



Artist or Crafts(wo)man?

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Abstract

Are orchestral musicians artists or crafts(wo)men? This article offers a principal discussion of the concepts of *artist* and *crafts(wo)man*, as well as the relation between these concepts, from a philosophical point of view.

We discuss the concept of ‘the crafts(wo)man’ based on Richard Sennett’s discussions of this concept, in which Hannah Arendt’s thinking plays an important role. Then, we turn our attention to Aristotle’s distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis*, as well as his concept of *techné*, as discussed by Martin Heidegger, and Plato’s discussion of *inspiration* as a basic fundament for artistic performance. Next, we address Walter Benjamin’s discussion on artwork in an age of technological reproducibility, and we draw lines between characteristic aspects in Sennett’s argument and the tension between professional thinking and the philosophy of art.

This article is part of the ongoing project, *Discourses of Academization and the Music Profession in Higher Music Education (DAPHME)*, conducted by a team of senior researchers in Sweden, Norway and Germany and founded by the Swedish Riksbank. The overall purpose of DAPHME is to investigate how processes of academisation affect students at institutes of higher music education in Europe, especially the education of orchestral musicians of the Western classical tradition.

Keywords: crafts(wo)man, artist, *homo faber*, animal laborans, *poiesis* and *praxis*, inspiration, professional thinking and philosophy of art

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Introduction

There is tension among instrumental teachers in higher education, especially among those who deal with Western classical orchestral music, regarding whether musicians are artists or crafts(wo)men. In a previously published Norwegian interview study, one of the informants argues:

We still think that handicraft is important ... We believe that this is about getting up in the morning and practising ... To take care of the musical heritage depends on handicraft knowledge ... We think that this still is important, to take care about the musical heritage, as well as to create something new.⁴ (Angelo, Varkøy & Georgii-Hemming, 2019)

Another informant says that “European orchestras demand musicians who can play as effectively as possible, who adjust themselves, not giving too much resistance” (Angelo, Varkøy & Georgii-Hemming, 2019). A third informant, a leader at one institution refers to handicraft as the ‘arch-traditional knowledge’ in the field and states that

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4 Translated from Norwegian to English by the authors. Quotes from and references to some informants cannot be generalised. They are only used here as illustrations of existing ideas and arguments in the field.

craftmanship displays a ‘distinctive kind of quality’ capable of massive and powerful reactions. Another leader in higher music education even argues that a lack of handicraft knowledge might become a consequence of the ‘artistic research’ doctoral programs as well.

Moreover, the empirical data in this study (also discussed in an earlier publication by Angelo, Varkøy & Georgii-Hemming (2019)) shows that the informants argue (a) that handicraft is one of the most important skills to develop in orchestral music education, (b) that orchestral musicians must be subordinate as crafts(wo)men in a collective under the conductor, who may be seen more as a performance artist than a crafts(wo)man and (c) that handicraft can be threatened in higher music education by increasing requirements to write, read and discuss academic texts, as these activities might consume the time and dedication that students and teachers should use for practice.⁵

The informants paint a picture of artists as entrepreneurs and freelancers who have to create their own jobs and distinctive artistic characters, while orchestral musicians find everything already prepared, organised and arranged, and their performances are, in a sense, the execution of what was prepared. The informants construct a distinction between artist and crafts(wo)man and between art and craft, and they argue in favour of an education that, in Norwegian, is called ‘kunsthåndverkere’ (or in German, ‘Kunsthändler/innen’). This term translates to ‘handicrafts(wo)men’ in English and refers to persons who have close relations to both art and craft and can be flexible on the axis between the two.

Two more examples of the tension between art and handicraft and artist and crafts(wo)man:

⁵ See Moberg (2019) for a discussion on students’ experiences of musical craftsmanship and artistic performance skills versus scholarly knowledge from higher music education.

In an interview with a Norwegian newspaper, one of Norway's outstanding viola players, Nora Taksdal, refers to musicians as crafts(wo)men and emphasises that she will never call herself an artist (Simenstad, 2017). According to Taksdal, there are, in fact, very few artists among musicians. Most musicians are crafts(wo)men. The reason she identifies more or less as a craftswoman and not an artist is not very clear. It seems, however, that this view may be due to her love for her instrument, the material of the instrument, the close relationship between the person who makes the instrument and the person who uses it and the "fingerspitzengefühl" ('finger tips feeling'/intuition) that is required of a musician for treating his/her instrument well.

On the other hand, the Norwegian composer Henrik Hellstenius, professor at Norwegian Academy of Music, argues that those in higher music education need to talk about the concept of art and asks why the discussion of whether instructors educate artists or crafts (wo)men is problematic. Hellstenius argues that this has something to do with the lack of knowledge of other art forms among musicians. Even more important, according to him, is the problematic distinction between the artist and the crafts(wo)man. Finally, Hellstenius argues that his task is to educate artists, meaning to educate reflective performers and composers (Istad, 2018).

The quotes and references above, both from the interviews (presented and discussed in Angelo, Varkøy & Georgii-Hemming, 2019), and the references to Taksdal and Hellstenius, are examples of existing ideas among Western classical musicians in the field of higher music education. They serve simply as illustrations, explaining of how our interest in the tension between 'artist' and 'crafts(wo)man' was born. They are *not* empirical data to be discussed in this article.

In response to this interest, in this article, we discuss the concepts of *artist* and *crafts(wo)man*, as well as the relationship or dichotomy between these concepts, from a philosophical point of view. We first discuss the concept of 'the crafts(wo)man' based on Richard Sennett's discussions of this concept, in which

Hannah Arendt's thinking plays an important role. Then, we turn our attention to Aristotle's distinction between *poiesis* and *praxis*, and Martin Heidegger's discussion of the Aristotelian concept *techné*. We also present Plato's discussion of 'inspiration' as a basic fundament for artistic performance. Next, we look at Walter Benjamin's discussion on artwork and technological reproducibility before drawing connections between aspects in Sennett's argument and the tension between professional thinking and the philosophy of art.

Our purpose is not "to solve" the problematic relation between 'art' and 'craft', 'artist' and 'crafts(wo)man'. The aim rather is to focus ambiguity, heterogeneity and paradoxes in this field. Thus, Sennett, Arendt, Heidegger, Benjamin etc. represent different perspectives more than disagreements, even though diversities should not be concealed.⁶

The Crafts(wo)man

In his book *The Craftsman*, Sociologist Richard Sennett (2009) discusses the relationship between craft and industrial and alienated labour. These discussions involve the tensions between art and craft, artist and crafts(wo)man. These tensions are, according to Sennett, characterised by ambiguity, displacement and paradoxes. One of Sennett's aims "is to explain how people become engaged practically but not necessarily instrumentally" (Sennett, 2009, p. 20). In this article, we will discuss some central aspects of Sennett's discussions of the relations and tensions between art and craft in relation to ideas from his former professor, Arendt, as well as Plato and Aristotle, Heidegger and Benjamin

6 Relating our discussion to a number of highly different philosophers and thinkers we are aware of the danger of eclecticism. We have however chosen to apply different ways of thinking and concepts as inspirations for our own thinking and argument.

Let us start our discussion by acknowledging the importance of Sennett's discussions as a project of raising the social status and understanding of craftsmanship, and in exploring "what happens when hand and head, technique and science, art and craft are separated" (Sennett, 2009, p. 20). According to Sennett the "craftsman represents the special human condition of being engaged," and he/she has a certain "material consciousness" (Sennett, 2009, p. 119). In addition, Sennett states that there is a strong connection between head and hand (Sennett, 2009, p. 149).⁷ He argues that this is true for carpenters and lab technicians, as well as musicians in an orchestra (including the conductor).

... an orchestra is rehearsing with a visiting conductor; he works obsessively with the orchestra's string section, going over and over a passage to make the musicians draw their bows at exactly the same speed across the strings. The string players are tired but also exhilarated because their sound is becoming coherent. The orchestra's manager is worried; if the visiting conductor keeps on, the rehearsal will move into overtime, costing management extra wages. The conductor is oblivious (Sennett, 2009, p. 19).

The crafts(wo)man is defined as a person "dedicated to good work for its own sake" is of special interest because the definition seems to give craft intrinsic value (Sennett 2009, p. 20)". Sennett's argument about the 'intrinsic value' of craft(wo)man-ship will be reviewed alongside some discussions from Arendt, who discusses the product and not the process of good work, and Heidegger.

First, Arendt (1958) distinguishes between three forms of human activity: labour, work and action. 'Work' is 'craft'. According to Arendt, work, like labour, does not have an end in itself. They have no intrinsic value even though work and labour are of fundamental importance to human life. Labour and work are means to other ends

7 See Øyvind Lyngseth (2017) for fundamental discussions of this topic.

outside themselves. Arendt's discussions on human activities reveals that only *actions* (social activities) are ends in themselves, having intrinsic value.

Labour is performed by people who Arendt calls *Animal laborans*, and work is done by *Homo faber*. Animal laborans are slaves, and Homo faber, to Arendt, are crafts(wo)men. Labour is cyclic, and the result of labour is articles of consumption that do not survive the use of them (Øverenget, 2012).⁸ On the other hand, Homo faber make products of a solidity, which is a quality that articles of consumption are lacking. The result of the labour by Animal laborans is brought in directly from nature itself (e.g. making food). To a certain extent, they can be prepared or fixed, but labouring is never about changing the form of nature. In contrast, while *Homo faber* retrieve their materials from natural surroundings, they create a new form for the material (e.g. making a table from wood). According to Arendt, however, *Homo faber* does not create art. *Homo faber* is only occupied with usefulness and cannot produce anything with intrinsic value that has an end in itself. Creating art is a human activity as action— having no end outside itself.⁹

Following Arendt's line of thinking, it is very difficult to consider the product of handicraft as having intrinsic value, whether it is the carpenter's table or the conductor's orchestral rehearsal. Intrinsic value is found instead in meals that occur

8 See Han (2018a) for a discussion of artwork in times of consumption.

9 On the other hand, Arendt focuses on the work of art as an object, as a product of work. Artwork is a product, and products are not ends in themselves but means for something else. This means art has some sort of double character, according to Arendt (1958). This double character (art as work and action) brings the term 'musicking' to mind. If music is seen not only as a product of a composer's production but as musicking — meaning to participate in a musical performance — as performer, listener, practitioner, composer or dancer, in fact even as ticket seller or cloakroom attendant, musicking is action, as well as production (Small, 1998, p. 138). Music is not only a thing, an object or a product. It is something that we do together. It is a verb; it is action. With this turn from solely focusing on the object or product of music to focusing on musicking as a process as well, music becomes action.

around the table and the connection between the music produced by the orchestra and its conductor and the listener.¹⁰ In other words, neither the practice of the musicians nor the product of music (the work of art, either in print or performance) has intrinsic value. Concepts like ‘intrinsic value’, ‘end in itself’ and ‘for its own sake’ are reserved for musical experience.

At the same time, however, we are aware that crafts(wo)men may consider good work to have value in itself. In this case, experiences have meaning that can be found in the process of handcrafting, exclusively for the crafts(wo)man him-/herself. No score of music, no novel, no painting can be said to have intrinsic value as products. The products of crafts(wo)men are means with ends outside themselves.

Similarly, in Sennett’s definition of the crafts(wo)man (in Arendt’s terms, *Homo faber*) as a person who is dedicated to good work for its own sake, he speaks of the process of good work as having meaning and value for the engaged crafts(wo)men and not the product of the process. Sennett is interested in the phenomenon of people working with dedication and devotion. This is not restricted to artists. It is also possible that Sennett’s argument serves his project of raising the status of craft and the crafts(wo)men more than as a philosophical argument about different forms of human activities. By raising the status of the crafts(wo)man in focusing on the crafts(wo)man’s work as “work for its own sake”, Sennett problematises the traditional distinction between art and craft in an interesting way.

To explore this problematisation, we first focus on Sennett’s attempt to “rescue *Animal laborans* from the contempt with which Hannah Arendt treated him” (Sennett, 2009, p. 286). Sennett claims that “the working human animal can be enriched by the skills and dignified by the spirit of craftsmanship” (Sennett, 2009, p. 286). In

10 For a profound discussion of aesthetic experience as an activity, see Varkøy (2015a). See also Martin Seel (1996) who speaks of the practice of aesthetic perception, which is not restricted to works of art. From this view, intrinsic (aesthetic) value lies in the experience an object creates.

this statement, he problematises Arendt's distinction between *Homo faber's* work and art. In other words, Sennett does not agree with Arendt's distinction between *Animal laborans* and *Homo faber*.

In Ancient Greek philosophy and society, there was a clear distinction between *Animal laborans* and *Homo faber* (i.e. between slaves and crafts(wo)men). According to Greeks, the craftsman "occupied a social slice roughly equivalent to a middle class" and "*demioergoi* (the craftsmen) included, in addition to skilled manual workers like potters, also doctors and lower magistrates, and professional singers and heralds" (Sennett, 2009, p. 22). Thus, the term used for craftsman in Ancient Greek tradition, as noted in the Homeric hymn to Hephaestus, is *demioergos*, a compound made between *demios* (public) and *ergon* (productive). This group of citizens lived between the few aristocrats and the mass of slaves. However, a mistrust for all kinds of physical work developed in Greek culture, and the distinction between *Animal laborans* and *Homo faber* became blurred (Øverenget, 2001, p. 83). According to Sennett, this started with Aristotle's differentiation between architects and artisans. He defined architects as those who know the reasons for the things which are done and artisans as those who only do things, without knowing the reason for the doing. In this discussion, Aristotle abandons the old word for the craftsman, *demioergos*, and uses instead *cheirotechnon*, which simply means 'hand worker' (Sennett, 2009, p. 23). In this context, *Homo faber* is reduced to *Animal laborans*. Sennett's project seems to be the opposite: to raise the status of *Animal laborans* to *Homo faber*. Sennett attempts to transcend the distinction between *Homo faber* — the crafts(wo)man — and the artist, between craft and art, as well as the distinction between *Animal laborans* and *Homo faber*. See, for example, Sennett's discussion of autonomy and originality:

Art seemed ... to place the artist on a more autonomous footing in society than the craftsman, and this for a particular reason: the artist claimed originality for

his work; originality is the trait of single, lone individuals (Sennett, 2009, p. 66).

Sennett reminds us that few Renaissance artists worked alone. The line between an artist's studio and a craftsmen's workshop was relatively blurry. The artist's studio, like a craftsman's workshop, was filled with assistants and apprentices. However, the master of the studio "did indeed put a new value on the originality of the work done in them" in a time when originality was a value not celebrated by the medieval guilds (Sennett, 2009, p. 66). This contrast still informs our thinking. For example, Sennett argues that "art seems to draw attention to work that is unique or at least distinctive, whereas craft names a more anonymous, collective and continued practice" (Sennett, 2009, p. 66). We should, however, according to Sennett, be suspicious of this contrast as long as 'originality' is a social label, and "originals form peculiar bonds with other people" (Sennett, 2009, p. 66).

True enough, art has an individual, dominating agent, where craft has a collective agent: "In the Renaissance, the appearance of something sudden was connected to the art — the genius, if you will — of an individual", and art and craft are certainly distinguished by time: the sudden versus the slow (Sennett, 2009, p. 70). When we think of art and craft as distinguished by autonomy, we have to remember that, according to historical perspective, "the lone, original artist may have less autonomy, be more dependent on uncomprehending or wilful power, and so be more vulnerable, than were the body of craftsmen" (Sennett, 2009, p. 73). Similarly, Sennett focuses on how the term 'originality' races its origin back to one Greek word, *poiesis*, which Plato and others use to mean 'something where before there was nothing'. He considers how originality "is a marker of time; it denotes the sudden appearance of something where before there was nothing, and because something suddenly comes into existence, it arouses in us emotions of wonder and awe" (Sennett, 2009, p. 70). How-

ever, Sennett's focus on the process of crafts(wo)manship and not the product conflicts with the Greek concept of *poiesis*.

Poiesis and praxis

According to Aristotle (350 B.C.), *poiesis* means to produce something, such as a house. This is end-means-thinking with 'originality of a second order'. The intellectual virtue that manifests itself in *poiesis*, is the good production of something. Therefore, *poiesis* is an activity that has no end in itself — the end is outside the activity.

On the other hand, the activity, called *praxis*, has an end in itself. The intellectual virtue that manifests itself in *praxis* is *phronesis* (practical wisdom). Following Arendt, aesthetical experience, as an activity of action, having its end in itself, is related to *praxis*, while producing music, activities of labor (as in practicing) and work (as in composing), having their ends outside themselves, is related to *poiesis*.

If Sennett argues in favour of the idea that a crafts(wo)man is a person who is dedicated to good work for its own sake, without distinguishing between the process and the product, crafts(wo)manship cannot be explained with the concepts of *poiesis* and *praxis* discussed by Aristotle.¹¹

Let us further explore Aristotle's argument. According to Aristotle, all art (or *techné*)

... is concerned with coming into being, i.e. with contriving and considering how something may come into being which is capable of either being or not being, and whose origin is in the maker and not in the thing made; for art is concerned neither with things that are, or come into being, by necessity, nor

¹¹ See Pöllänen and Ruotsalainen (2017) for a discussion of this topic in another art form (i.e. one that is not music).

with things that do so in accordance with nature (since these have their origin in themselves). (Aristotle, 350 B.C.)

The phrase “either being or not being” in this quote may be understood through Giorgio Agamben’s discussions of Aristotelian ideas about the talents and possibilities in a person and the tension between potentiality and reality. On this subject, Agamben (1999) argues that the knowledge of an artist also opens up for the opposite of creating: not to create. For example, a poet can choose silence or an artist can make powerlessness and destruction a part of their artwork. This is not a possibility for a craft(wo)man.

Further, the Aristotelian concept of *techné*, (‘art’ in English), which is often associated with *technique*, can be used to discuss the technical skills needed to play an instrument, as a musician needs to have technical knowledge. However, Heidegger (2000) argues that the term *techné* has nothing to do with what we think about today as technical skills and that it is to be interpreted as a way in which to have knowledge or to have seen. *To see*, according to Heidegger, is a perception of being just as it is and uncovering the deeper truth of being. Moreover, a central aspect in Heidegger’s discussion is how we often focus on the fact that the Greeks used the word *techné* for both craft and art, but according to Heidegger, *techné* means neither craft nor art, and certainly not technical in the modern sense. Rather, the word *techné* indicates a way to perceive being. *Techné* is not about producing something. Therefore, according to Heidegger’s point of view, when art is called *techné*, this in no way means that the artist is a crafts(wo)man.¹²

This view of *techné* as the knowledge required to uncover the truth gets to the very heart of what it means to make or to perform music. Uncovering truth is what art is often about. For instance, when people discuss a musical performance, they

12 See Varkøy (2013) for a profound discussion of Aristotle and Heidegger concerning the *techné* concept.

rarely focus on technical skill alone. Instead, they focus on interpreting the music or on revealing “the musical truth” (Varkøy, 2013). This involves the relationship between craft and art, revealing the dual nature of the Greek term *techné*, which is evoked in music in the relationship between instrumental technique and artistic interpretation.

Heidegger’s discussion of the Greek concept *techné* reveals the connection of craft and art, but how does craft differ from art? Sennett’s main point is that, in terms of practice, the “line between craft and art may seem to separate technique and expression” (Sennett, 2009, p. 65). In the discussions in Plato’s *Symposium*, it is observed that although all craftsmanship is quality-driven work (*areté*) and all craftsmen are poets (artists), “they are not all called poets; they have other names” (Plato, 2008, p. 109, 205b-c). Richard Sennett states that there is reason to worry “that these different names and indeed different skills kept people in his day from understanding what they shared” (Sennett, 2009, p. 24).

Inspiration

Among the Ancient Greeks, there are two main theories about art. The first is Aristotle’s concept of *techné*, and the second is Plato’s view of art as inspiration (Skjerveim, 1996). In Plato’s *Ion*, Socrates speaks with Ion, who is a reciter and interpreter of Homer (Plato, 2008). A central question in the dialogue is what it means to interpret. Socrates argues that nobody can be a good interpreter without understanding the meaning of a poem or song. To be able to recite a poem in a beautiful way is not equivalent to understanding the meaning of what one is reciting. If Ion really is an interpreter, Socrates argues that he has to understand Homer. Ion, however, does not understand what he is reciting, even though he thinks that he knows and understands everything Homer writes about. How could he sing Homer that well if he did not? And Socrates agrees (!), Ion *is* the very best reciter.

If Ion is a qualified reciter, this fact undermines the premise above (that you have to understand the meaning of the poem or song to be a good interpreter). Socrates, however, has a new premise to introduce. He argues that there are two possible ways of making interpretations — they can be made based on *techné* (knowledge) or *enthusiasmos* (divine inspiration). Thus, Ion is a man inspired by the gods, and he does not know what he is doing. He has a sort of embodied knowledge, mastering a certain set of rules for a certain human activity, and is able to perform this in practical life. Therefore, a prerequisite for being an artist is to have embodied knowledge.

Concepts like inspiration and Heidegger's 'uncovering the truth of being' are some sort of 'romantic' ideas. However, Sennett is not very fond of romantic ideas. See, for example, his statement concerning his lack of interest in the concept of *creativity*: "... the word creativity appears in this book as little as possible. This is because the word carries too much Romantic baggage — the mystery of inspiration, the claims of genius" (Sennett, 2009, p. 290). However, when Sennett argues that crafts(wo)manship "may suggest a way of life that waned with the advent of industrial society" because craft is characterized by slowness, he reveals that he may not be free of romantic ideas:

Craftsmen take pride most in skills that mature. This is why simple imitations is not sustaining satisfaction; the skill has to evolve. The slowness of craft time serves as a source of satisfaction ... Slow craft time also enables the work of reflection and imagination – which the push for quick results cannot (Sennett, 2009, p. 295).

Weber (2011) describes modernization as a general process of disenchantment of the world, which has existed since the Renaissance and Reformation periods and has made the world more prosaic and predictable and less poetic and mysterious. Similarly, Benjamin (2003) discusses the transformation of our aesthetic relation to objects and the world brought about by new technologies that allow for reproduction.

Through the concept of aura, Benjamin develops the idea of a reciprocal relationship between the subject and the world of things. More specifically, the aura experience refers to the aesthetic relationship to things and the world in general and, thus, our relation to works of art and artistic practice. The transformations that occur in the field of art are results of changes that concern our basic perception of matter, time and space. The most important change is that technology gives us a power over things that we did not previously have.

Moreover, Benjamin argues that we, in the age of handicraft, are at the mercy of the quality of things, but with new technology, the mystical nature of things disappears. The handicraft tradition allows things to retain a kind of distance and mystery. However, works of art, like all things, lose their aura when technological interference destroys their distanced mysteriousness. The ability to reproduce them— and, of course, the experience of them — as a result of new technology takes from their unique character.¹³

Sennett also notes concerns for craft(wo)manship with the introduction of technology. Specifically, he raises concerns about the erosion of crafts(wo)manship in industrialized societies. This is not a concern limited to crafts(wo)manship as such, but as a way of life, the creation of a world, and the ability to shape our lives into something we find desirable. Even though Byung-Chul Han's views are not necessarily in line with Sennett's, we find it interesting to discuss Sennett's focus on the dwelling character of crafts(wo)manship in light of Han's philosophical project of 're-romanticising and re-auratising' artwork (Han, 2018b). Han argues in favour of a return to connecting a sense of awe and wonder to 'the otherness' of artwork, which is

13 Among a number of the thinkers referred to in this article at hand, a common premise is that there is some level of intrinsic value in music. The context implied by Benjamin might hint at alternative interpretations. However: this discussion is not a topic as such in this article (as it certainly is for instance in Varkøy, 2015a).

reminiscent of the idea that artwork is not an object but is part-subject/part-object. It is a *Thou*, not an *It* (Varkøy, 2020).

Sennett challenges the differences identified by Aristotle between poiesis and praxis, as well as those identified by Arendt between labour, work and action. He also challenges Heidegger's distinctions between things, utility articles and artwork. According to Heidegger (2000), works of art do not have an end or purpose beyond themselves. Heidegger argues that while products of craft are utility articles, works of art cannot be used for anything. They oppose use and application (Varkøy, 2015a).

Professional Thinking and Philosophy of Art

We find an interesting parallel to Sennett's argument in favour of the crafts(wo)man in some discussions in professional thinking about art education as professional education and art as a profession (Mangset, 2004). Similar to Sennett, Mangset argues that an important element of the professionalisation of artists (through professional education) is the need to distance oneself from romantic ideas about art and autonomy, as well as romantic myths about 'genius artists'. However, this practice leads to the risk of art and artists becoming marginalized by ideas of craft and profession. The idea of the autonomy of art (and the artist) is no longer valued.

Professional education is targeted and directed. The professional is authorised to perform its special community service, a social mandate or mission. The value of professions and their basis for existence are connected to their serviceability (i.e. they should be good for something and function in a certain way). Abbot (1998) and Grimen (2008) talk about professions as heterotelic by nature. Another condition of a profession is that it must provide a service to society that professional education has to fulfil in order to maintain the contract with the employer, often public authorities. This means that professional education delivers education that is relevant to society.

Therefore, if learning is referred to as professional education, this implies that the education has direct relevance to society (Christensen, 2012; Angelo, 2012 and 2016).

On the other hand, Kant (1987), in his construction of the idea of the autonomy of art, explicitly draws a line between what can be aesthetically judged (like works of art) and what is judged by its usefulness or moral goodness. Kant differentiates between judgments of the beautiful without concern for whether the object is desirable and what appeals to us and makes us interested in its existence. In addition, the taste for what is pleasurable and appealing to the senses is what Bourdieu (1984) calls the ‘taste of necessity’, while the taste for the beautiful is the taste of freedom. An object that gives pleasure to the senses might be something we want to possess. In this case, we are dependent on our desires. The taste for the beautiful (and the sublime) is, on the contrary, disinterested. Hence, it is free from the focus on the value of utility. In other words, to experience something as art means emancipation. Thus, if the aesthetic experience is ‘useful’, this opens up the possibility that the relevance of this type of experience is related to questioning the hegemonic relevance thinking itself (Maritain, 1961). This represents a strong philosophical tradition in evaluating aesthetics and art, even to some extent supported by Pierre Bourdieu (1984). In his critique of the oppressive functions of Kantian aesthetics, Bourdieu surprisingly defends the idea of the relative autonomy of art. In addition, he argues that the relative autonomy of art is a prerequisite for our modern idea of art as critique.¹⁴

It is, of course, not our intention to reduce professional thinking to a project of regulation and control. However, although professional thinking also includes elements of emancipation of both the individual and social life in general, it is not possible to ignore the fact that professional thinking includes elements of regulation and control. We think it is of philosophical interest to ask if the frames of professional thinking can become too narrow. Must we let go of the ideas of art’s fundamental

14 See Varkøy (2015b) for a more profound discussion of these aspects.

unpredictability and unreliability, as well as the artist's calling to act unfaithfully and disloyally, ending up reducing art to some sort of "social handicraft"? If such ideas are to be considered with the depth and intensity they deserve, it presupposes a confidence with the disturbing features of art or art's outrageousness

Concluding remark

The ambiguities and paradoxes discussed in the previously published article referred above (Angelo, Varkøy & Georgii-Hemming, 2019) show there is a need for philosophical awareness and accuracy concerning the concepts of art and craft, artist and crafts(wo)man, within higher music education. As stated in the introduction, the aim of this article was to *discuss* these concepts, as well as the relationship or dichotomy between them, from a philosophical point of view. Our purpose was *not to solve* the problematic relationship between art and craft or artist and crafts(wo)man.

We need to rethink the tension between craft and art, crafts(wo)men and artists. It is not a good idea to create a discourse without distinctions and characterised by bluntness and a lack of philosophical accuracy. Why? The function of such discourse is often revealed to be soft manipulation in favour of an idea that is planned to win the discussion. That will certainly not be of any help in reflecting on craft and art, crafts(wo)man and artist, as well as the relationship and tension between these concepts, in higher music education. To focus and discuss ambiguities, heterogeneity and paradoxes in this field, as we have done in this article, may be more constructive.

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