways from the viewer, looks into the distance thus not returning the spectator's gaze. None of the miniscule human figures look directly at the viewer, something which is commonplace in landscape paintings, and the populated landscape can feel surprisingly empty. Paintings that return the beholder's gaze effectuate an act of interpellation by making the viewer aware of themselves. Portraits or miniature eye lockets are a prime example of evoking this subject position.⁷³ For Lacan the relationship between seer and seen is negotiated between the conscious and unconscious, the 'I' and the

⁷¹ della Dora, 'Putting the World in a Box', 293-94.

⁷² Grimley, *Grieg*, 55-8 (and throughout ch. 2).

⁷³ See Hanneke Grootenboer, 'Treasuring the Gaze: Eye Miniature Portraits and the Intimacy of Vision', *The Art Bulletin*, 88/3 (2006), 496-507 at 497.

symbolic 'other'. The subject not only sees but can also be seen from a number of vantage points that belong to the dominion of the 'other' and upon which the subject depends for its constitution but cannot lay direct claims to.⁷⁴ The invocation of open spaces, as in landscape paintings, asserts the intimacy with oneself: the subject can look all they like but they are not seen, or challenged, by the gaze of others. A propensity towards empty spaces is underpinned by what Lacan designates 'the pacifying . . . the abandonment, the laying down, of the gaze'.⁷⁵ Dahl's composition ostensibly effectuates the 'pacifying gaze' by revealing *objet a* through the substitution of an apparent space (a depicted inhabited landscape) for an 'other' more distant *topos* beyond the immediately visible (a primeval landscape, perhaps, devoid of humans). This 'other' provides an unthreatening realm for the gaze to reside in, countering the challenges of modernity impelled by the compression of time and saturation of space. I would like to suggest that similar substitutions of an apparent (pictorial) place for an 'other' imaginary, distant or abstract space of enduring timelessness, which operate in Grieg's Op. 66, can be understood as evocations of the 'pacifying gaze'. As Grimley has already remarked, although not in connection with the Lacanian gaze *per se*, the musical discourse of the opening *kulokk*, Op. 66 No. 1, which characterizes the set, effectuates a strong sense of 'withdrawal into a remote distance created by the tune's melodic, dynamic and harmonic shape'.⁷⁶ The abstract pictorialism of the fourteenth song, 'I Ola-Dalom, i Ola-Kjønn' (In Ola Valley, in Ola Lake), recounted by the submerged sound of ringing bells and mountain echoes, also stands for something beyond appearance: loss, enchantment, nostalgia and memory.⁷⁷ The final number, 'Gjendines Bådnåt' (Gjendine's Lullaby), Op. 66 No. 19, with its *pianissimo* dynamics throughout, its *quasi*-monodic repetitive melody centred on *g'*, and the softly cradling rhythms recedes, again, into a distant sound

⁷⁴ Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts*, 72 and 106.

⁷⁵ Ibid. 101.

⁷⁶ Grimley, *Grieg*, 95-7 at 97, and for a more recent analytical reading of the sound world of the first *kulokk*, although still rather heavily indebted to Grimley, see Taylor, *Towards a Harmonic Grammar of Grieg's Late Piano Music*, 1-5.

⁷⁷ For further discussion of the plausible hermeneutic readings of this piece, see Grimley, *Grieg*, 105-8, and for a follow-up analytical commentary of the same piece see also Taylor, *Towards a Harmonic Grammar of Grieg's Late Piano Music*, 48-54.

world of seeming childhood reverie, rounding off the set with a pacifying tone similar to how it started.

The dreamscape of lullabies and the displeasures of alienation

Apart from the feeling of solitude, alienation also denotes the remorse of separation from the mother. A maternal presence, which signifies an object of desire, can be represented in various figurative forms in both painting and music. In Dahl’s pastoral assemblage, while the viewer might be freer from the imminent visual field of others they are still seen by the symbolic ‘other’ constituted by the gaze of nature itself, if we are willing to attribute anthropomorphic qualities to the mountains that frame the picture. The two larger shapes in the centre allude to a maternal figure in the manner they resemble female breasts; a voluptuous maternal bosom which is also a sign of fertility. The propensity to envision nature as a ‘fecund mother’ is a pervasive cultural metaphor for human origins and a condition of pre-subjective primitiveness.⁷⁸ In the picture, an implied human primordially is engulfed by the maternal bosom of nature. This connection between nature and human becomes symbolic of the dyadic relationship between mother and infant, and of the development of the self as a fully constituted social and sexual being through the (m)other.

The Op. 66 finishes with a reflective lullaby which sonorously enacts the image of mother and child. Lullabies are intended to be sung at the infant’s cradle and are associated with a maternal presence and the mother’s soothing voice. In her study of nineteenth-century cradle songs and lullabies, Karen Bottge explores how a musically enacted maternal presence is a powerful means of

⁷⁸ See Steven Adams and Anna Gruetzner Robins, ‘Introduction’, in id. (eds.), *Gendering Landscape Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 1-12 at 2. Landscape paintings construct gendered sites of looking. In the nineteenth century, sight and the spectator’s gaze were predominantly domains of male power, since looking signified a sexualised, masculine authority. In the context of Norwegian nationalism, a gendered discourse was enacted in visual art in the manner paintings or photography often captured the *sæter* girl, or pasture maid, dressed in picturesque traditional costume and engaged in agricultural activities. These images projected the ideal of a feminized ‘pure’ landscape and represented the productivity and fecundity of rural places. Although a nationalist naturalism persisted in landscape art, by the turn of the twentieth century female figures were increasingly depicted occupying other spaces in the modernist construction of womanhood. For further discussion, see Nils Ohlsen, ‘Women’s Rooms: An Aspect of Nordic Interior Paintings’, in David Jackson (ed.), *Nordic Art: The Modern Breakthrough, 1860-1920* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2012), 217-23.

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3 acculturation, mediating the child's introduction in the world. For the infant, whose hearing
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acculturation, mediating the child's introduction in the world. For the infant, whose hearing precedes the sense of vision, the mother's sonorous presence is the permeable membrane that stands between the external social milieu and the infant's inner world, the conscious and preconscious, the acculturated and the pre-linguistic.⁷⁹ The mother's voice acts as a comforting blanket of sound that surrounds and protects the infant, providing a safe space for first experiencing (auditory) intimacy and pleasure.⁸⁰

In Op. 66 No. 19, the repeated opening four-bar phrase creates a stable sonorous environment and evinces a primitive-sounding discourse (Ex. 2). The simple melodic gesture, comprising only four pitches (g' , $f_{\#}'$, a' and b_b') in step-wise configuration, resembles infantilized vocalizations. The harmonization maintains close spacing of the inner and lower voices, constructing a safe, intimate envelope around the melody. The regularly oscillating tonic, dominant and subdominant harmonies are enveloped by the rich resonance of a sustained tonic pedal in the lower register. This soothing sonorous space symbolises the containment, protection and nurturing of the infant by the mother figure. Since the piano arrangements do not retain the lyrics of the original folk songs, the absence of any words in this musical setting reinforces the retreat from the symbolic order, which is normally constituted by the subject's appropriation of language, and the regression to a pre-linguistic realm. But the phenomenal sensation of comfort set up in the opening eight bars is interjected by elements of displeasure in the second strophe, which potentially allude to the distress of the nurtured ego. The octave in the right-hand part at the beginning of the second strophe (bar 9) creates a break from the previously snug harmonic spacing and exposes the falling fourth in the melody as a remorseful cry. The dotted rhythm emphasises the d'' , the highest-pitched gesture in the melody, but the persisting *pianissimo* tone lends this shriek a subdued, almost repressed, quality. The harmonic context elicits further anxiety through the lack of resolution. The augmented sixth chord on the first beat of bar 10 sets up the expectation for a dominant (D major),

⁷⁹ Karen Bottge, 'Brahms's "Wiegenlied" and the Maternal Voice', *19th-Century Music*, 28/3 (2005), 185-213 at 187.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 187-8.

only to give way to another augmented sixth (French type), which harbours the dissonance of a tritone between tenor and alto ($a_b - d'$). Resolution to the dominant (D major) is again denied in bar 11; the augmented sixth chord on the first beat arrives at a diminished triad while the movement in the bass exposes, again, a dissonant tritone ($e_b - A$). Although, given its spacing, we could hear the chord on the second beat of bar 11 as an implied dominant seventh in G minor, the absence of the root (D) creates ambiguity between dissonance and anticipated resolution, thus further articulating the ambivalence between comfort and discomfort. The dynamic intensity reaches its highest point in the entire piece at these moments of unresolved tension in bars 11 and 16. The regularity of the four-bar phrase scheme set up in the opening is inflected in the second strophe with slightly more extended phrase gestures of five and seven bars. The return of the comforting sound of the tonic pedal in the last three bars now accompanies the gradually fading melody that lingers on a' , although the anticipation of the tonic is ruefully deflected by the chromatic hovering in the inner voices.

[Insert Example 2 about here]

Ex. 2. Grieg, Op. 66 No. 19, 'Gjendines Bådnåt', bb. 1-20.

As the Op. 66 set concludes its journey of melancholy sound, it takes the listener back to a state of motherly comfort revealing a world of pre-subjective origins into which one might seek to escape the realities of adult life. But subtle disturbances in the lullaby's sound envelope also expose the transient nature of this maternal haven, harbouring the reminder of the inevitable remorse of separation from the mother. While the pacifying gaze of the last song in Op. 66 potentially constructs a subject position where the solitary viewer stares contemplatively into the distant mountain-scape, the visual encounter with the natural landscape also becomes a metaphorical confrontation of the primal fear of separation from an object of desire—the (m)other.

Other lullabies in the set also conceal elements of displeasure beneath an ostensibly placid state of infantile regression. In Op. 66 No. 6 'Lok og Bådnåt' (*kulokk* and children's lullaby), tonal ambiguity is evident from the beginning dispensing a mood of defamiliarization and lack of fulfilment (Ex. 3). The starting note in both the melody and bass is e''/e' and the imperfect cadence in E major in bar 5 gives the feeling of an E centre. The melody, however, winds around a' on the strong beats and this opening phrase gesture could also be heard as a dominant upbeat in A minor. In the *Allegro* phrase, an A minor home is implied but not firmly established. The undulating drone-like sixths in the bass articulate an A pedal but dissonant tritones in bars 6 and 8 (e.g. $f - b'$; $g_{\sharp}' - d''$; $d' - g_{\sharp}'$) and bars 7 and 9 (e.g. $A - d_{\sharp}$; $d_{\sharp}' - a'$) evoke an uncanny instability to the up-tempo rhythmic movement. The tritone has long been described in music theory as an abstruse dissonant species, and in certain musical contexts can create tonal defamiliarization evoking a sense of the weird, strange, magical and even the uncanny.⁸¹ In the *Più lento*, the D centre implied by the sustained pedal in the bass is deflected by the grittily accented parallel tritones in the tenor and alto ($c' - f_{\sharp}'$; $c_{\sharp}' - g'$), while the harmonic rhythm alternates incessantly between D^7 and a half diminished seventh chord. The perfect cadence in D major across bars 18-19, though via a partially formed A^7 chord lacking the fifth, offers a refreshing respite to the repetitive dissonance. The *Andante cantabile* is a reharmonized version of the opening tune, now featuring an extended chromatically descending bass line (from a to B). Tonal ambiguity ensues as the harmonic motion articulates diminished seventh harmonies (bar 25), a German augmented sixth (bar 26), adjacent unresolved seventh chords (F^7 and D^7 in bar 27) and other passing dissonance (bar 27), culminating in a sustained, but again unresolved, B^7 chord with decorative 6-5 appoggiatura in bar 28. The entire sequence is repeated an octave higher in *pianissimo* tone effectuating a distant echo. The final approach to the key of B major (bar 35) is articulated via a decorated plagal cadence. The dynamic shaping of this phrase affords another

⁸¹ For an exploration of tritones in a specifically Griegian context, see Wojciech Stepień, 'Musical Categories of the Uncanny in Edvard Grieg's "Troll Music"', *Studia Musicologica Norvegica*, 38 (2012), 46-64.

interpretation. Given that the loudest moment is the F^7 chord on the first beat of bar 32, this harmonic gesture, which marks the flattened dominant of B major, becomes suggestive of a distant tonic-dominant relation. The F^7 chord is also the Neapolitan of the subdominant. What appears to be a dominant seventh of a notional E tonic (B^7 in bar 33) is transformed into the actual tonic at the end. Whichever listening scenario predominates, what is clear is that a familiar tonal centre is obscured, almost hidden from view, and only revealed obliquely. The transposition of bar 34 an octave lower off-sets the otherwise smooth stepwise movement across bars 33-35, and the final return to a tonal home is deflected both harmonically and registrally. Arriving in B major potentially also reconfigures the memory of the opening of the piece by recasting the function of bar 5 as a plagal cadence in B major which foreshadows the ending.

[Insert Example 3 about here]

Ex. 3. Grieg, Op. 66 No. 6, 'Lok og Bådnåt', bb. 1-35

In this lullaby and *kulokk* the psychological dimension of alienation—the subject's confrontation with the illusions and phantoms of the infantile past—is coupled with a sense of the uncanny. In his essay, 'The Uncanny', Sigmund Freud defines the uncanny (*unheimlich* in German) as something that 'belongs to all that is terrible—to all that arouses dread and creeping horror; [and although] the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, it tends to coincide with whatever excites dread'.⁸² The German word *unheimlich* is the opposite of *heimlich* which commonly means 'familiar' or 'belonging to a home'. But the etymology of *heimlich*, as Freud traces in his essay, reveals a crucial ambivalence. Among its many definitions, that include 'the enjoyment of a home', 'homely comfort', 'the familiarity of dreams as in a cradle-song', is the following: 'concealed, kept

⁸² Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny (1919)', in Benjamin Nelson (ed.), *On Creativity and the Unconscious: The Psychology of Art, Literature, and Religion* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 122-61 at 122.

from sight so that others do not get to know about it'.⁸³ The true meaning of *heimlich*—what is familiar—emerges from this ambivalence in signification until it finally coincides with its exact opposite—*unheimlich*. In other words, everything is uncanny, and excites fear or dread, that 'ought to have remained hidden or secret and yet comes to light'.⁸⁴

The title of Op. 66 No. 6, 'Lok og Bådnåt', refers to a children's lullaby intimating the symbolism of dreams which are revealed only with the eyes of the unconscious. The words in Beyer's hand-written transcription read: Now Per must shut his eyes, now young Per must sleep.⁸⁵ But when a young child goes to sleep, the prospect of shutting the eyes and the impending darkness can create fear and a state of anxiety.⁸⁶ What exactly happens during sleeping remains unknown and secret until it comes to light through the recollection of dreams, but any recounting of dreams inevitably blurs reality and fantasy. The 'Lok' part of the title refers to a *kulokk*, which in Nordic folklore is a high-pitched vocal cry that was used to call the animals across the mountainous pastures. This peculiar type of song is also characterized by an eerie affectivity because in Nordic culture it was bequeathed well-nigh mystical status linked with bewitchment and the supernatural.⁸⁷ *Kulokk* songs were used by the *sæter* girls not only to communicate with the animals or with one another across distance but also to tell stories about the dangers of the Norwegian landscape, which is a dark and treacherous place inhabited by spirits, fairies, trolls, sprites and all sorts of grotesque and frightening creatures. Young Per's dream world seemingly conceals something dreary. Resounding sinister gestures, in the shape of repetitive tritones created between the repeated melodic fragments and the ostinato-like accompaniment in bars 6-23, evoke uncanny disturbances to the sweet reverie of the lullaby tune heard in bars 1-5 and 24-35.

⁸³ Ibid. 125-28.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 130-31.

⁸⁵ *No maa han Per lukka Augo igjen, no maa han vesle Per sova.*

⁸⁶ In Freudian psychoanalysis, the anxiety connected with the eyes and the fear of not being able to see runs deeper into the fear of castration and the loss of a vital body part. Both organs, the eye and the male penis, are critical not only for survival but also pleasurable experience. Freud, 'The Uncanny', 137.

⁸⁷ Beryl Foster, *The Songs of Edvard Grieg* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1990), 3-4.

The compulsion for repetition in the middle passage of the piece affords several interpretations. Repetition, even in short bursts as exploited here, gives the impression of something mechanical in operation, an automaton perhaps, blurring the distinction between an animate or inanimate object.⁸⁸ Grieg often uses repetition of short motifs in compositions referring to supernatural or grotesque creatures like trolls and goblins.⁸⁹ In the context of this lullaby, automatism could also be linked to children's inability to distinguish sharply between living and lifeless objects, since children habitually attribute animate qualities to lifeless things, such as a doll or a puppet, which are associated with mechanical, repetitive motion. Although the music is not overly frightening, a sense of the uncanny—the strange and unfamiliar—is evoked by the uncertainty whether the particular figure alluded by this lullaby is something real or unreal, be it a dreary creature of Nordic folklore or a childish toy. Musical repetition has another psychological dimension. According to Freud, the uncanny implicates the compulsion for repetition because something which is suppressed in the unconscious usually recurs in other, often frightening, guises in a person's consciousness. Childhood fears, for example, often return as unpleasant dreams, visions or feelings during adult life. This form of the uncanny 'is in reality nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged by the process of repression'.⁹⁰

Against brushstrokes of tonal defamiliarization and automatism the dreamscape of this curious lullaby, Op. 66 No. 6, vacillates between reality and unreality. The next two numbers, 'Bådnåt', Op. 66 No. 7 and 'Lok', Op. 66 No. 8, which are linked by the *attacca* indication at the end of No. 7, complement this psychological mood of distant (childhood) memory and uncanny displacement. The solemn lullaby tune of Op. 66 No. 7, which resounds gravely from the piano's lower register, leads straight onto the enchanting high-pitched quirks of the *kulokk* Op. 66 No. 8 that deflect the previously established mood of introspection and despondency. Other lullabies, such as

⁸⁸ Freud, 'The Uncanny', 132.

⁸⁹ For various examples, see Stepien, 'Musical Categories of the Uncanny'.

⁹⁰ Freud, 'The Uncanny', 148.

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3 'Bådnåt' Nos. 15 and 17, which combine the deeply affective contrast between reflective
4 melancholy and oblique bursts of diatonic brightness also create a sense of defamiliarization in the
5 mood. Since uncanniness ascribes the feeling of uncertainty, and even loss of orientation, in one's
6 environment we could trace its precedents in the broader context of the Op. 66 pieces. In the set as
7 a whole, the musical discourse often paints a distant vision of the landscape by adumbrating a world
8 that is absent, vanishing or out of reach. The frequent lack, or interruption, of dominant-tonic
9 articulation and the blurring of a tonal centre with harmonic ambiguity instil a feeling of
10 incompleteness and uncanny displacement. The music, as I have been discussing, confronts the
11 Lacanian discordance between the eye and the gaze, where the gaze stands for a primordial home or
12 lost object of desire that only reveals itself obliquely. On the level of the individual, the expression of
13 uncanniness could be understood in relation to Grieg's aesthetic project and his search for a sense of
14 direction or purpose vis-à-vis an ardent but nascent Romantic nationalism. As Grimley has already
15 suggested, musical distance tends to evoke Grieg's own sense of creative isolation.⁹¹ Uncanniness
16 inevitably brings into question the certainty of belonging to a home. On a collective level, the
17 Norwegian rural landscape—the source of these folk songs—could be seen as that once familiar and
18 old-established homely place which has become estranged and distant by the process of modernity.

39 Miniaturism and the intimacy of imaginative hearing

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41 Grieg's Op. 66 takes us through a journey that swerves between reality and unreality, certainty and
42 uncertainty, belonging and estrangement, closeness and distance. The set plays with the allusion of
43 beyond appearance since these folk-song arrangements articulate in an intimate miniature form the
44 paradoxical containment of a distant landscape. The compositional process, which converts a vocal
45 folk genre into an instrumental one, points to a reconstitution of the 'original' acoustic space that is

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53 ⁹¹ Grimley, *Grieg*, 101-2. In a recent article, Daniel Grimley's discussion of Grieg's Op. 73 concurs that
54 alienation and dislocation are central to the affective properties of Grieg's later piano music. See his "In the
55 Mood:" *Peer Gynt* and the Affective Landscapes of Grieg's *Stemninger*, op. 73', *19th-Century Music*, 40/2
56 (2016), 106-30.

now aimed at a bourgeois private space. Grieg had not intended his Op. 66 pieces as a concert-hall work and their condensed form undoubtedly creates an intimate instrumental genre.⁹² Miniaturization as a process of capturing and representing the natural world has strong precedents in contemporary material visual culture which effectively brought the outdoors closer to home. By placing the Norwegian landscape, or its sonic representation thereof, in the clasp of one's hand, Grieg's Op. 66 piano miniatures find their counterpart in the vogue for hand-held optical devices, ranging from stereoscope viewers to photograph display boxes, which partook in the nineteenth-century popularisation of the rural landscape and its haptic encounter. Smaller, portable, box-enclosed photographic dioramas ranging in size and shape, offered a peep-show experience, and created the illusion of a tangible rendering of the landscape and its objects (refer to Fig. 1). But these visual representations of the landscape, especially optical illusion devices, not only captured the vastness of the rural landscape by scaling it down but also offered the viewer a sense of 'uncanny dislocation' between being contained in a finite space whilst also being imaginatively liberated by the optical illusion.⁹³ In the remaining discussion I consider how an expansion of space is performatively elided between Op. 66 and the dreamlike aesthetic of other miniature worlds.

In Op. 66, the original folk songs are extended by the interpolation of extra bars, and, more significantly, by repetition and registral variation. Extension devices comprise the addition of a brief introduction and a *codetta* which invariably functions as a subdued, reflective, echo-like epilogue that protracts sonority and suspends time. Characteristic examples of such resonant concluding statements include the final bars of the first *kulokk* song where the opening melodic gesture is resounded at the end over a sustained D⁹ chord before melting into a plagal cadence in D major. In No. 14, the closing bars elicit a *morendo* sonorous unfolding of timbre in A major absorbing all previous tensions in the piece. The hymn-like arrangement of No. 7 does not finish in four-part harmony (the D major chord in bar 18) but digresses into retrospection by glancing back at the

⁹² Benestad and Schjelderup-Ebbe, *Edvard Grieg: The Man and the Artist*, 337.

⁹³ Clarke and Doel, 'Engineering Space and Time', 42, and della Dora, 'Putting the World into a Box', 288.

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3 antique vocal style of the opening with a repetition of the sombre unison two-part texture of bars 8-
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5 9 at the end. Elsewhere, gently arpeggiated or *ritardando* gestures mark the ending of pieces, as in
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7 Nos. 3, 6, 8 and 15.
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10 The tunes are elaborated strophically in keeping with their folk-song origins. A single stanza
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12 may be repeated and varied once, twice or three times. In Nos. 7 and 12, for example, the first
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14 phrase comprises a simple, almost primitively bare, presentation of the folk tune (in two-part unison
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16 and parallel octaves, sixths and compound thirds respectively), while the second phrase is more fully
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18 harmonized in four-part style. In No. 11, the first eight-bar stanza is repeated in the second half of
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20 the piece with a similar harmonic framework but registrally extended textures. In other pieces the
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22 folk song is weaved into a longer structure, as in Nos. 13 and 18 where the tune is repeated three
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24 times in different registers. Repetition through registral variation has other significant ontological
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26 consequences for the folk material. Folk songs do not exist at a determinate point in the notated
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28 musical staff but only come into being as oral vocal constructs in their acoustically and timbre
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30 variable natural habitat. Registral expansion counters, in part at least, the containment of the folk
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32 song by Western notation allowing it to inhabit the timbral resources of the piano without
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34 necessarily being confined to a single register. Repetition revisits, or looks back at, the folk material
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36 from different vantage points enhancing its salience and embedding it in memory. Despite the
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38 miniature form, registral growth in Op. 66 evinces a process of actualisation and sonorous
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40 'becoming' through a retrospective ontology.⁹⁴
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44 Repetition through registral and dynamic variation, without substantially altering the
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46 harmonic content of the strophes, as for example in Nos. 10, 11 and 13, creates a spatial process
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48 that evades a long-span teleological narrative.⁹⁵ The listener often experiences both a filling in and
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50 expansion of space through the exploration of different tessituras. Within these piano miniatures
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54 ⁹⁴ Retrospective actualisation is inherent to variation procedure which is a recursive process. While we cannot
55 speak of any thematic-motivic transformation of the folk material in these miniatures, the concept still applies.
56 See Jeffrey Swinkin, 'Variation as Thematic Actualisation: The Case of Brahms's Op. 9', *Music Analysis*, 31/1
57 (2012), 37-89, esp. at 37-9 and 42-3.

58 ⁹⁵ Grimley, *Grieg*, 77.
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the sense of illuminating the folk tune from alternate registral positions, but without moving decidedly towards a tonal goal, could be likened to the peep-show box experience of the wandering eye being contained in an enclosed space. With miniature landscape optical devices, moreover, the effect of gazing through a small opening into a considerably scaled-down natural world severed the observer from full-sized reality inducing a sense of space displacement coupled with an element of wonder that vacillated between rationality and imagination.⁹⁶ As Gaston Bachelard expounds about the phenomenology of miniature spaces, ‘a miniature detaches [one] from the surrounding world . . . Miniature is an exercise that has metaphysical freshness; . . . miniature rests us. . . . And paradoxically . . . one relaxes in a small space’.⁹⁷

Besides small-scale visual representations of the landscape, various other nineteenth-century artefacts and discourses of visual culture were also coeval with this phantasmagorical miniaturization of the physical world. The concept of miniature worlds was disseminated, among other, by microscope literature and images due to the burgeoning disciplines of scientific naturalism, such as entomology and botany, which relied on advances in microscopy, as well as by fantastic literature revolving around folkloric themes and the miniature world of fairies.⁹⁸ Miniature culture was fuelled by the convergence of microscopic realism and magical miniaturism, and nurtured popular perceptions of the paradoxical existence of a captivating natural world that was both invisible, or inaccessible, to the naked eye and amenable to imaginative contemplation by the perceiver. Whilst relying, in many respects, on scientific rationality for portraying accurate realist details, the miniature representation also offered a means of escapism from the disenchantments of modernity and countered the trend toward empiricist truth by prompting the subject to inhabit a

⁹⁶ della Dora, ‘Putting the World into a Box’, 294.

⁹⁷ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994), 161-62.

⁹⁸ See, for example, Laura Forsberg, ‘Nature’s Invisibilia: The Victorian Microscope and the Miniature Fairy’, *Victorian Studies*, 57/4 (2015), 638-66, and Francesca Brittan, ‘On Microscopic Hearing: Fairy Magic, Natural Science, and the *Scherzo Fantastique*’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 64/3 (2011), 527-600.

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3 dream world.⁹⁹ Discourses of miniaturization extend to other cultural domains of a specifically
4 Norwegian context. Henrik Ibsen's famous play 'A Doll's House' (1879) revolves around the potent
5 metaphor of the miniature whose symbolic function shifts from a private space of confinement—
6 Nora's domestic enslavement and infantilization by her father and husband—to one of liberation.¹⁰⁰

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11 Small spaces, according to Bachelard, do not suppress but indulge the realm of imagination
12 and dreams. Miniaturism engenders a special type of inversion of perspective since a tiny space does
13 not preclude the experience of vastness beyond the immanently visible. On the contrary, small
14 spaces intimate a 'liberating topophilia', and the contradiction of scaling down but experiencing
15 space beyond its real size is made possible 'when representation is dominated by imagination'.¹⁰¹ As
16 Bachelard further asserts, 'one must go beyond logic to experience what is large in what is small'
17 since images can only change size through our metaphysical 'being-in-the-world' as we inhabit
18 different spaces.¹⁰² Miniaturism is not restricted to the visual domain. In Grieg's Op. 66 we are
19 continually drawn into a miniature of sound which has the potential to become expansive. The
20 plethora of *pianissimo* gestures, fading echoes and subliminal resonant events, especially at the end
21 of pieces, are not only invocations of distance but also a *trompe-l'œil* to go beyond an 'auditory
22 threshold' and hear with the eyes of the imagination.¹⁰³ A mechanism for overcoming the apparent
23 miniaturization of space in Grieg's Op. 66, which at times pushes the genre to its limits, is the
24 expanding and stretching of sound through registral repetition and variation and the consequent
25 exploration of timbre and resonance. According to Jean-Luc Nancy, 'resonance outweighs form . . . it
26 enlarges it; it gives it an amplitude, a density . . . or undulation' that engenders a special attitude to
27 listening.¹⁰⁴ As Anthony Gritten proposes, following the work of Jean-Luc Nancy and Jean-François

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⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, Henrik Ibsen, *Four Major Plays*, trans. James McFarlane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹⁰¹ Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 149-150.

¹⁰² Ibid. 150 and 173.

¹⁰³ Ibid. 166.

¹⁰⁴ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 2 and 13-16. A visual counterpart to resonance energising space can be found in contemporary paintings. In Edvard Munch's *The Cry* (1893) the landscape behind the head of the central figure is portrayed as pulsating (sound) waves. Cézanne also

Lyotard, resonance evinces a mode of ‘attending to sound fluidly with the body’, and as a type of sensual intensity resonance exists outside of a purely signifying (and cognitive-representational) realm.¹⁰⁵ From this perspective, the lingering resonant gestures operating in Grieg’s Op. 66, especially as concluding statements, can be understood as more than mere extension devices. By creating a more protracted phenomenological space for becoming imaginatively immersed in the fading sound, these encounters with timbre and resonance potentially prompt the listener to go beyond a miniature finitude.

Bachelard elaborates on another means of experiencing an inversion of perspective which has immediate relevance for both Grieg’s Op. 66 and contemporary visual art—the paradox of the miniaturization of distance. For Bachelard, the representation of distance creates miniatures; nests of solitude to dream and imagine. If we recall momentarily Dahl’s ‘View from Stalheim’ (Fig. 2b), this large painting can still create an intimate world in miniature. Despite the imposing vastness of the mountains, the small villages and the finer details dotted around the landscape become tiny homes for the eye to inhabit. As Bachelard expresses it:

Distance disperses nothing but, on the contrary, composes a miniature of a country in which we should like to live. In distant miniatures, disparate things become reconciled. They then offer themselves for our “possession”, while denying the distance that created them. We possess from afar, and how peacefully.¹⁰⁶

Grieg’s Op. 66 folk-song miniatures are renderings of an imagined far-away place that offer intimate spaces to inhabit and from which the beholder may reach out contemplatively into the distant landscape.

energized the depicted space around certain objects in his late landscape paintings of *Mont Sainte-Victoire*. Both examples are cited in Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 163.

¹⁰⁵ Anthony Gritten, ‘Resonant Listening’, *Performance Research: A Journal of the Performing Arts*, 15/3 (2010), 115-22, esp. 116-19 (quotation at 119).

¹⁰⁶ Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, 172.

Conclusions

In this paper I have argued that the propensity towards a sense of abstraction, defamiliarization and tonal decentredness, and a dreamlike miniature aesthetic in Grieg's late work, the Op. 66 folk-song piano arrangements, has strong precedents in contemporary visual culture. A modernist visual subjectivity in the nineteenth century was underpinned by the increasing subversion of the traditional strictures of realism: the uprooting of vision from a fixed or stable referent and the long-held assumption of a unitary viewing position. Technological innovations in photography and optical devices blurred the distinction between illusion and reality and challenged the epistemological certainty of the experience of the phenomenal world. During this period, representations of the rural pre-modern Norwegian landscape in visual art, paintings, photography and dioramas, became an important instrument in the consolidation of Norwegian national-cultural identity. Representations of the Norwegian landscape were seemingly rooted in the visible but also fostered a rendering of the invisible and imaginary: the portrayal of an idealized time and place and the yearning for a rural past away from the burdens of modern life. Modern visual culture, such as optical illusion devices depicting the unspoilt wilderness of the Norwegian landscape, created a sense of uncanny dislocation between the experience of the physical landscape in a present moment and in the confines of a given space and the reality of the rural landscape existing as a distant object of desire hidden, or located far away, from the immediate access of vision and the other senses. Grieg's Op. 66 pieces also articulate this curious tension with the musical discourse adumbrating the illusion of a world that is absent, vanishing or out of reach, although in the paradoxical containment of miniature form. The music, as I have proposed, confronts the Lacanian discordance between the eye and the gaze, where the gaze conceals what lies beyond an apparent reality which is only revealed obliquely. Through a close reading of selected Op. 66 pieces, in light of their broader cultural context, I have sought to unravel some of the latent meanings and psychological dispositions that potentially exist beyond the pictorial referentiality of the set. These miniature compositions undoubtedly occupy a

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complex space between Romantic nationalism—art inspired by folk music and the rural landscape—
and the modernist abstraction of realism as manifested in contemporary visual culture.

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Figure 1. (a) Photograph viewer box (approx. 60 x 20 cm); (b) close-up of viewing screen and turning wheel; (c) roll of stereo cards. Reproduced by kind permission of the Picture Collection, University of Bergen Library, photo by Morten Heiselberg.

(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 2. (a) Thomas Fearnley’s ‘Old Birch Tree at the Sognefjord’ (1839), oil on canvas, 54.5 X 66 cm, photo by Frode Larsen; (b) Johan Christian Dahl’s ‘View from Stalheim’ (1842), oil on canvas, 190 X 246 cm, photo by Jacques Lathion. Both images are available in the public domain through the Norwegian National Museum, Oslo.

(a)

(b)

Ex. 1. Grieg, Op. 66 No. 18, 'Jeg gaar i tusind Tanker': (a) bb. 1-5; (b) bb. 18-35; (c) Beyer's transcription reproduced by kind permission of the Grieg Archives, Bergen Public Library.

(a)

Adagio religioso.
la melodia ben tenuto

D major: I IV III
F sharp major: bII I

(b)

18 *la melodia ben tenuto*

D major: I V⁷ IV
I III (F sharp major) V⁹
I III vi VI (B major)
[V] i I
B major: I iii I⁷ iv (e minor) VII⁷ (A sharp major)
[V⁷]
iii (D sharp minor) I⁷ (E pedal)
i [V⁷ I (implied)]

Ex. 1. (c)

(c)

Handwritten musical score for a song. The lyrics are in Danish and read: "Jeg gærst tænker og elsker, du is ei kan sige. Hjært mig i Gleden tænker elsk mig bare maa. Hvor Lyst var det i dig i fik, som jeg har hørt saa højt, men mange falske mennesker der - det var ingen er."

Ex. 2. Grieg, Op. 66 No. 19, 'Gjendines Bådnåt', bb. 1-20

Printed musical score for Grieg's 'Gjendines Bådnåt'. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and consists of 20 measures. It features a piano introduction with a 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamic marking. The melody is in the right hand, and the accompaniment is in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Ex. 3. Grieg, Op. 66 No. 6, 'Lok og Bådnåt', bb. 1-35

The musical score for Grieg's 'Lok og Bådnåt' (Op. 66 No. 6) is presented in a single system with five staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes the following markings and features:

- Measures 1-6:** Marked *Andante.* and *p*. Features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.
- Measures 7-11:** Marked *Allegro.* and *rit.*. Features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.
- Measures 12-17:** Marked *Più lento.*. Features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.
- Measures 18-23:** Marked *Andante molto.* and *cantabile*. Features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.
- Measures 24-29:** Marked *poco rit.* and *a tempo*. Features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.
- Measures 30-35:** Marked *frit.* and *p*. Features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a quarter note in the left hand.

The score is written for piano and includes various musical notations such as dynamics (*p*, *pp*, *mp*), articulation (*rit.*, *frit.*), and tempo markings (*Andante.*, *Allegro.*, *Più lento.*, *Andante molto.*, *cantabile*, *poco rit.*, *a tempo*). The score is numbered 1 through 35, corresponding to the measures.

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Figure 1a

250x184mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Figure 1b

250x187mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Figure 1c

250x216mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Figure 2a

1411x1174mm (72 x 72 DPI)

Figure 2b

1411x1079mm (72 x 72 DPI)

Only

Adagio religioso
*la melodia
ben tenuto*

p *pp* *p*

D major: I

F# major: IV III
bII I

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la melodia ben tenuto

D major: I V⁹ IV

pp

p

I (D major) III (F# major) V⁹

poco rit.

a tempo

cresc.

p

I III vi VI (B major)
[V i I]

2

30

B major: I iii I⁷ iv (e minor)

32

VII⁷ (A # major) iii (D # minor) I⁷
[V⁷] i] [V⁷]

34

(E pedal)
I (implied)]

270x55mm (96 x 96 DPI)

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Allegretto semplice

The musical score is written for piano and consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 1-7) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody in the treble staff features eighth and sixteenth notes, with accents and slurs. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) and *p* (piano). The second system (measures 8-14) continues the melodic and harmonic development, with a *pp* dynamic in measure 9 and a *p* dynamic in measure 14. The third system (measures 15-21) concludes the piece with a *ritard.* (ritardando) marking in measure 18 and a final *pp* dynamic in measure 21. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

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Andante *rit.* Allegro

p

7

12

Piu lento

1 *f*

Andante molto *cantabile*

p 1 *p*

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