

A sonata for ghosts

Ingmar Bergman's use of sounds and Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2 in the radio adaptation of Ibsen's play *John Gabriel Borkman*

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Introduction

Since nothing is visible in a radio play, it must be heard all the better. What is heard, releases the visible freely to take shape in the listener. The pictures heard are suggestions. The one who listens completes.¹

Is it possible to gain insight into Ingmar Bergman's directorial art by studying the music, its musical and formal aspects, in relation to the script and performance? The question may be rhetorical since several of Bergman's films allude to a piece of music or a musical form. Take, for instance, *Autumn Sonata* (1979) or *Saraband* (2003), as well as working titles like 'A Sonata for two voices' during the production of *The Silence* (1963).

Around the turn of the millennium, in his eighties and after more than six decades of being one of the foremost directors of film and theatre, Bergman stages and adapts several plays by Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg for radio (see Appendix A). In a radio interview from 2001, Bergman describes this work as 'tremendously stimulating'.² He underscores the stylistic and narratological influences between Ibsen and Strindberg and how they sometimes got irritated and mocked each other. Bergman believed they had a significant and important literary exchange. Scholars such as Birgitta Steene (2005) and Egil Törnqvist (Törnqvist and Perridon, 1998) have, in turn, presented ample evidence of the considerable influence of both Strindberg and Ibsen on Bergman. In a diary entry from 2000, Bergman conveys his depressed state during the creation of his final TV production, *Saraband*. He anticipates that relocating to Fårö and immersing himself in 'proper work' will alleviate his condition. He abbreviates this work 'JGB'.³ Interpreting this as Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896), the play appears to hold a dual significance: one in addressing his emotional vulnerability and another in helping him to finalise *Saraband*.

Bergman consistently regarded Strindberg as a pivotal figure, a fount of inspiration, and a mentor in his creative pursuits (Steene, 2005, p. 11). The use of titles alluding to musical form can be found already in Strindberg's productions, as seen in works such as

¹ Hessler, 1989, p. 71. Bergman's radio adaptation of Strindberg's *Easter* was first broadcast in 1952.

² Florin, 2001 (audio).

³ Bergman, 2000 (archive).

Spöksonaten [The ghost sonata] and ‘Septembersonaten’ [The sonata of September], Strindberg’s designation for his poem *Chrysaëtos* (Strindberg, 2018, p. 54). Strindberg too considered the concept of composing a play based on formal musical principles. An illustrative example is provided in a note to the publisher of *Brott och brott (BOB)* [There are Crimes and Crimes] (1899) where Strindberg explicitly states his intention for the play to be understood in terms of ‘fugal actions’:

A detail: Please state in parentheses about Beethoven’s D Minor Sonata, in the Finale that especially the bars 96–107 shall be grinding. These tones always seem like a drill in my conscience. It should sound as if the musician practiced these bars, i.e., repeats and repeats, with breaks between them. And so again, again (Do you notice that my play is built on this sonata with a fugal action?)⁴

Bergman incorporated the Beethoven sonata Op. 31/2, a work closely associated with Strindberg who titled it ‘Spöksonaten’ [The Ghost Sonata],⁵ into his staging of Ibsen’s *John Gabriel Borkman (JGB)* on two occasions: first, during a production at the Residenztheater in Munich in 1985, and second, in a radio adaptation for Swedish Radio in 2001.

Unlike Strindberg, who believed that a play could be understood through musical forms, Roy Prendergast (1992, p. 44) suggests that film music, unlike sonata or rondo forms, lacks traditional formal expectations simply because there are none. With Bergman’s detailed musical annotations in the 2001 *JGB* manuscript and the continuous use of Beethoven’s Op. 31/2 in the final product, there remains an avenue to investigate whether Bergman applied principles of classical sonata form in this radio adaptation. This serves as a potential starting point that may reveal patterns of significance for his oeuvre.

Another point of departure is Ibsen’s sonic landscape, where he employed sounds and noises to enhance moments (Swanson, 1998, p. 205). Ibsen’s explicit instructions regarding the actors’ intonation of their lines, coupled with everyday sounds like Borkman’s footsteps in *JGB*, serve diverse purposes. This element is likely something that Bergman paid attention to, especially in the radio – a medium well-suited for small or intimate-sounding gestures (Stanton, 2004). Elsewhere, Ulf Björlin⁶ has noticed that Bergman’s use of everyday sounds had a transferred, musical function in the film *The Silence* (Malmer, 1967); something that scholars like Maaret Koskinen (2010) and Charlotte Renauld (2011) have explored later. This leads to the research query: To what extent did Bergman’s incorporation of actors’ intonation and everyday sounds, to serve

⁴ Strindberg, 1899 (archive). My translation. Swedish: ‘En detalj, var snäll angif i parentesen om Beethovens D. moll sonat, Finalen att särskilt takterna 96–107 skola gnos på med. Dessa toner verkar alltid som en centrumborr i samvetet på mig. Det ska låta som om musikspelaren öfvade in dessa takter, alltså tar om, tar om, med pauser emellan. Och så igen, om igen! (märker Du att min pjes är byggd på denna sonat: fugerad?)’

⁵ Not to be confused with his play of the same title.

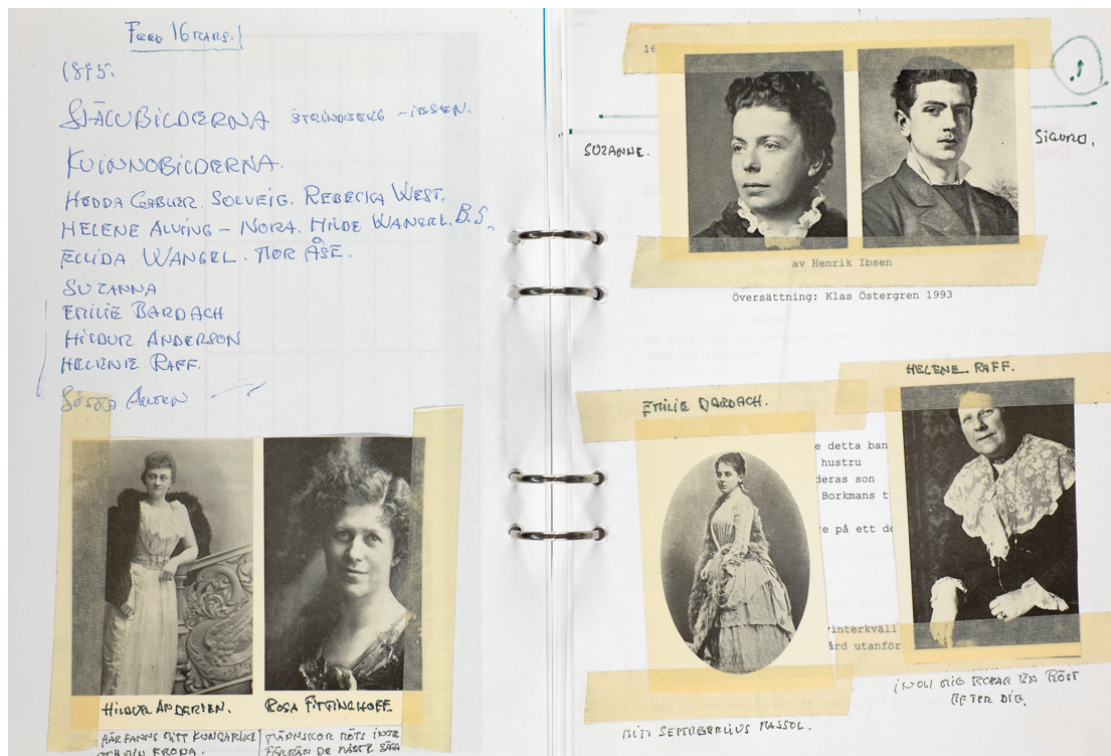
⁶ Conductor at the Royal Dramatic Theatre (RDT) during Bergman’s leadership in the 1960s. For additional information, see Eulau (2009).

various scenic purposes in the drama, contribute to the overall significance of sonic environments in his production of *JGB*?

In *JGB*, Ibsen sheds light on how Borkman has prioritised work and power over love, mirroring Ibsen's subordination of life to art (Figueiredo, 2019, pp. 610–629). In his radio adaptation of *JGB*, Bergman exclusively uses music mentioned in Strindberg's autobiographical work *BOB* where Maurice wants to break free from his obligations, which prompts the question: Does this signify Bergman's bold attempt to unite Ibsen and Strindberg into one persona drawing nourishment from both authors? Something that reinforces such an interpretation is that both Ibsen and Strindberg represent John Gabriel Borkman's 'self-image' in the cast of the 2001 *JGB* (Figure 1).

In essence, this article investigates the significance of music and sound effects, as well as their absence, in Bergman's radio adaptation of Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman*. By studying Bergman's use of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2, the aim is to examine whether the dramaturgy can be comprehended through the idiom of music. What interests me, and what I regard as a central element to delve into, is if the dichotomy between the sonic and the narrative in relation to Bergman's last production for film has parallels in this radio adaptation of Ibsen's *JGB*.

Figure 1. Gallery of characters in Bergman's script for the radio adaptation of John Gabriel Borkman (2001). e_047_0_0032a; Kungliga biblioteket © Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman.



Method

Intermediality is a commonly used conceptual framework when investigating and analysing interactions within Ingmar Bergman's body of work produced for different media (Koskinen, 2008). In the study of radio theatre, intermediality involves examining the dynamic interplay of sound, narrative, imagination, and technology (Wolf, 1999). While it is not a method *per se*, this study adopts an intermedial approach that combines musical style analysis with analyses of sound, narrative, and other relevant aspects. Departing from Bergman's well-known admission of having been influenced by Strindberg, and, in turn, Strindberg's documented admiration of Beethoven and his music, this study uses a methodological approach consisting in examining the connections between the radio adaptation of Ibsen's play *John Gabriel Borkman* and Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2.

Regarding the analysis of Beethoven's music in *JGB*, I have adopted eclectic approaches drawing inspiration from traditional musical style analysis by renowned Beethoven scholars (see references below), applying narratology through a musicological lens, and placing a special emphasis on music for film and theatre. As Tobias Pontara (2020) points out, a comprehensive exploration of themes, dimensions, and patterns cannot be fully grasped without a systematic approach to the perspective of the music and sounds they contain. To contextualise the sounding elements in relation to the narrative of *JGB*, the investigation began with documenting important background materials. This material forms the foundation of the study (see Appendix B).

The introductory quote by Ole Hessler draws attention to the immersive nature of listening to a radio play, highlighting its parallel with a transformative mental process, akin to the experience of dreaming and engaging the mind in internal visions. While initially presented in the context of radio drama, this concept can be extended to the cinematic medium, suggesting that both radio plays and films have the capacity to evoke imaginative and internalised experiences within the minds of their audiences. When scrutinising the musical elements in radio drama, it proves advantageous to leverage insights gained from the analytical tools designed for the examination of film music. Claudia Gorbman's concept of diegesis (1987, pp. 22–23), initially developed in her research on film music, proves applicable in radio drama, facilitating the exploration of the temporal and spatial dimensions occupied by characters and their actions. Gorbman's differentiation between diegetic and non-diegetic music is crucial for understanding how music contributes to a film's narrative and emotional structure. Diegetic music seamlessly integrates into the storyline, audible to characters and woven into scenes. In contrast, non-diegetic music, unheard by characters, enhances emotional impact, resembling a film's score or songs for dramatic effect. In addition, there is a concept called 'metadiegetic music', defined by Gorbman as music supposedly narrated or 'imagined' by a character. It occurs when music played initially within the story is later replayed non-diegetically, as a character's flashback, triggered by a scene's narrative. Additionally, the concept of 'intradiegetic music' refers to music that is merely mentioned or related to within the narrative, existing solely within the film's story world

(Winters, 2010)⁷. In Table 1, a schematic overview is provided of Bergman’s use of Beethoven’s Op. 31/2 as either diegetic or non-diegetic in the radio adaptation of *JGB*.

In Appendix B, there is a compilation of how sounds and Beethoven’s music appear in the radio adaptation of *JGB*, with an emphasis on its relation to the narrative. When interpreting Bergman’s radio directorship, it is important not to overlook the musical aspects of theatre and radio theatre. Key works in the field, including those by Lynne Kendrick (2017), David Roesner (2016), and Tim Crook (1999), are consulted to explore the formal, rhythmic, and melodic qualities of elements associated with radio drama and theatrical media.

Table 1. Schedule of the bars of Beethoven’s Opus 31/2 that are played in Bergman’s radio adaptation of Ibsen’s *Johan Gabriel Borkman*. White background is for the first movement which is non-diegetic [ND] and grey for the third movement which is diegetic [D] or metadiegetic [MD].

Movement Bars	MVT1: 1-7	MVT3: 91-94;2; 1-28	MVT3: 350-399	MVT1: 217-228	MVT3: 259-318	MVT1: 143-144	MVT1: 143-148
Figure	4A	5A-B	5F	4C	5E	4B	4B
Scene no. in <i>JGB</i>	1	4	5-6	9	13-14	15	15
Diegetic/non-diegetic (D/ND)	ND	D	D	ND	ND/MD (inner - flash back)	ND	ND
Duration (H.Min:Sec)	7.03:47- 7.04:43	7.24:16- 7.24:30	7.25:19- 7.26:10	7.50:55- 7.51:10	8.03:08- 8.04:01	8.10:29- 8.10:43	8.16:01- 8.16:45

Materials

In recent decades, several musicologists have explored Bergman’s use of predominantly classical Western music in film (Broman, 2021, 2012; Luko, 2016; Neumann, 2017). Less known is his usage of music for the stage and radio drama. Alongside Ulla-Britta Lagerroth’s study of music in Bergman’s theatrical renditions of Shakespeare (Lagerroth, 2008), Birgitta Steene’s work *Ingmar Bergman: a reference guide* (Steene, 2005) offers the most extensive groundwork in this area. However, to the best of my knowledge, there has been no comprehensive investigation into the connection between musical structure and narrative in any of Bergman’s productions, including those intended for radio.

⁷ Pontara (2016) has engaged in an in-depth discussion of the concept from philosophical and cinematic perspectives.

In a master's degree study, Linda Randsalu (2004) highlights that more than half of the recordings of the 40 radio theatre productions that Bergman created between 1946 and 2003 have been lost. John Gabriel Borkman is a unique exception since not only the radio recording but also all the working materials have been preserved. Contained in a folder at Kungliga Biblioteket, Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman, are Bergman's annotated copy of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2 (movements 1–3), and Klas Östergren's translation of the adaptation by Ingmar Bergman and Erland Josephson of Ibsen's manuscript, including Bergman's handwritten scene divisions, directions, deletions, illustrations, and cross-references between text and music. Additionally, there is a rehearsal schedule for Ibsen's *Ghosts*, which premiered at the Royal Dramatic Theatre ('Dramaten') a few months after the broadcast of *JGB*. Together with the entire radio recording of *JGB*, which is available for research at Kungliga Biblioteket, The Swedish Media Database, this collection of working material holds a unique significance.

Even though Bergman was clear about when music was supposed to be played and sometimes provided detailed information about the music in his films, the presence of sheet music in connection with a work script is very rare. Another circumstance, which is especially important for comparative purposes, is that the work script from the Munich staging in 1985 is also preserved in the Ingmar Bergman Archives. Unfortunately, no recordings of this staging are available.⁸ Rudolf Gregor Knabl, the supervisor of the music proceedings of the staging in 1985, recalls that Op. 31/2 was included as an act separation and sometimes performed live on a stage piano.⁹ To ensure accurate English translations of Ibsen's and Strindberg's texts, *Project Gutenberg eBooks* has been consulted. For Strindberg's Swedish texts, *the National Edition* (Nationalupplagan) with text-critical comments was referenced. This is also the source I refer to for narrative questions. Other Swedish sources have been translated into English by the present author, unless otherwise specified.

In the music analyses, the 'Bärenreiter Urtext' edition (Beethoven, 2019) has been used as a complement due to its fidelity in preserving Beethoven's original notation and markings. For aspects related to sonata form, reference is made to James Webster (2001). In a discography of Bergman's record collection (Eulau, 2018), it is evident that Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2 was featured in three distinct recordings: one LP and two CDs. Given that Bergman had Beethoven's complete piano sonatas recorded by Wilhelm Kempff on LP in his possession, and considering that his stereo system was best equipped for vinyl, it is reasonable to assume that Bergman was most familiar with this recording.¹⁰ In the radio adaptation of *JGB*, Käbi Laretei plays the piano.

⁸ This conclusion is based on e-mail communication with: Sinead Kennedy, Residenztheater, Munich; Kim Heydeck, Deutsches Theatermuseum; and Thomas Maagh, Verlag der Autoren in Frankfurt.

⁹ R. G. Knabl, e-mail communication 2021.

¹⁰ It should be noted that Kempff made two complete recordings: one in mono and a later one in stereo. The recording referred to here is in stereo (DG 138 942 SL MP).

The Music: Piano Sonata Op. 31/2

Beethoven's Piano Sonata in D Minor Op. 31/2, no. 17 (1802), is written in three movements (MVT1-3). This sonata has been regarded as Beethoven's most dramatic composition up to that point, characterised by contrasting tempos, motifs, and a radical shift in mood (Rosen, 2002; Cooper, 2017). Scholars such as Theodor Adorno (Adorno et al., 1997), Barry Cooper (2008, 2017), Carl Dahlhaus (1991), and Dave Molk (2020) have extensively examined the challenges presented in MVT1, particularly its opening, which contains various ambiguities. One of the primary areas of focus has been reconciling it with the traditional procedures of sonata form. Internationally, this sonata is often referred to as 'The Tempest'.¹¹ In Sweden, Beethoven's Op. 31/2 is widely linked to Strindberg, particularly due to his keen interest in its third movement. His titling it as 'The Ghost Sonata' likely stems from its development marked by the persistent reiteration of its initial rhythmic figure – a characteristic that troubled Strindberg and led him to liken it to a persistent, grinding drill that burrows its way into the conscience.¹²

In *JGB*, Bergman exclusively uses MVT1 and MVT3, both in D minor, while excluding the bright, second movement in B-flat major. Regarding form, Alfred Brendel, by whom Bergman had a recording (Eulau, 2018), describes the unique presentation of the musical material in MVT1 (Brendel, 2015, pp. 66–67). Brendel highlights the tripartite structure of the theme, with a solemn broken chord at the beginning, an expressive embellishment at the end, and a layered figure on the notes A–F–E–D in the middle. This figure embodies elements that serve as a genetic foundation for all the themes in each movement, resurfacing prominently or subtly throughout the composition. In this way, it harmoniously aligns with the context of a family drama.

Result

Narratological aspects

In both *JGB* (1896) and *BOB* (1899), crime is a central theme. Borkman's crime is embezzling money from the bank, and he also sacrificed love for power by marrying Gunhild, the twin sister of his sweetheart Ella. After several years in prison and eight years in the apartment/gallery above, separated from Gunhild, who lives below, the yearning for freedom overcomes his domesticated existence, and he escapes with Ella into the winter night. Borkman's tragic flaw lies in prioritising power over love.

In *BOB*, Maurice, a young writer, rises from obscurity in Paris due to a successful play. Intoxicated by fame, he betrays his former beloved Jeanne and their daughter Marion, leaving with his friend's mistress Henriette. Marion's sudden death raises suspicions of Maurice's involvement, as he briefly experiences a dark desire in Henriette's arms. However, Maurice is eventually proven innocent and exonerated. In the foreword, Edwin Björkman highlights the Catholic context of the play, where

¹¹ This is because Beethoven, albeit without clear grounds, is said to have referred to Shakespeare's play as inspiration (Cooper, 2008, p. ix).

¹² See Footnote 4.

Maurice is judged in a higher court for crimes against the spirit, against the intangible power that moves us, against God (Ibsen, 2006).

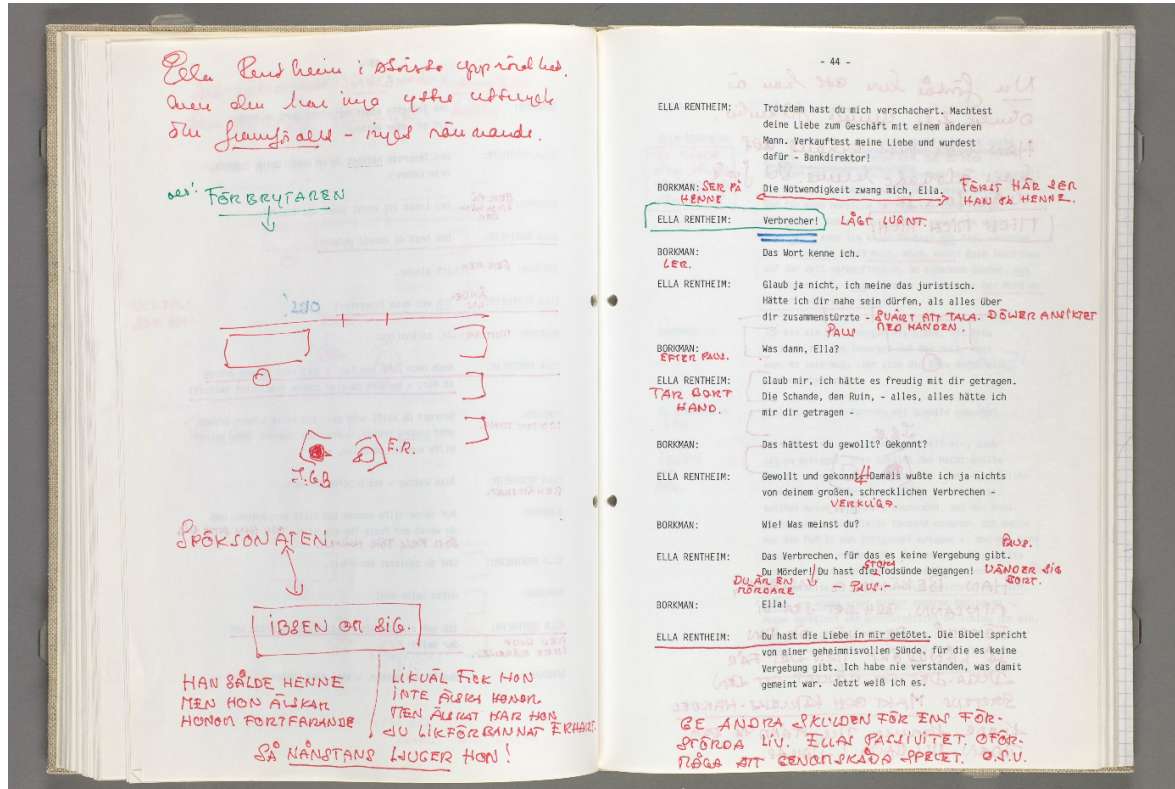
Similarly to Maurice, Borkman exhibits megalomania. However, Borkman shows no remorse. In contrast, his 21-year-old son Erhart, who shares traits with Maurice, experiences significant guilt toward his mother Gunhild as he reveals his plan to leave with Mrs. Wilton. Probably, the feelings of guilt are also directed towards Frida Foldal, daughter of Wilhelm Foldal, Borkman's only friend, who received piano lessons from both father and son Borkman. According to Steene (2005), in the German staging in 1985, Bergman presented Foldal as the title figure's alter ego, a shadow from his youth, and suggested Ibsen's persona in the Borkman-Foldal duo by adding to the play text a passage from Ibsen's youthful tragedy *Catalina*, in which he had Foldal present as an excerpt from one of his own dramas in the making. Bergman retained this addition in the radio version. Likewise, a note about *The Ghost Sonata* in relation to Ibsen's own perspective on himself/Borkman (Figure 2), reveals that Bergman considers father and son Borkman as the same person. In this way, father, son, and Foldal would be one persona and Frida Foldal its daughter/sister. By portraying the Borkman/Foldal persona as fluid and ambiguous with various identities, Bergman subtly explores uncomfortable and painful themes, such as incest and prostitution, that are known to all the characters in the play but remain unacknowledged. This approach is reminiscent of the profound exploration of incest in Bergman's final TV production, *Saraband* (2003), which is revealed when reading Bergman's workbook (Bergman, 2018, p. 438).

Unable to bear staying in his childhood home any longer, Erhart hastily leaves with Mrs. Wilton and Frida Foldal, who is said to be accompanying them on their trip abroad to receive piano lessons. Both in *JGB* and *BOB*, there is a sense of jealousy and pride (that goes before a fall) between the women associated with the main characters. It is only in their closing lines, after Borkman's death, that the twin sisters in *JGB* find reconciliation.

Sonic aspects

Through the actors' lines where Borkman's footsteps are mentioned by the women downstairs, Ibsen provides instructions about the sounds that the audience should perceive in *JGB*. In the radio adaptation, Bergman modernises the play by reducing era-specific sounds such as the sleigh bells when Ella arrives at the house. However, he retains significant sounds like Borkman's footsteps from his gallery above Gunhild's chamber during her encounter with Ella. Ibsen scholar Robert Dean (2011) notes that Borkman's actions' sounds are an unwelcome intrusion into the characters' space, creating an 'aural intrusion' effect (ibid., p. 61). This 'acousmatic intrusion' creates tension between on-set and off-set spaces.

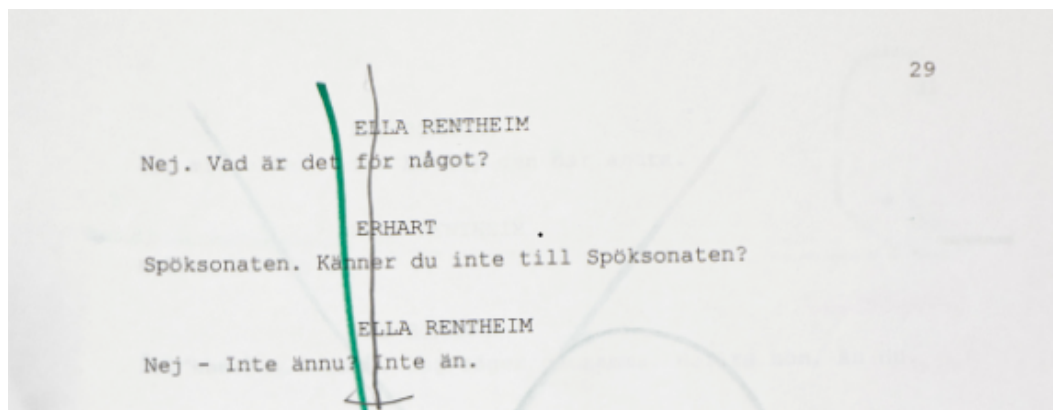
Figure 2. ‘The Ghost Sonata.’ **Ibsen about himself.** He sold her, but she still loves him | yet she was not allowed to love him. But goddamn she has loved Erhart. So somewhere she’s living! Translation of Bergman’s note (in capital letters) on the left page, below the drawing. Bergman’s work script, 1985, p. 38 d_098_0_0049a. Photo: Kungliga biblioteket © Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman.



In scene three, as Frida ascends to play the piano for Borkman, the sound of his footsteps, previously audible to Ella and Gunhild, would, according to Dean, have been accompanied by piano music. However, in Bergman’s radio adaptation, the footsteps are omitted. Instead, the distinct sound of Erhart’s increasingly heavy breaths in his dialogue with Mrs. Wilton at the end of scene three intensifies a heightened sexual tension. This happens shortly after Erhart urges Frida to go upstairs to Borkman. The ensuing silence from the gallery above, coinciding with Erhart’s lively conversation with Mrs. Wilton and his forced and affected behaviour towards his mother and aunt shortly after that, creates an eerie effect. Here, the human sounds take on a significant role. Borrowing from Ubersfeld’s introduction of a poststructuralist shift (quoted in Stanton, 2004, p. 95), one may argue that Bergman redirects focus from the author to the reader. Drawing on ideas reminiscent of poststructuralist thinkers like Derrida and Lacan, particularly the concepts of ellipsis and decentring, Ubersfeld highlights that the connection between the spectator’s yearning and the stage is marked by ceaseless exploration but also enduring dissatisfaction (ibid.). By having the actors use different shades of tune that they could produce with their voices and avoiding mentioning Erhart’s and Ella’s lines when discussing the music (Figure 3), Bergman guides the team on a journey through what Stanton depicts as another unconscious, complex, ‘allusive acoustic bricolage’ in which the radio audience might take part (Stanton, 2004, p. 103).

What Borkman did to Ella when he abandoned her for Gunhild due to financial reasons now appears to be repeated when Erhart sends Frida to play for his father to earn some money, while he himself entertains the considerably older, well-off Mrs. Wilton. None of this, however, is explicitly stated in the text. It is hidden within the metadiegetic relationship between the sonic aspects of the voices and the music in MVT3. In this way, Bergman demands a good amount of interpretative ability from the radio audience.

Figure 3. Bergman's cancellation of 'The Ghost Sonata'. Bergman's script for the radio adaptation of John Gabriel Borkman (2001). E:047_0_0061a; Kungliga biblioteket © Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman.



First movement (MVT1)

In accordance with Table 1, the music from MVT1 only appears in non-diegetic form. It comes either from the exposition, the recapitulation, or, as in the case of its last occurrence, the connecting episode. Its performance at the beginning and the end provides a musical backdrop for the play. An exception is found in scene 9, which coincides with the end of Ibsen's second act when Borkman leaves home. Here, the music seems to underscore the end of an era.


Melody

Concerning form and melody, the introductory arpeggiated triad (Figure 4A) captures the play's essence; simultaneously, as the plot unfolds, it traverses the realms of the past, exploring what has been and what could have been. Similarities exist with Bergman's film *Wild Strawberries*, where a car journey transcends time and memories. In *JGB*, Ella's reunion with Gunhild evokes haunting memories from the past. Koskinen (2001) demonstrates how specific elements, like a gong, guide Bergman's productions. Three such guides appear in *JGB*: the traditional 'radio theatre' gong strike, the introductory arpeggiando, and Gunhild's hand bell, capturing listeners' attention and marking the play's start. Using the arpeggiated triad and subsequent five bars, Bergman introduces the play and assigns distinctive motifs to the main characters: Borkman, Gunhild, and Ella. By considering their temperaments, one can deduce that the *Largo* represents Ella's calmness, while the couple is symbolised by the alternating *Allegro* and *Adagio*, reflecting their contrasting natures. However, as is often the case in Bergman's

productions, characters slip in and out of each other's personas. In the radio adaptation, Bergman combines voice and narrative by selecting actors (Anita Björk and Gunnel Lindblom) with similar tone of voice for the twin sisters, causing confusion among the audience as to whether there are two distinct individuals or a single persona. In support of this, I regard these three characters as a group, the 'older generation', corresponding to the first group of motifs in a sonata movement.

Figure 4. MVT1. A) The opening with Bergman's marks of the episode to be played; B) Bars 143-148, concluding JGB (2001); C) The final bars (217-228) of MVT1, concluding scene 9 (Ibsen's second act); D) Page 31 of a stamp from Swedish Radio's Music Library (the passage is not played in Bergman's radio play). Bergman's script for the radio adaptation of John Gabriel Borkman (2001); d_047_0_002-8a. Kungliga biblioteket © Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman.

A. 

B. 

C. 



Harmony

Dahlhaus (1991, pp. 116–118) regards the beginning of this sonata with the arpeggiated chord as an introduction, not the exposition of a theme:

The formal section that begins in bar 21 [based on bars 1–2] distinguishes itself by a stronger melodic outline and more regular syntax /.../ [but also] as the goal and the outcome of a harmonic development that has moved towards the delayed tonic /.../ The arpeggiated triad in bar 1 is ‘not yet,’ and in bar 21 is ‘no longer’ the exposition of the theme /.../ The fact that musical form consists in the process of coming into being, as well as in the result that is seen at the end of the process, is of course particularly obvious in works like the D minor sonata /.../ The path, not its end, is the goal.

This simultaneously clear and ambiguous structure appears to be a perfect fit for Bergman’s interpretation of Ibsen’s drama where the characters flow in and out of each other’s personas. By analysing musical elements like pianissimo, pedal indications, formal location, first-inversion harmony, and ambiguity, Molk (2020) reveals a unique pattern specific to the *largo* passages. Through exploring the ‘largo essence’ of MVT1, Molk identifies three significant waves that follow an ABA structure. These waves seem to align with key moments of structural importance in terms of the sonata form. Comparing Bergman’s usage of MVT1 with Molk’s identified ‘largo waves’, it becomes evident that two sequences in *JGB* align with two of these waves: the first (bars 1–2 and 7–8, Figure 4A), and the last (third) one (bars 143–148, Figure 4B; and 153–158). Bars 217–228, which conclude MVT1 and serve as the ending of scene 9 (Figure 4C), lack the tempo indication *Largo*. However, as Molk argues, in a movement characterised by a frenzied rhythmic surface (like the finish of the recapitulation), such a unique deviation acquires heightened significance. Therefore, this concluding part might be perceived as *Largo* as well. Thus, the structure of MVT1 seems to hold considerable influence on the formal structure that frames Bergman’s *JGB*.

Beethoven reuses the opening triad of the first movement in bars 143–144, foreshadowing the recapitulation. In the last scene of *JGB* (No. 15), the subject is played twice. At the beginning of the scene, it is unclear which version of the subject is being played. The arpeggiated chord creates the impression that Borkman is opening a treasure chest to an imaginary kingdom. The chord signifies the narrative of recapitulation, symbolising the beginning of the end. However, this indication of a recapitulation is deceptive. This becomes clear to the radio listeners when Ella tells Borkman that he will never make his triumphal march into his cold dark kingdom because of his murder of their love. Shortly after that he passes away.

Common to Bergman's final productions of Ibsen's *Ghosts* and Strindberg's *The Ghost Sonata* and *Island of the Dead/The Pelican* is that they all conclude with the same musical piece that was used to open them (see Appendix A). However, in *JGB*, different sections (largo waves) are employed for the beginning and the end. After the parting shot, the arpeggiated chord re-appears in the original key (dominant) with the two 'largo-bars' extended to six bars (143-148, Figure 4B) and concludes the play. The solitary melody, unaccompanied, has a unique character described by Beethoven as 'con espressione e semplice', conveying an intimate and straightforward melodic feeling, with an uncertain and elusive movement between the dominant and the tonic. In Molk's words, 'it exists in an ambiguous, indefinite state' (Molk, 2020, p. 103). Bergman's use of the opening arpeggiando and the rest of the 'first wave' in the final scene, suggests a return to significant exposition material. However, the delayed tonic may hinder its classification as a recapitulation.

Molk (2020, p. 107) notes that performers who recognise the fermata at bar 158 as signalling the departure from the strange world of the recitatives will linger, drawing out this moment for as long as possible. In contrast, it is evident from Bergman's notations in the sheet music that it was his intention to end before the fermata (Figure 4B). However, a sense of 'fermata' pervades the entire recitative, as Laretei performs bars 144-148 in a lingering, dreamlike manner, using the pedal to allow the final note, the dominant, to resonate and fade away. In this way, Bergman and Laretei create an ambiguous ending of the play, in both harmony and performance, bearing a striking resemblance to the ending of Strindberg's play *The Ghost Sonata*, where, as per Strindberg's stage directions, the entire room disappears, replaced by Arnold Boecklin's painting *Isle of the Dead* (German: *Die Toteninsel*) accompanied by soft music before the curtain. In the way that Bergman employs Beethoven's music to conclude *JGB* - very slowly and expressively, as if walking in darkness along an unexplored path - the piano appears to function as a guide, clearing the way to a place whose attainment remains uncertain. For Bergman scholars, it would be impossible not to recall Tamino's *O ewige Nacht* in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (K. 620), which, according to Bergman himself, was the scene that touched him the most when adapting it for the screen (Bergman, 1987, p. 251). After directing the opera for television in 1975, Bergman revisits the scene in a more abstract and symbolic manner in his films *The Serpent's Egg* (1977) and *From the Life of the Marionettes* (1979), where a man frantically runs between several doors, knocking in despair, hoping that at least one of them will open. By using the 'Con espressione e semplice' theme (Figure 4B) to accompany the death of Borkman and his mourning women, Bergman not only creates an atmosphere of solitude, but also sets the stage. As such, the music seems to have a metadiegetic function, illustrating the man retiring from present life - a retreat that suitably enough coincides with the beginning of the recapitulation of MVT1. An important aspect is that Bergman rounds off the play by using this very expressive music after the twin sisters finally have become reconciled.

By means of harmony, Bergman seems to give *JGB* an open end as well as a gate to his next (and last) radio production, Strindberg's *The Pelican/Island of the Dead*.

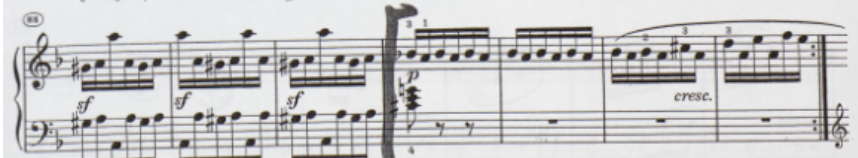

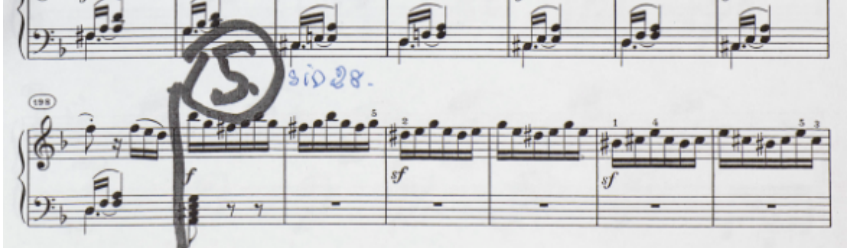


Considering the passage as a connecting episode leading to the tonic in D minor, a harmonic connection between *JGB* and Bergman's subsequent radio adaptation of Strindberg's *Island of the Dead/The Pelican* becomes apparent. The latter begins in D minor with J. S. Bach's *Saraband* from Cello Suite No. 2 (BWV 1008), establishing an implicit line that supports the cadential formula. The transformative power of chords and tonalities to quickly change mood makes harmony a significant element for textual expression. The *Saraband's* progression from minor to major keys brightens the atmosphere, aided by an octave leap at the cadence to create a sense of closure. In addition, the voices of Erland Josephson and Anita Björk enhance the auditory experience of the transition. Josephson, who portrays Borkman, passes away in *JGB* and later emerges as 'the Dead Husband' in *Island of the Dead/The Pelican*. On the other hand, Anita Björk plays Ella, who is afflicted with an incurable disease in *JGB* and stands by Borkman's side as he passes away. When he arrives at the 'Island of the Dead', Björk's voice is already there to meet him in the role of 'The Teacher'. The sound of the actors' voices and speech qualities accentuates the significance of the harmonic events. By modifying Strindberg's text in *Island of the Dead*, Bergman directs the journey towards *Damascus*, echoing Strindberg's autobiographical dream-play. Its original ending with 'May he rest in peace!' and 'Amen!' is adapted in Bergman's radio version, using 'må ske' [translation of Amen] before the *Saraband* concludes the play. Thus, the harmonic, sonic, and narrative connection between Bergman's last two radio plays highlights an organic transition from life to death and beyond, enriching the metadiegetic experience as it shifts from Ibsen to Strindberg.

Third movement (MVT3)

If MVT1 frames the play as the older generation setting the tune for a family, MVT3 reflects the younger generation, contemporaneous with Strindberg. From Strindberg's letter (see Footnote 4) the 'guilty conscience theme' is symbolised by bars 96–107 from the *development* section (which starts in bar 95). When Bergman uses MVT3 in *JGB*, no music at all comes from its development. Instead, he uses bars 91–94 which lead both to the repetition of the *exposition* (first time) and to the *development* section (second time, Figure 5A–B). By only playing this passage and never the one that leads to bar 95 where the development begins, Bergman emphasises the feeling of confinement, monotony, and lack of progress that young people may experience upon returning to their childhood home after being away for a long time. On the other hand, by not playing 'the guilty conscience theme', Bergman assists Erhart in setting aside any feelings of guilt and directing his attention towards the escape.

A parallel could be discerned in Bergman's account of his parents' early years together in *The Best Intentions* (Bergman, 2018), published a few years after his first staging of *JGB*. In this narrative, the father Henrik is severely tormented by feelings of guilt for being unfaithful to Frida, who is his secret fiancée. Just like Ibsen's Frida Foldal or Jeanne in Strindberg's *BOB*, Frida comes from humble circumstances where geographic and/or familial ties from the years when they were growing up, seem to hold the relationship together.

Figure 5. MVT3 A) Passage leading to the repetition of the exposition with the repeat from B), the beginning, marked in the sheet music. The music stops at bar 28 (as it sounds in the final radio adaption). C) Bergman’s cross reference in the script (p. 28) to D), the sheet music (p. 44) and vice versa; E) Bergman’s mark from recapitulation/connecting episode at bar 243. The red mark in the work script does not coincide with the place where the music starts in the final radio version. F. Bar 350 to the end, end of Act II. Bergman’s script for the radio adaptation of John Gabriel Borkman (2001): e_047_0_0013-21a and e_047_0_0061a. Kungliga biblioteket © Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman.

<p>A. Bars 91-94, p. 41.</p>	
<p>B. Bars 1-28.</p>	
<p>C.</p>	<p>ERHART Så kan vi prata vidare i morgon - Du och mamma och jag. Vore det inte mycket bättre?</p> <p>FRU BORKMAN Erhart, - jag kan se att du vill komma härifrån! Du vill till Hinkels.</p> <p>Musik - (Sido 44)</p>
<p>D.</p>	 <p><small>*) In der (ziemlich unzuverlässigen) Originalausgabe steht hier e¹ (ohne b); in Frühdrucken e². *) Here the (rather inaccurate) original edition has e¹ (without b); early editions e². *) Dans l'édition originale (assez inexacte) se trouve ici m¹ (sans b); dans premières impressions e².</small></p>
<p>E. Red mark bar 243 (never played).</p>	
<p>F. Bars 350-399, Scenes 5-6</p>	

When Erhart, in scene four of *JGB*, perceives the music from upstairs, where Frida is playing the piano for his father, he becomes overwhelmed by horror and flees from the house. In this way it is Frida who, by playing Beethoven, makes Erhart tear himself away from his possessive mother and demanding father. In *The Best Intentions*, it is also the character Frida who initiates breaking free from the damaging relationship with Ingmar Bergman's father. The fact that Ibsen gave Foldal's daughter the name Frida, the same name as Strindberg's wife, recalls Bergman's statement about Ibsen ridiculing Strindberg. In any case, Strindberg's idea that his daughter Kerstin was an obstacle to his separation from Frida Uhl, and that his life would be easier if she were dead (Hellqvist, 1997, p. 148–150) may have a parallel in Erhart, who seems to believe that everything would be resolved if his parents were no longer alive. When MVT3 is played for the second (scene 5) and third time (scene 13), it also symbolises Gunhild's intense dislike and fear as she realises that she will be left alone and abandoned when Erhart departs from home. The third and final time MVT3 is played, it is from a passage that leads into the second theme and eventually towards the end. Bergman's red mark 'OBS! 5A' in the sheet music may suggest a link between scene 5 and 13, since bars 243–246, where the initial figure (exposition) appears in the bass (Figure 5E), belong to the recapitulation. Thus, it is implied that the development has already unfolded through the narrative events – reality has caught up with Gunhild, whose nightmares have come true. However, the music used by Bergman from the recapitulation starts at bar 259 when the initial figure reappears in the bass. In *JGB*, Ibsen briefly mentions music, noting the 'Danse macabre' playing upstairs as Frida accompanies Borkman on the piano. Dean (2011, p. 62) suggests that the music's title and style date back to the late medieval period in Western Europe, allegorically depicting death's omnipotence and equality.¹³ This implies a reference to 'Dies Irae', the medieval liturgical poem on death's inevitability and impartiality. Bergman capitalises on the inherent rhythmic tension between the first and third movements by exclusively utilising music from them. The transition from 4/4 (MVT1) to 3/8 (MVT3), and the change from Largo/Allegro in MVT1 to the nearly dance-like Allegretto in MVT3 allow free scope for an interpretation that this is a dance that, like a whirlwind, grows increasingly powerful and from which no one can escape with their life intact. In the work script (2001), 'The Danse Macabre' is replaced with 'Spöksonaten' (the Ghost Sonata), a title that also appears, handwritten, in relation to Frida's piano playing in the German work script.

However, as we can see in Figure 3, these lines are revised in pencil in the final version. Notably, Bergman does not assign a title to the music in the dialogue. The most apparent reason is that a faithful translation would lead to confusion, given the strong association of 'The Danse Macabre' with the opening scene of Bergman's film *The Seventh Seal* (1957), featuring a choir singing *Dies irae* and ending with a dance of death. Similar ambiguity would arise concerning the title 'Spöksonaten', due to its significant link with Strindberg. By merging Ibsen's concept of the 'Danse macabre' with

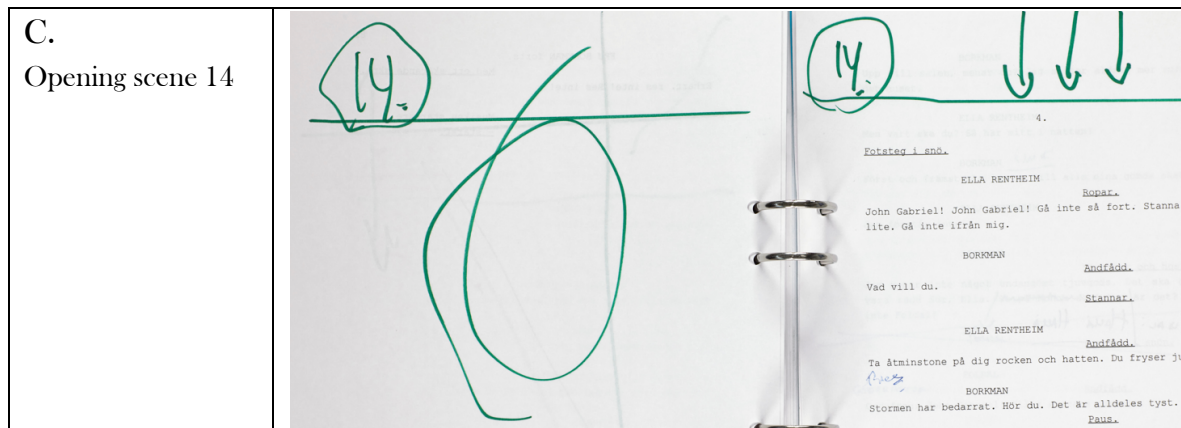
¹³ Due to the French spelling of 'Danse macabre', one can assume that Ibsen might have had Saint-Saëns's symphonic poem *Danse macabre* (1874) in mind.

Strindberg's favourite Beethoven sonata, Bergman unites the two playwrights through music and imparts a fitting musical atmosphere to the condemned Borkman house.

In the transition between scenes 13 and 14, music from MVT3's recapitulation section accentuates a deeper complexity. The grinding character of the music, intensified in strength, underscores the persistent and repetitive atmosphere of a biting cold that tightly grips the Borkman family. Adding a ritardando and diminuendo in bars 312-318, Bergman concludes the 'danse macabre' at the beginning of scene 14. The MVT3 contains an extended coda, which finally ends with a reiteration of the perfect cadence found upon the initial rhythm of Strindberg's 'drill/trill figure'. By stopping at bar 318, Bergman interrupts the music just before this coda starts.

Figure 6. The transition between scenes 13 and 14. Bergman's script for the radio adaptation of *John Gabriel Borkman* (2001), e_47_0_0114a. Kungliga biblioteket © Stiftelsen Ingmar Bergman.

<p>A. End scene 13 Gunhild tries to stop Erhart from leaving home. Music louder to loud.</p>	<p>FRU BORKMAN forts. Erhart, res inte! Res inte! Med ett skärande skri. Musiken starkare - starkt.</p>
<p>B. Ella, Gunhild and Borkman's 'rhythmical' arguing to the tones of MVT3, bars 259-318 (cf. Figure 4E).</p>	<p>PAUS. FRU BORKMAN Barnlös. Nu är jag barnlös. Musik. ELLA RENTHEIM John Gabriel, vart ska du? Vart ska du ta vägen? BORKMAN Ut i snöstormen. Släpp mig, Ella! ELLA RENTHEIM Nej, nej, jag släpper dig inte! Du är sjuk. BORKMAN Låt mig gå, säger jag! Han sliter sig lös och går ut i förstugan. Vind. ELLA RENTHEIM Gunhild! Hjälp mig att hålla fast honom. FRU BORKMAN Jag håller inte fast någon enda människa i hela världen. Låt dom gå ifrån mig allihop. Så långt dom vill. LÅT DOM GÅ! ESQ24 GA!</p>



As if by magic, the music here catalyses several resolutions: Borkman departs the gallery, never to return, fleeing into the winter night with Ella, who finally exacts her revenge on Gunhild for marrying Borkman. Foldal finds solace as Mrs. Wilton steps in to support his daughter's piano studies, freeing him from the guilt of exploiting her financially and allowing his 'poetic vein' (Ibsen, 2006) to live on through Frida's music. Erhart achieves his freedom and escapes the claustrophobic house. With Beethoven's music, Bergman concludes the indoor scenes, echoing Strindberg's resolution of Maurice's issues in *BOB*. In a 2003 interview about radio theatre during a *BOB* revival, Bergman likened dialogue to musical phrases, emphasising rhythm as its essence, and remarked: 'When actors embrace the rhythm, background sounds become redundant'.¹⁴ Webster (2001) underscores that modifying the rhythmic structure and exploring remote tonal regions or sections of tonal instability can turn the development section into a highly tense passage. In the interpretation, this perspective provides valuable insights into the transition from scene 13 to scene 14, where pivotal character interactions take place, mirroring the development and recapitulation stages – both in a musical and narratological sense. The tempo, momentum, and melodic intensity of the finale effectively create a distinct climax in the narrative's depth during the transition from scene 13 to 14.

By portraying characters with varying temperaments and moods, accompanied by Beethoven's music (Figure 6), Bergman orchestrates a rhythmic culmination of the play. This transition from scene 13 to 14 embodies an unfolding fugue-like action. The clash of interests, representing emotional possession and the demand for responsibility versus the yearning for freedom, now finds resolution.

Notes on the unheard sounds of MVT2

Regarding Dean's view of the 'Danse macabre' as a 'musical emblem signifying freedom and happiness' for Borkman (2011, p. 64), some comments on MVT2 are necessary. Bergman's inclusion of all three movements from Beethoven's Op. 31/2 in the *JGB* work script folder, yet using only MVT1 and MVT3, raises queries. On the back of the record jacket, Wilhelm Kempff writes:

¹⁴ Bergman, 2003 (audio).

The Adagio, like the first movement, is introduced by an arpeggio. However, this song of confidence, or faith in the ‘loving Father above the starry firmament’, is not based on a chord of the sixth robbed of its supports, but on the firm foundation of the tonic (Kempff, LP DGG 138 942 SL MP; see Footnote 10).

Unlike MVT1 and MVT3, MVT2 is in major keys: B-flat Major for the first subject and F Major for the second. Notably, Adorno appreciates this cantabile, describing its first thematic complex as ‘[e]xceptionally beautiful, a harmonious blend of contrasting shapes’ (Adorno et al., 1997, p. 185). Adorno emphasises the rise of the F major theme after the dense backdrop, highlighting its dual nature of reconciliation and promise. In connection with MVT1 and MVT3, Brendel, in turn, compares MVT2 to ‘[an] angel between two demons’ (Brendel, 2015, p. 68). However, these positive utterances on MVT2 may not be very applicable to *JGB*. But let me broaden the perspective with an example from Bergman’s epoch-making stage production of Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler* at Dramaten in the early 1960s. In an opening pantomime, Hedda’s gesture subtly reveals an unwanted pregnancy, a non-explicit detail in Ibsen’s text. Bergman defended the addition, likening the play to a musical composition:

No, it’s in the play. Not in this scene itself, but the fact that she is pregnant and doesn’t want the baby. It’s just that it’s so subtly implied in Ibsen’s text that if you don’t listen very carefully, it goes unnoticed. It’s analogous to a musical composition. If a faint sound needs emphasis, you raise its volume. /.../ Whether she approves or disapproves, it’s in the sheet music. (Sjögren, 1968, p. 312, quoted in Lagerroth, 2011, p. 215)

Through this example, I intend to highlight Bergman’s skill in subtly incorporating the theme of ‘a passing angel’ into *JGB*, thereby deepening the audience’s engagement. Bergman’s transition from the external to the internal, from the impact of reality to the realm of emotions, is evident. Interpreting and ‘listening to’ a text in a musical context to uncover the author’s inner voice and the core themes of a play appear to be a pivotal technique in Bergman’s stage and radio theatre productions, as well as in his films.

If the music from MVT2 had been audible to the characters on stage (or the radio listeners), it would likely have been played before Erhart paid attention to it (MVT3). Why does Erhart (or we) not hear the music? Probably because he is engrossed in his own concerns, unaware of a ‘passing angel’. Only Borkman, standing beside the piano, hears the entire sonata. His usually stern voice shifts to excitement. The music conjures up memories of his miner father occasionally taking him into the mines during his childhood. In this dialogue, the music becomes intradiegetic as he prompts Frida to guess where he first heard tones like the ones she just played:

The metal sings down there /.../ The hammer-strokes that loosen it are the midnight bell clanging to set it free; and that is why the metal sings – in its own way – for gladness (Ibsen, 2006).

Here, Ibsen draws parallels between mining work and the production of piano sound, highlighting the variety of tones that can be achieved through hand contact with metal, from the heavy labour in the mine to the refined play of the piano’s metal strings. Koskinen (2008) highlights astonishing similarities between Ibsen’s *Ghosts* and

Bergman's *Saraband*. I would argue that this also applies to *JGB*. The intimate situation between Borkman and Frida during the piano playing – she plays, he listens attentively – appears to have a parallel in the sixth scene of *Saraband*, in which Karin visits her grandfather Johan. Concealed in the background of the scene is a portrait of Ludwig van Beethoven.¹⁵ The portrait becomes visible as Karin enters Johan's study. He is seated beneath it, flanked by two loudspeakers, while the vigorous, rhythmical *Scherzo* movement of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony in D Minor plays at full volume. Johan abruptly halts the music upon noticing Karin's presence, only to restart it after she leaves. This frames the scene with the *Scherzo*, akin to how the second movement of Beethoven's Op. 31/2 is surrounded by 'demons'. Also, Karin, like Frida in *JGB*, is surrounded by demons. From the dialogue between Karin and Johan, it becomes clear that Karin wants to leave her father to study abroad and that she is not prepared to accept her grandfather's offer of support for her studies. This can be interpreted as her reluctance to let her grandfather exercise financial power over her. The shared points of connection are their mutual interest in music and their love for Karin's deceased mother. Linked to *JGB*, the Beethoven portrait carries multiple interconnected meanings¹⁶. It portrays a young talented woman, the daughter of an amateur (musician in *Saraband*, poet in *JGB*) of modest means, who also serves as her teacher. Additionally, the old man's admiration and reverence for her authentic performance brings confidence and joy to his emotionally languishing life upstairs in his gallery.

Discussion

Through an examination of Bergman's utilisation of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2 and other auditory elements, the objective was to assess whether the dramaturgy of Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman (JGB)* in the 2001 radio adaptation could be comprehended through the musical idiom. The result has revealed that the music in this production contains important musical contributions that define the play's shape. With reference to structural issues, three main themes have been crystallised.

The first theme exposes a use of music and sound that can be described and interpreted by a vocabulary known from sound design in radio drama as well as in music for the stage and film. With the help of either music, sounds or silence, Bergman creates soundscapes to provide the radio audience with enough information concerning environmental issues. As such, the radio production touches musical dramaturgy.

¹⁵ The portrait appeared earlier as a prop in Bergman's TV production *In the Presence of a Clown* (1997), depicting Schubert with Beethoven's portrait on the wall, an unusual central perspective for Beethoven but common for Strindberg's portraits.

¹⁶ Regarding the music choice in *Saraband*, a note in Kåbi Laretei's book (quoted in Luko, 2016, p. 93) indicates that it was the preferences of the rabbits outside the house, who seemed more interested in Bruckner than Beethoven, that determined the music selection. Laretei does not specify which music by Beethoven Bergman might have tried on the rabbits. Inquiries were also directed to Daniel Bergman, son of KL and IB, who, regrettably, did not have information or insights on the matter (personal communication). However, considering that both works are in D minor, it is not unlikely that it could have been Op. 31/2.

A second theme indicates that there are movements between the structure of Beethoven's sonata and Bergman's radio production which suggest parallel developments of significance for the diegesis. While seeking structural elements related to a sonata form protocol, it is worth noting, with reference to Prendergast (1992), that such an approach could overwhelm the audience's understanding, and that this applies to radio drama as well. However, if we establish that adhering strictly to sonata form is not the primary compositional imperative in this production, we liberate ourselves to perceive this material from a fresh perspective. We can be influenced by the sonata form without being constrained by it. Based on this premise, the result indicates that Bergman used *largo* passages from MVT1 solely in a non-diegetic manner to frame the play with an introduction, a conclusion, and to signify the end of an era when Borkman leaves the house and ventures out into the winter night, never to return. As Molk (2020) shows, the *largo* material evolves gradually, not only in terms of duration but also in complexity, reaching its zenith in the extra-generic recitative sections functioning as transition to the recapitulation. By employing this recitative, the study suggests that Bergman takes an artistic approach to the play, linking it with his subsequent radio production, *Island of the Dead/The Pelican*.

The third theme is represented by recurring, diegetic gestures which unite certain occasions within a play and/or between different Bergman productions on a metadiegetic level. By paying attention to the music and the sonic effects, or their absence, in *JGB*, the study has examined the possibilities of uncovering that Bergman went from the outside to the inner, from the effect of reality to the area of emotion. As an illustrative example, music from MVT3 exclusively emerges in scenes set indoors. This is also where the music is performed diegetically and, later, in flashbacks or reminiscences perceived metadiegetically by Gunhild. As such, it harmonises with the actors' lines which are rhythmically synchronised with the music. By incorporating selected sequences from MVT3 into *JGB*, as shown here, Bergman, by removing lines and altering or transforming some of Ibsen's explicit musical references, allocates a corresponding space for music as a functional element. The choice of excerpts from MVT3 and their placement within *JGB*, aligned with their original roles in Beethoven's sonata and Strindberg's stage directions in *BOB*, positions Bergman's radio adaptation within a narrative space that bears similarities to Strindberg's play while simultaneously challenging it. This since Bergman never uses the bars from Strindberg's mentioned tormenting MVT3's development in *JGB*, only music from the exposition and recapitulation, suggesting no development, just modified returns. In this way, Bergman prioritises the emotional aspects over realism. In doing so, Bergman elucidates some obvious similarities between Erhart/Borkman and Peer Gynt, an interpretation supported by the fact that Bergman has put Solveig in his gallery of characters (see Figure 1).

In Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, a carefree narcissist living in poverty with his mother, falls in love with Solveig but flees from her and his dying mother to pursue dreams of becoming an emperor outside his hometown. His journey takes him far away, and upon his eventual return home, he is an aged and broken man, compelled to confront himself.

The study has provided examples that Bergman's work on the radio adaptation of *JGB* and the staging of *Ghosts* the following year seems to have served as a valuable source of inspiration for completing *Saraband*. Additionally, research has drawn parallels between Erhart/Borkman's behaviour and that of Hamlet (Van Laan, 1995). In consideration of this, it would be intriguing to explore in the future whether Bergman was influenced by *JGB* and *Hamlet*, and vice versa, given that he staged them around the same time in the mid-1980s.

A crucial question concerns the extent to which the musical selections employed in the production are a manifestation of Bergman's original intent or the product of collaborative deliberations involving the pianist Käbi Laretei. Due to a stamp from Swedish Radio (rather than from the Residenztheater in Munich, where he worked in 1985) on one of the copies (Figure 2D) and considering Bergman's cross-references between the work script of the radio production and sheet music (Figure 5C-D), one could conclude that Bergman reviewed the material on his own before involving the pianist Käbi Laretei in the radio production. However, since Bergman's cross-reference on page 28 does not match the soundscape, it is likely that Laretei assisted Bergman in the final phase of production. Another indicator that may be attributed to Laretei's involvement is that the music in the transition from scene 13 to 14 starts 16 bars after the red mark (Figure 5E)

As mentioned, previous research on Bergman's use of music has primarily focused on his film production. The absence of the visual element in the radio medium, however, with its possibilities to turn the mind 'to a field of internal vision' (the theatre critic and scholar Martin Esslin, quoted in Törnqvist, 1996, p. 191), may be a significant advantage. This is because imagined images may wield greater impact than real ones only by making demands on our hearing. In the interpretation of music's possibilities to support these transformative processes, elements from film music have appeared usable. In film, as Gorbman argues, music draws attention to itself and shifts from the imaginary to the symbolic, a transition analysed psychoanalytically as a move from preverbal and affective responses to a more explicitly representational and non-narrative role (Gorbman, 1980, p. 183; 1987, pp. 6-7). Even though auditory perception is less immediate than visual perception, hearing does not inherently entail the automatic association of a sound with its origin. In radio, on the other hand, as Hand and Traynor (2011) argue, since there is no object for our gaze, the dramatist must always be aware of the imagination of listeners who are unable to see what they are experiencing. Here, the associations go to Pierre Schaeffer, who, through the concept of 'deconditioning the ear' sought to liberate the perception of sound from the association with its origin (Dhomont, 2001). By examining music, silence, and sounds in Bergman's radio adaptations, I believe that the present study will lay the groundwork for future research on Bergman's radio productions, aiming to trace patterns of the significance of music in his oeuvre.

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Louise Eulau

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Appendix A

Ingmar Bergman's staging of Ibsen and Strindberg around the turn of the millennium

Year/time of staging*	Play	Author	Music	Comments
1999/2	<i>Oväder</i> - Opus I [The Thunderstorm]	Strindberg (1907)	Beethoven, op. 101 MVT 3, A major; op. 111 MVT 1, C minor. Chopin, <i>Fantasia-impromptu</i> , C-sharp minor, Op. 66 no. 4. Waldteufel, Op. 160 no. 1.	Radio play, Swedish Radio. No work script at The Ingmar Bergman Foundation.
2000/4	<i>Spöksonaten</i> - Opus III [The Ghost Sonata]	Strindberg (1908)	Bartók, <i>Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta</i> BB 114, <i>Adagio</i> and <i>Allegro Molto</i> (Sz. 106:3-4)	Stage production, Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm.
2001/2	<i>John Gabriel Borkman</i>	Ibsen (1896)	Beethoven, op. 31/2, D minor, MVT 1, MVT3	Radio play, Swedish Radio. Work script at The Ingmar Bergman Foundation.
2002/1	<i>Gengångare</i> [Ghosts]	Ibsen (1886)	Pärt, <i>Für Alina</i>	Stage production, Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm
2001/3	<i>Pelikanen</i> Opus IV/ <i>Dödens ö</i> [The Pelican/ Island of the Dead]	Strindberg (1907)	J.S. Bach, <i>Saraband</i> , BWV 1008 ^{iv} D minor Chopin, <i>Fantasia- Impromptu</i> Pärt, <i>Für Alina</i>	Radio play, Swedish Radio. Work script at The Ingmar Bergman Foundation. This is the first time that Bergman puts together <i>The Pelican</i> with the fragment of <i>Island of the Dead</i> .
2004/1	<i>Rosmersholm</i>	Ibsen (1884)	Female solo voice	Radio play, Swedish Radio. Bergman's processing for radio. Directed by Gunnel Lindblom.

* Bergman staged several of Strindberg's and Ibsen's plays multiple times for either theatre, TV, or radio. The number indicates the sequence in which the production occurred.

Appendix B

Table of Ingmar Bergman's radio adaptation of Ibsen's play *John Gabriel Borkman* (JGB, 2001, 1.5 scenes).

Scene	Page ¹	Content: instructions (translated) and first and last lines (in Swedish). S = start, E = end	Notes on music with references to Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2.	Movement (MVT); bars; notes on minutes (min) from start
ACT FIRST (Ibsen 2006)				
1	1 (33)	<i>A whistling wind. A handbell rings.</i> S - Marlene: Fru ringde? E - Marlene: Varsågod och stug på, fröken Rentheim [Marlene, Mrs. Borkman] S - Mrs. Borkman: God afton, Ella. E - Marlene: Nej, det är fru Wilton. [Marlene, Mrs. Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim] S - Mrs. Wilton: God afton, kära fru Borkman. E. God kväll fru Wilton. [Mrs. Wilton, Miss Ella Rentheim, Erhart, Frida]	<i>Largo, Adagio</i> and <i>Adagio</i> - stops by <i>Largo pp.</i> Largo passage. According to Molk (2020, p. 93), 'Wave 1', occurring within the exposition and containing 2 sets of 2 bars (1-2; 7-8)	MVT 1, bars 1-8 (0:15 min). Figure 4A.
2	2 (34)	S - Erhart: Kära Moster Ella. Tänka sig att du äkt... E - Erhart: God natt, mamma! [Erhart, Mrs. Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim]	Figure 4A-C, p. 28 (60) with reference in manuscript to p. 44 in sheet music. The passage is marked for the last four bars before the repeat mark in sheet music p. 44.	MVT 3. End of the first repeat bars 91-94 followed by beginning of the movement to bar 28, 20:27 min. Figure 5A.
3	21 (53)	S - Erhart: God natt, kära moster Ella, god natt, mamma. E - Mrs. Borkman: Erhart! Du får inte överge mig - jag orkar inte längre. [Erhart, Fru Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim] <i>Picture of Erhart who looks like Strindberg. Ghost Sonata p. 30 (62) Picture p. 29 (61)</i>	Page 30 (62) in manuscript: 'Music loud, ca 60 min'. P. 48 (21) in sheet music: from <i>f</i> in bar 350, marked with a forward-pointing red arrow. The music links together scenes 5-6/first and second act.	MVT 3, bars 351 (and upbeat) to end (399). From 21:40 min. Figure 5F.
4	25 (57)	S - Erhart: God natt, kära moster Ella, god natt, mamma. E - Mrs. Borkman: Erhart! Du får inte överge mig - jag orkar inte längre. [Erhart, Fru Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim] <i>Picture of Erhart who looks like Strindberg. Ghost Sonata p. 30 (62) Picture p. 29 (61)</i>	Figure 4A-C, p. 28 (60) with reference in manuscript to p. 44 in sheet music. The passage is marked for the last four bars before the repeat mark in sheet music p. 44.	MVT 3. End of the first repeat bars 91-94 followed by beginning of the movement to bar 28, 20:27 min. Figure 5A.
5	29 (61)	S - Erhart: God natt, kära moster Ella, god natt, mamma. E - Mrs. Borkman: Erhart! Du får inte överge mig - jag orkar inte längre. [Erhart, Fru Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim] <i>Picture of Erhart who looks like Strindberg. Ghost Sonata p. 30 (62) Picture p. 29 (61)</i>	Figure 4A-C, p. 28 (60) with reference in manuscript to p. 44 in sheet music. The passage is marked for the last four bars before the repeat mark in sheet music p. 44.	MVT 3. End of the first repeat bars 91-94 followed by beginning of the movement to bar 28, 20:27 min. Figure 5A.
ACT SECOND (Ibsen 2006)				
6	31 (63)	S - Mr. Borkman: Tack, kära Frida! E - Mr. Borkman: Godkväll, fröken Frida. Och tack för musiken. <i>Borkman walks back and forth. Mumbles something. [Borkman, Frida]</i>	MVT 3. After a chromatic scale passage, the music ends with a recurrence of a cadence found upon the initial figure rhythm.	MVT 3, to bar 399, stops at 22:30 min.
7	35 (67)	<i>Someone is knocking on the door. Borkman doesn't answer. The knocking is heard again.</i> S - Mr. Borkman: Stig in. E - Mr. Borkman: God kväll, Vilhelm. [J. G. Borkman, Vilhelm Foldal]	No music in the end. Only the sound of footsteps.	

¹ in manuscript (archive page for E:047 Ingmar Bergman Foundation)

8	50 (82)	<i>Slightly later a knock on the wallpaper door. Silence.</i> S – Mr. Borkman: Vem är ni? E – Mr. Foldal: Tack, John Gabriel! [Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim]		
9	62 (94)	<i>The wallpaper door swings open. Mrs. Borkman stands in the doorway.</i> S – Mr. Borkman: Aldrig någonsin att Erhart ska heta så! E – Miss Ella Rentheim: Både du och jag... [Mr and Mrs. Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim]		MVT 1, bars 217–228 (end). 47 min. Figure 4C.
ACT THIRD (Ibsen 2006)				
10	64 (96)	<i>A handbell rings repeatedly.</i> S – Marlene: Ja, Ja, Ja. E – Marlene: Ja, ja, Jag ska gå. <i>A large photograph of Henrik Ibsen, p. 64</i> [Marlene, Mrs. Borkman]		
11	65 (97)	S – Marlene: Kors i jössenamn! E – Mrs. Borkman: Erhart! [Marlene, Mr. and Mrs. Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim]		
12	70 (102)	<i>Erhart quickly swings the front door open.</i> S – Erhart: Men mor, vad i herrans namn...? E – Mrs. Borkman: Erhart! <i>Erhart opens the door.</i> [Mr. and Mrs. Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim, Erhart]		
13	75 (107)	S – Erhart: Fanny, nu kan du komma in. E – Mrs. Borkman: Erhart, res inte! Res inte! [Mr and Mrs Borkman, Miss Ella Rentheim, Erhart, Mrs. Willton]	Stage instruction: 'Musiken starkare – stark' [the music louder to loud]	
14	80 (112)	S – Mrs. Borkman: Barnlös, nu är jag barnlös. E – Miss Ella Rentheim: Ja, jag kommer! [Mr. and Mrs Borkman; Miss Ella Rentheim, Mr. Foldal]		MVT 3, bars 239–318. Music stops after a ritardando. 59:24 min.
ACT FOURTH (Ibsen 2006)				
15	90 (122)	<i>Music. Footsteps in the snow. Silence.</i> S Miss Ella Rentheim: Vart är vi på väg? E: Vi skuggor och vår döda man. [Mr. and Mrs. Borkman; Miss Ella Rentheim]	Stage instructions: Musik. Fotsteg i snön. Tystnad [Music. Footsteps in the snow. Silence]. The scene opens with the same music as the play does (i.e. the first bars of first wave (Molk, 2020, p. 93). A recitative of four bars of quite a different character. Molk (ibid.) has recognized this 'largo passage' as the third wave that occurs within the recapitulation and contains 2 sets of 6 bars.	MVT 1: bars 1–2 open the scene 1h 06:50 min; bars 143–148 conclude the play 1h 12:19 min. Figure 1B.

Abstract

Background: Ingmar Bergman, one of the most significant directors in theatre and film during the 20th century, is well-known for using the language of music as a source of inspiration when describing his films. Additionally, it is known that Bergman was strongly influenced by August Strindberg. What is less known is whether Bergman, like Strindberg in his play *There are Crimes and Crimes*, used a specific musical piece as a foundation for creating the dramaturgy in his productions, where the musical language was reflected in the structure of the narrative. Here, Bergman's radio adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's play *John Gabriel Borkman* offers a particularly interesting subject of study. This is because only one piece of music is used throughout the entire production: Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 31/2. This sonata serves both as a framing device for the play, a means of separating scenes, and as part of the dialogue on a metadiegetic level. It's worth noting that both the working script and the sheet music with Bergman's handwritten notes and cross-references are preserved.

Aim: To analyse Bergman's use of music in *John Gabriel Borkman* to determine if the dramaturgy can be interpreted through a musicological lens. Additionally, this article investigates whether the division between sound and narrative in Bergman's final film, *Saraband*, parallels this radio adaptation.

Method: Inspiration has been drawn from intermediality and musicological research, with a focus on previous Beethoven studies.

Result: Three themes emerge: 1) the use of music and sound that can be described and interpreted using vocabulary from sound design in radio drama, stage music, and film; 2) indicating movements between the structure of Beethoven's sonata and Bergman's radio production, suggesting parallel developments significant for the narrative; 3) recurring diegetic gestures that connect the radio adaptation of *John Gabriel Borkman* with *Saraband*, as well as other Bergman productions, on an almost metadiegetic level. In this way, the current study could make a significant contribution to the existing body of research on Bergman's use of music in his oeuvre.

Keywords: Ibsen, Ingmar Bergman, intermediality, John Gabriel Borkman, music, piano sonata, Strindberg.

The author

Louise Eulau has a background in musicology and nursing science. Following her dissertation on the conductor, composer, and arranger Ulf Björlin, Eulau delved into areas intricately blending music and health in her research and teaching. Currently, Eulau serves as a senior lecturer and director of studies at Sophiahemmet University, Stockholm. With over two decades of academic experience, she has taught and conducted tutorials for doctoral and master's level students in musicology, nursing, and university education. Her primary research areas encompass musicology, music therapy, film music, Ingmar Bergman research, and person-centered care.