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The influence of role models in metal musicians' composing and career

How do the songs come alive?

Thesis

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ABSTRACT

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<p>The idea of this thesis was to study the influence of role models in metal musicians' composing and career. The information was collected from theme interviews from the members of Amaranthe, Epica and Sonata Arctica and this thesis was written based on their answers using qualitative research.</p> <p>Based on the interviews we can say that each musician has taken some influences from their role models. The influences they take from other musicians' songs are mostly the stylish or atmospherical influence. For all musicians, the common source of inspiration was books and movies.</p> <p>The role models affected these people in different ways, but what was common was that they have learned from them with consideration, following only the good practices. In this thesis I compared my own composing process to my role models' composing processes. There was a lot in common, it turned out, that the most of these composers compose alone.</p> <p>The most important tips for aspiring composers were to "follow your heart", "let the music choose you" and "never give up".</p>		

Key words Composing, metal music, music, role models
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TIIVISTELMÄ OPINNÄYTETYÖSTÄ

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<p>Opinnäytetyön tarkoitus oli tutkia esikuvien vaikutusta metallimuusikoiden sävellysprosessiin ja uraan. Tätä varten on teemahaastateltu kolmea metallimuusikkoa Amaranthesta, Epicasta ja Sonata Arcticasta ja heidän vastaustensa pohjalta kirjoitettu tämän laadullista tutkimusta käyttävän työ.</p> <p>Haastattelujen perusteella jokainen muusikko on ottanut esikuvistaan jonkinlaisia vaikutteita. Vaikutteet mitä he ottavat muiden artistien kappaleista ovat lähinnä tyylillisiä tai tunnelmallisia. Yleinen inspiraationlähde oli kirjat ja elokuvat.</p> <p>Esikuvat vaikuttivat hyvin eri tavoin haastateltaviin, mutta mikä oli kaikille yhteistä, oli se, että esikuvilta on opittu harkintaa käyttäen ja hyviä opittuja tapoja on pyritty hyödyntämään. Vertasin opinnäytetyössäni myös omaa säveltämistäni omien esikuvieni sävellysprosessiin. Prosesseissa oli paljon yhtäläisyyksiä, kuten se, että suurin osa säveltäjistä säveltää yksin.</p> <p>Tärkeimpänä ohjeena aloitteleville säveltäjille oli seurata sydäntä, antaa musiikin valita sinut ja olla antamatta koskaan periksi.</p>		

Asiasanat

Esikuvat, metallimusiikki, musiikki, säveltäminen

ABSTRACT
TIIVISTELMÄ
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1 INTRODUCTION

Bands like Nightwish and Sonata Arctica were the reason why I went to school to study music and later to make it my profession to become a music pedagogue and a classical singer. They are the reasons I got into the world of music, when I was 8 years old and started to feel like: “Maybe this is my thing. This is what I want to do”. This is the reason is why I got interested in learning how role models affect my own role models. To get answers to this question I interviewed three metal musicians; Jake E from Amaranthe, Mark Jansen from Epica and Tony Kakko from Sonata Arctica. They have been a huge influence for me on my studies and on my composing process and because of that I will also study how these bands compose their songs. It is always wonderful to get information from those people who have accomplished the things you only dream about, you might get very useful information out of it. Hopefully this thesis also will be an interesting research for anybody interested in metal music or the psychological effects of role models and their influence. I did not find any other research on this subject so this thesis is a first of its kind.

2 MAIN CONCEPTS AND RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter defines the terms used in this thesis such as metal music, different metal music genres, and the influence of role models. Moreover, the research questions and methodology will also be introduced in this chapter.

2.1 Metal music

Heavy metal or metal music is a genre that developed from hard rock music in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Metal bands started to use power chords with heavily distorted sounds and more aggressive bass and drum lines. Bands like Steppenwolf and Iron Butterfly are some of the originators in the metal genre, but the bands who get the most credits creating heavy metal are Deep Purple, Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin.

There are different sub-genres including power metal, symphonic metal and death metal, which are essential in this thesis. Power metal usually uses fast tempo and complex guitar playing. Singing is very melodic and in some cases resembles operatic lines. Well-known power metal bands include for example Stratovarius and Sonata Arctica. Symphonic metal is another sub-genre of metal music, which adds keyboards and orchestral elements to metal music. There is usually a female singer with operatic style elements. In both sub-genres, lyrics are usually dark fantasy themed, battle related or sorcery themed, but not always. (Freeborn 2010.) World-famous symphonic metal bands are for example Nightwish and Within Temptation. Death metal is a genre characterised by fast and technical guitar playing, drums playing blast beat and growling vocals. The time signature changes and changing tempos are characteristic in this genre. Examples of death metal bands include Swedish bands Dark Tranquillity and In Flames. (Freeborn 2010.) Metalcore is a sub-genre that combines elements of hardcore and heavy metal such as screamed vocal lines, dropped guitar tunings and guitar riffs. Killswitch Engage and Avenged Sevenfold are well-known examples of metalcore. (metaldescent.com 2017.)

In Finland, the first heavy metal band was Sarcophagus, founded in 1977. The band was not the media's favourite pet. Critics did not like either this new wave of music in Finland or the band. Sarcophagus did not make it big in Finland, but opened the way for other bands. (Gullstén 2007.) In the 1990s Finnish metal music started to make a name for itself outside of Finland, too (Käkelä 2015). Metal bands like

HIM and Nightwish started their career then, and now they are the most known bands from Finland worldwide. (Patterson 2016)

2.2 The influence of role models

According to dictionary.com (2017), role model is “a person whose behavior, example, or success is or can be emulated by others, especially by younger people”. Role models present personal characteristics with which individuals identify, so the role models’ specific behaviours appear attractive and cause individuals to imitate the perceived behaviours. Model learning is the specific way of role models’ influence. For example, children learn to play the piano following the way their teacher plays. Another example of role models’ influence can be found in the fan culture. Young people identify themselves through their idols and start to dress like them, be like them in the good and the bad. (Laine 2014.) The little things idols do, like using just one specific guitar brand might seem to be ridiculous, but it might have a great meaning to someone, to be able to use the same brand as their idols do. The environment adjusts individuals more than the genetic heritage. So the right environment and role models are part of someone’s talent, not just the genetic heritage. (Tarvonen 2014.) In the metal music scene in Finland, there are some popular bands that almost everybody name as their idols. That is fine, but when for example a band in the beginning of their career copy the idolized band almost completely, it goes the wrong way, since promoters are searching originality in the music. Role models are important, but only as an influence to one’s own musical style. (Silas 2011.)

2.3 Research methods and materials

In this thesis, I used qualitative research as a research method. Qualitative research is a scientific research method in which one is trying to understand quality and meanings of the researched subject in a comprehensive way. I used a half-structured theme interview and a half-structured theme inquiry to gather research material. In the half-structured interview and theme interview there are same questions for everyone, and in theme interview one is trying to take notice people’s own opinions and interpretations. There is room for free speech, but the theme questions must be followed. (Koppa 2015.) The information that I got from the interviews and inquiries are in the narrative form, because the story is important in them.

2.4 Interview questions

The interview questions were selected based on what was essential to this thesis. The questions were created after choosing the subject of this thesis, so everything is based on these questions. The half-structured interview leaves space for interviewees' own voice and that is what I wanted to accomplish.

1. How was your band born?
2. Where did you get the idea to combine the elements you use in your music?
3. What kind of role models or idols do you have as a) a composer b) as a band?
4. Have you ever met your idols? If you have, please describe the meeting and its influences on you and your music?
5. How have your idols or role models affected your music, your band and your career?
6. Where do you get the inspiration in your music?
7. Do you use influences from other artists' music intentionally?
8. How and how much do you use influences and what kind of influences are they?
9. Could you describe your composing process from the idea to its final form?
10. When you compose new music do you use other persons than your band to assist for example with different instruments or choirs?
11. How do the arrangements of your songs come alive? Is there variety between different kinds of songs?
12. Do you have any good tips to give to starting composers and musicians?

3 THE STORIES OF THREE DIFFERENT METAL BANDS

3.1 Amaranthe

Amaranthe is a Swedish band formed in 2007. Their genre is unique, some say it is melodic death metal or metalcore. I would say it is both, with “poppish” elements. These “poppish” elements make this band a game changer in the melodic death metal genre. The members in Amaranthe are Elize Ryd (vocals), Jake E (vocals), Henrik Englund Wilhelmsson (screams), Olof Mörck (guitar and keys), Johan Andreassen (bass) and Morten Løwe Sørensen (drums). The band announced in early 2017, that one of the singers Jake E, has left the band. (Amaranthe 2017.)

I interviewed Jake E with my research questions in Tampere, Finland in 2015 during their Massive Addictive tour.

1. How was your band born?

Jake E: Me and Olof became friends and planned to start a project like a Gothenburg Avantasia kind of. Olof and me would play in every song and ask different drummers, guitarists etc to play in our songs. Amaranthe was taking shape in two years or something. In that time we invited all the band members to be in our demos and finally in the band. Then we recorded our first album and have been concerting ever since.

2. Where did you get the idea to combine the elements you use in your music?

Jake E: From the very beginning I and Olof, we had this idea of the songs to be Meshuggah inspired, when I say Meshuggah I mean that sense they are overcomplicated, you know you play five-sevens over four-fours and you know really really weird tempos and you know time signatures and almost like complete morse-code. The audience could never interact with the music because it always twisted, time signatures changed all the time so audience couldn't have been able to clap with the song. It was really really complicated stuff, so we decided to tune that down. Me, Olof and Elize are the ones who write everything, but then it's colored from the perspective from each musician, for example the poppy elements are from Elize. So everything combined was what made the sound actually. So if we would have had other members, it would have sounded in a different way.

3. What kind of role models or idols do you have as a) a composer b) as a band?

Jake E: As a composer I have like Max Martin (songwriter) and Denniz Pop (DJ, producer), those are great role models when it comes to how to compose a song. Both of them, now Denniz Pop is unfortunately dead since many years back, but Max Martin for example, he's living proof of less is more, but how could less be more, you get my point. But he knows how to take away the unnecessary stuff, but yet keep the most, keep the importance of the song. Something that we picked up from our role models when it comes to composition is that you don't have to, you can't be egoistic in your own instrument, you have to be, you have to listen what is best for the song. As a band rolemodels for me, I've listened very very much Helloween when I grew up, Judas Priest and Iron Maiden. Joey Tempest is a great composer and also now on later days singer in the Sixx:A.M, James Michael, he is the one that has been writing all the music in Sixx:A.M, and he's a fantastic singer. I rarely listen to music anymore, not at all, because when you are working in music all the day you don't, I don't find an inspiration to listening to other, even though I know that I should do it, I miss out a lot on new stuff, producers perspective like that new sound and new ideas of mixing. But I listen a lot of Sixx:A.M, especially the first album, because that is like a musical... The album itself is genius.

4. Have you ever met your idols? If you have, please describe the meeting and its influences on you and your music?

Jake E: The thing is that I'm very spoiled. I used to work as a both behind the music like a guitar tech, drum tech and the stuff like that and I also did work as a pyrotechnician. So I've been working with a lot of bands. Then I also do music videos, when I have the time to work with Revolver Film Company, with Patrick Ullaeus who also makes our videos. I've been touring with bands like In Flames, Dimmu Borgir and Hammerfall, bands that I really looked up to when I was a kid, and I have been working in Europe's videos. Then also when you grow as a band you realize you somehow are equal as band colleagues in different bands so you start to tour with bands that we saw up to really much when we grew up, for me and Olof that was Evergrey, and all of a sudden we're on the same tour and you know that's been a lot like that and all of a sudden I was doing pyros for Guns N' Roses and for Beyoncé and Judas Priest, so I have worked with all our, my childhood heroes. The only band that I haven't met is Helloween.

5. How have your idols or role models affected your music, your band and your career?

Jake E: I think that I already have told that more or less.

6. Where do you get the inspiration in your music?

Jake E: I don't listen to music very much. When it comes to composing to Amaranthe Olof is doing 99% of all the music composition. I sometimes come with the one song that get used, like Burn With Me is one song that I wrote all by myself for example. But I write more or less 95% of the lyrics instead and the bottom of the vocal lines. I find inspiration in the vocal lines comes straight back from the day when I listened to music, so that is also a one thing, you know, I'm stuck in the 80's still. The 80's or 90's when I still listened to music. So all my vocal lines and the chord progressions and everything I use when I write music are still, you know, from 20 years ago, because I never listen to new music. When it comes to the lyrics I... The first two albums were inspired by movies. Also when it comes to videos. I watch a lot of movies, movies and tv series, like 24 and post-apocalyptic movies like Matrix. And I like videogames, like Fallout and GTA series.

7. Do you use influences from other artists' music intentionally?

Jake E: It's not the question for me to answer

8. How and how much do you use influences and what kind of influences are they?

Jake E: Olof is the one that is extremely talented when it comes to you know transforming influences. Because Olof can listen to Soilwork album for five days and then he writes a Soilwork song but it's nothing similar to any of the songs that Soilwork does but it could have been that Soilwork made the song. (Like it sounds like Soilwork song but it's not copied or anything from them). We have bands that take other song and twist the riffs and stuff, but you can still hear the original song in that creation. That's where you take your influences a little bit too much. And we try not to do that.

9. Could you describe your composing process from the idea to its final form?

Jake E: Both Olof and me have separate studios. And we usually email back and forth ideas, he sends the riffs and I put vocals on it and I send them back and we do the same with Elize. She like records some vocal lines in GarageBand or whatever then sends them over and then she comes down to us, and then we sit together. Either way three of us, the general way of composing is we are sending a lot of

stuff until we have enough ideas to sit down together. So it usually takes like a month or something before we have the first song, the basic form of song and then we start working from there.

10. When you compose new music do you use other persons than your band to assist for example with different instruments or choirs?

Jake E: Sometimes we do that when we compose. We have a guy that is a genius when it comes to composing and stuff like that. So for songs like Amaranthine, Over and done and I also think that he did some stuff for Burn with me, for the ballads, when we have you know layers of orchestral stuff, he's been there, you know we play it and then he has arrangement of it. So sometimes we do that, but other than that we have not been working with anyone outside. We've tried couple of times but ... When you have that group that you have worked a lot with it, everything works the best with that group.

11. How do the arrangements of your songs come alive? Is there variety between different kinds of songs?

Jake E: I have answered that already.

12. Do you have any good tips to give to starting composers and musicians?

Jake E: I'd say the key to success is to never give up. Also a tip for people that wants to come to somewhere: Play because it's fun, don't play because you want success or money or whatever.

3.2 Epica

Epica was formed in the Netherlands in 2002. They are a symphonic metal band with operatic vocals, cinematic arrangements and deep growls. What makes them different from traditional symphonic metal bands is their lyrics, they are not all about fantasy themed, the lyrics are more about exploring science, philosophy and spirituality. The band members in Epica are Simone Simons (vocals), Mark Jansen (guitar and growls), Coan Janssen (synth and piano), Ariën van Weesenbeek (drums and vocals), Isaac Delahaye (guitar) and Rob van der Loo (bass). (Epica 2017.)

I interviewed Mark Jansen via email in 2015.

1. How was your band born?

Mark: I did found in 1995 the band After Forever together with Sander Gommans, after 7 years and 2 albums with that band I left that band and founded Epica in 2002 with some friends and some other musicians were found by the internet, but all within the Netherlands and Belgium.

2. Where did you got the idea to combine the elements you use in your music?

Mark: I already had that idea as a kid as I loved metal music but also movie scores and classical music. It was a dream for me to combine those two elements ever since.

3. What kind of role models or idols do you have as a) a composer b) as a band?

Mark: a) as teenager Guns N' Roses, b) we don't really have role models as we do exactly things the way we want to do it ourselves.

4. Have you ever met your idols? If you have, please describe the meeting and its influences on you and your music?

Mark: I have never met Slash but we will play on some festivals where Slash is playing too so maybe 2015 is gonna be the year that I'll meet him.

5. How have your idols or role models affected your music, your band and your career?

Mark: Guns N' Roses was known for their sex drugs and rock 'n roll lifestyle. I read a lot about them when I was young and I wanted to have a band like them too. Later on I realised that I would be better to live health in order to keep the band together and enjoy touring. I train a lot and eat well, don't use any drugs and drink not much. So the examples affected me to do things a bit differently haha.

6. Where do you get the inspiration in your music?

Mark: Inspiration for music is hard to define. It comes and goes, it's somehow illusive. I don't know where it exactly comes from so I usually say it's coming from the smell of nature :)

7. Do you use influences from other artists' music intentionally?

Mark: Not intentionally but I think that the music you listen too always finds its way in your head and comes out eventually in another way as well.

8. How and how much do you use influences and what kind of influences are they?

Mark: When I travel and hear some music I haven't heard before which I like we can use such a style as inspiration for our own music.

9. Could you describe your composing process from the idea to its final form?

Mark: It starts with playing around, just trying until you find something. Sometimes it even starts with a dream, in those dreams I often hear a certain melody, which I record as soon as I wake up and that's often the starting point for a new song. Than I record all guitars and keys, program drums and write some choir parts and vocal lines. When I am satisfied I let the song listen to the other and they give their suggestions. Sometimes we change a lot, sometimes almost nothing. After that we sit together with Simone and our producer to improve the vocal lines and write some extra lines. Than we take a look again to the whole song and change some parts if needed. After that we start playing the song as a band and find out what still needs to be changed, if after that we're fully satisfied, we start recording the song.

10. When you compose new music do you use other persons than your band to assist for example with different instruments or choirs?

Mark: Yes choirs, orchestra, backing vocals, guest vocals sometimes as well.

11. How do the arrangements of your songs come alive? Is there variety between different kinds of songs?

Mark: We write our songs in a way that we think they would work well for playing live. After the CD recordings we start rehearsing for the upcoming tours and than we chose which songs we will play live.

12. Do you have any good tips to give to starting composers and musicians?

Mark: Follow your heart, you feel yourself best what you need to do and as long as you follow your own path you will feel most satisfaction.

3.3 Sonata Arctica

Sonata Arctica is a Finnish band formed in 1996. Their genre is power metal, with diverse melodic vocals, guitars and keyboards, but they are also categorized as melodic metal in some cases. The band consists of five members: Tony Kakko (vocals), Tommy Portimo (drums), Elias Viljanen (guitar), Henrik Klingenberg (keyboards and backing vocals) and Pasi Kauppinen (bass). (Sonata Arctica 2017.)

I interviewed Tony Kakko via email in 2015. I translated his answers from Finnish to English.

1. How was your band born?

TK: Our former bass player Marko Paasikoski, guitarist at the time, gathered a band with our bass player at the time from our schoolmates. The year was December 1995. Marko was in the same dance hall orchestra with me, believe it or not, and he asked me to sing in his new band. Long story short, that's how we started.

2. Where did you get the idea to combine the elements you use in your music?

TK: In the beginning, we played rock/heavy rock cover songs, but soon I got excited about melodic metal. I started to combine my own musical influences to melodic metal without being completely aware of it. I think the greatest influence for me is Queen. I try my best not to do again things already done in the next albums, which has led to some kind of musical rollercoaster. Music is an adventure, the best thing surviving in it, is your imagination. We try to change in every album within our musical common thread, but still our albums have always been recognizable as our works.

3. What kind of role models or idols do you have as a) a composer b) as a band?

TK: a) I don't know, if I have proper idols as a composer. I try to make music on my own terms that looks and sounds like me. I do admire some artists and composers, but the common things with them comes from somewhere deep within my subconsciousness, so somehow I can't call them role models.

b) We wouldn't be doing what we are doing now without that enthusiasm that Stratovarius gave us. Stratovarius is the clear role model of Sonata Arctica's first years. It's really great that we have been able to work with them all the way from the beginning of our career.

4. Have you ever met your idols? If you have, please describe the meeting and its influences on you and your music?

TK: Yes, the best example of that is our tour with Stratovarius. Later we sure have been able to meet many bigger stars, but I don't think that any of them has affected that much directly that Stratovarius had.

5. How have your idols or role models affected your music, your band and your career?

TK: After getting our first record deal and releasing the first album, Stratovarius invited us to be their supporting band during their seven-week European tour. Because of that, we got a "flying start" to our career. We learned many precious things in many sectors, both in musical way and we also learned a lot about the music business. Somebody would say that it was a blessing to support such a band in early stages of our career. We learned to dodge the many devils and learned positive ways of doing, which we have tried to pass on to younger bands.

6. Where do you get the inspiration in your music?

TK: From my own and other people's lives, movies, books... The earth and universe around us are full of most miraculous things you can get inspired by.

7. Do you use influences from other artists' music intentionally (or without knowing that)?

TK: Both. In many cases, it's not worth to invent the bike again, only to shape it again and color it to our own. So basically you create art with the same tools and elements that other composers have used

from the beginning of music. I think that in my composing work there is a 50/50 balance between intentional and unintentional use of influences. I borrow sometimes intentionally the atmosphere of other songs into my own use. The final product is usually completely different from the source borrowed, but in my own head the feeling is the same. Sometimes not even that, so that your borrowing has worked as a tool to create your own music and after that has been wiped away.

8. How and how much do you use influences and what kind of influences are they?

TK: We have developed during the years our own style and frames in which we operate. You could think that it limits us, but as a composer, I don't feel I have this kind of problem. I think that anything I do, it sounds me, despite the influences I take from someone another. These influences are more like seasoning that the actual "potatoes" in that soup that I create my music. Atmospheres. Nowadays like that. As younger it was more like that "fake it till you make it" –feeling, although our first album is already standing on its own feet.

9. Could you describe your composing process from the idea to its final form?

TK: I sit down, choose my instrument (guitar or keys) and start playing. At some point, I start to sketch potential song frames, which I record to the computer. I collect these motifs between the albums and some of them are chosen to be the final song frame, when we start to collect material to record the next album. Sometimes a song that sounds like almost complete doesn't feel right, I let it "stew", so when the time goes by it will find its final form or its destiny is to be the "sparebox" to other songs. Sinful.

10. When you compose new music do you use other persons than your band to assist for example with different instruments or choirs?

TK: What comes to composing process, I'm extremely jealous. I have been thinking would co-writing ever work. So I do it alone. The arrangements are mostly in my hands also, but when we train as a band some arrangements can change radically. For the orchestrations I have been using a person outside the band. The orchestration world is a little bit strange for me and it requires the person who knows things to be usable in our albums. I deliver the frame of the song to the orchestration maker when it is almost complete, so it's easier for the maker to fit the orchestration parts better to the song. We have been doing the sample-based orchestrations due the easy changing process and budget reasons. The choir arrangements I have been doing myself. It feels natural for me as a singer.

11. How do the arrangements of your songs come alive? Is there variety between different kinds of songs?

TK: Mostly they are one man's job. I hear the song almost complete in my head when it's just a "unripe fruit", but sometimes when we train for the album, we create something better as a band than I could have created by myself. Mistakes are sometimes the most precious things in the world and you should embrace them. In every wrong chord there could be diamond hidden. You should just hear it out there. And it's true, like Mick Fleetwood said, that even though you could create wonderful music alone, without seeing anyone, is person happier by doing music with other people. It's so true, but sometimes it's geographically challenging.

12. Do you have any good tips to give to starting composers and musicians?

TK: Remember always that music is the greatest hobby in the world. Don't choose this profession, let it choose you. If that happens, I congratulate you. On the good days this is the worlds best job! And then I deliver my condolences, on bad days this is very horrible job, and the music doesn't give you that comfort you usually got of it. Music won't ever treat you the same way it did. You grab your instrument, and you are working, you want it or not. Subconsciously. Every chord can hide a new song, and suddenly, eight hours later you notice to be hungry and thirsty. But you have created a new song to the world. They are great moments. But seriously, you need a new hobby. I recommend that. I run. Exercise is good, keeps your head and body in shape.

4 ANALYSIS

In this chapter I analyze those things that were similar and also different in Amaranthe's, Epica's and Sonata Arctica's composing process. I also compare their ways to my own composing process.

4.1 How do these bands compose?

The thing that was common for all the bands I interviewed was that they take influences from other songs more or less, but they maintain their own sound in every song they make and do not copy other songs. It is mostly just the atmospheric or style influence. All these bands have created their own musical style that does not fit in any original "this is metal music -box" and they keep continuing to follow their own paths. Common for them was that they use people outside of the band to do orchestrations. They do not know everything from every aspect of music so they trust for example orchestration professionals to make the songs as great as they can be, even though Tony Kakko said that he is sometimes a bit jealous about his work and likes to work alone. The inspiration often comes from movies and books, but also from "the smell of nature" like Mark Jansen mentioned. You cannot always explain where you got the inspiration from.

In Amaranthe the composing process was to send ideas between three people and then sitting down together and composing, but in Epica and Sonata Arctica, composers Mark and Tony do almost all of the work by themselves. They start with playing around with some instrument and start to collect melodies. After that, they record the basics of that song. They sketch the song alone and then bring it to the other band members to play together and make some changes together if needed. All of these bands work with that same group of people that they have found effective to their songs and work on the arrangements together, as a band. In my opinion, this co-operation style in arrangement making has been effective for the bands, because they play well together, and they sound good. That was one point that Mark Jansen pointed out; in Epica they make their songs to be good played live. I think that is just wonderful.

All of the bands have taken some example from their role models. In Amaranthe Jake E said that they have learned to listen what is best for the song and leave the unnecessary things out of the song. Mark Jansen said that he has learned the healthy lifestyle from not doing things like Guns N' Roses did. I think that is wise and has lead to success. Stratovarius was a big role model to Sonata Arctica, and you

can hear that in their music. The influence is clear, but like Tony Kakko said, Sonata Arctica's albums stand on their own feet and have their own unique Sonata Arctica style. It is a priceless chance if you get to work with people you look up to when you are starting your career. You get tips and tricks about how the industry works and create contacts that might benefit you in the future.

4.2 Me as a composer

When I compose, I do it alone, which is apparently very common. I get inspiration from feelings, nature, books, videogames, and sometimes it is hard to explain the origin of the idea of a song. My inspiration sources are very similar with my role models I interviewed. I find it exciting that my composing ways are very similar to theirs. Listening to music is important for me as a composer. I can get inspiration from other songs, like I decide that I want to make a song that has the feeling of a Sonata Arctica song or the tempo and accompaniment, but it comes out usually completely so different that nobody can point out that song I got the idea from. When I start composing, I have already done the lyrics. I create the music itself to these lyrics by first playing the piano and sketching, and then creating all the other instruments simultaneously while recording the song. The lyrics make me sometimes compose a completely different song that I originally planned when I started to make the lyrics.

If I have to decide the style of my songs, it would be symphonic metal, because of the large orchestrations I like to use and opera-style vocals, similar to Epica's or Nightwish's style. When I was young, I wanted to do things like my idols did. I was a typical young fan, but when I grew up I started to relate to these idols and learn things from them in a more professional and analytical way. Making arrangements of the songs and learning to play them are a great way to learn intriguing ideas from the composers. One could conclude by saying that my role models have affected my work more than one would think.

Unlike my role models, I have learned to do almost all of the composing work myself. I have studied composing, recording, conducting, arrangement making and many instruments, so I would be able to work almost completely all by myself without depending on other people. That is somewhat selfish and I appreciate a lot of those bands who work together and share their knowledge with others. That is one thing I have to learn from my role models and that is what I greatly respect in Amaranthe. Another major learning experiment is to listen the song and do what is best for the song and make it completely

different from original idea if the song needs it. In my opinion, these learning points are crucial to everyone who wants to succeed.

I started composing very young, and the compositions I made were too similar to the real songs I had in mind composing my own songs, including the same chords and themes and among others. When I grew more, I learned to create songs without having to look other songs' chords for inspiration. I agree that every chord combination is used already so you are not making some completely new music, but in my opinion, my first style of composing was copying and these copied songs ended up to be forgotten or composed again with different chords. I think that respectful composers know when they cross that line of using too much inspiration from other songs. It is fun to compose without paying attention to the chords too much, without knowing always even the key of the song, just putting some chords after another that sound good, without analysing things too much. That is the only downside I can think of studying music analysis, because you start sometimes overthink when you compose. Instead, a composer should replace the "unpopular" chords and choose what fits a particular song.

4.3 Me as an artist

I did my final concert of singing in January 2017 and wanted to honor my role models in it. The first half of my concert included classical singing and some opera and lied songs, and the second half was metal music from my own role models. I had an amazing band of four people with me on a stage, moreover in one song a little symphony orchestra consisting of 9 musicians and a multicultural choir consisting of 12 singers. I created the arrangements to the band, orchestra and choir, and also produced the concert. I found out that even though the arrangement making is a long process, it pays off the first time you hear everybody playing it together.

My final concert was one of my dreams coming true. I wanted to do this two-part concert instead of a classical music concert, because of my strong metal music background. I wanted to combine the two sides of me in one concert, because that is who I truly am. The power of classical music is breathtaking and metal music will always have a place in my heart. The title of my concert was "From the past to present", to perform the songs from different stages of my youth. The classical songs I performed were taken from my music pedagogue journey, starting from the auditions to this school. The Phantom of the Opera was the first song I performed live as a classical singer and I love that musical. Sonata Arctica's Shy was a song that touched me very much with its lyrics and the atmosphere when I was in

the 7th grade and their Black Sheep has that strong energy which mesmerizes me every time, since I first saw them live back in 2010. Nightwish's Taikatalvi was an opening song for my first Nightwish concert in 2012, so that is why it is important to me, but it is also such a beautiful song. Finally Ghost Love Score, the one song I have dreamed of performing since 2004, before even having the idea of being a musician. That song is so symphonical and amazing: I had to perform it, with an orchestra and the choir, so I gathered all the wonderful players to perform it with me. The reason for these songs was that they are important to me, have been since I was a little girl and I have grown up with them.

5 CONCLUSION

Writing this thesis was a very rewarding process. To get to interview my personal role models was obviously the greatest part of it. In addition, what I personally got from the interviews was the experimental learning. To get to interview people that are my role models and idols was a big learning experience for me. It took a long time to finish this, but I have grown a lot during this process and I have got more perspective into music as a career. I learned a lot from the interviews and accomplished what I wanted to know. My goal was to study how role models influence composers and how similar the composing processes are between different bands. I learned that the universal composing process is very similar like where they got the song ideas, and the differences are in the details, like how they arrange the songs or how many composer and arrangement makers there are. Moreover, I have learned from my role models to behave wisely in public, you cannot read about their crazy bar nights or scandals from the tabloids and that is something I really respect and it makes their value even greater in my eyes adding it to their great music.

It was a great honor to get to interview these people and listen to their own experiences. I would not be the person I am today without my role models. They are the reason why I study music and want to make it my career. I am very grateful of that opportunity and want to thank everybody who was part of this thesis. All these people were so couraging and kind towards me, towards “just a curious fan”. There are great tips to any musicians in this thesis and interesting facts about the bands for the inquisitive people like me.

This thesis brings more questions for me about how the composing process of metal music differs from other styles, such as classical, pop or musicals, and whether role models are as important as in metal music. It would be also interesting to learn how things differ on a larger scale in the metal music industry like in death or black metal. How do the role models affect a different music scene, and if there are any differences between them.

The main thoughts I learned while making this thesis was to follow your heart, let the music choose you and to never give up.

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