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AN ACOUSMATIC STALKER  
CHARACTER AND SONIC  
REPRESENTATION OF FEAR***

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# ***WHEN A STRANGER CALLS: AN ACOUSMATIC STALKER CHARACTER AND SONIC REPRESENTATION OF FEAR***

**Sini Mononen**

In the film *When a Stranger Calls* (dir. Fred Walton, 1979) a young babysitter is alone in a large house waiting for a phone call from a boy on whom she has a crush. Instead she will receive multiple calls from a stalker who makes her more and more fearful. The film shows how the girl becomes afraid of the telephone: the close-up images and the expressive music depict the suspense that builds up and erupts into a sonic blast of terror. In between the loud sequences filled with atonal and anxious musical soundscapes are moments of silence. These are interrupted by the violent sound of a ringing telephone. This sound functions as a fear trigger and represents an auditory surveillance, in panauricon fashion, conducted by an acousmatic, unknown stalker.

Stalker films frequently represent the telephone as a violent auditive tool, which I call a *weaponized telephone*. The weaponized telephone may be used as an implement for carrying out violent conduct such as intimidation, harassment, auditive peeping or controlling surveillance. Like many film genres that comment on different socio-political issues, stalker films<sup>1</sup> and cinematic representations of telephone terror bear a resemblance to a real-life phenomenon, namely *stalking*. The prevalence of stalking grew during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>2</sup> with telephone technology making it easier than ever to approach someone repeatedly and against the other person's will. Even though the evolution of the telephone has sparked discussions and studies of various kinds, the experience of telephone terror and stalking via telephone is an under-discussed and less theorized topic. Nevertheless, popular culture, such as film, offers a wide range of material for studying representations of telephone terror and experiencing it. Especially the representations associated with stalking frequently fore-

ground telephone imagery and suggest at least a partial connection between the increasing prevalence of stalking behaviour and the developing communication technology in the West.

Stalking is an old form of behaviour. Yet it has been regarded as violent and socially unacceptable only for a relatively short time, since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Forensic psychology and legal texts define stalking as *behaviour that understandably inflicts fear*.<sup>3</sup> Thus the definition of stalking highlights the victim's fearful experience, and not, for example, the act or intention of the stalker. In stalker films the representations of fear are often mixed with other similar affects, such as horror, startling someone and the creation of suspense. However, in this article, in discussing the effect of stalking on the person stalked, I am referring to it as *fear*. This conceptual framing will draw attention to the relationship of the cinematic representation and the real life phenomenon, rather than, say, the effect in relation to questions of the genre, namely horror.

I will close read and close listen to the original version of the slasher-horror-stalker film *When a Stranger Calls*<sup>4</sup> and study its representation of stalking and telephone terror while keeping in mind my main research question: What kinds of violence and violent experience are at play in the sonic representation of stalking and telephone terror in the film *When a Stranger Calls*? I will focus on one scene in particular: the film's twenty-two-minute opening, which includes a cinematic representation of stalking and telephone terror accompanied by a dense sonic representation of fear. This scene defines the characteristics of the atmosphere and the characters in the film.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the scene depicts the nature of being stalked and terrorized over the telephone with a narration that is constructed around multiple harassing telephone calls. In this scene, the *acousmatization*<sup>6</sup> of the stalker character – that is, representing the stalker as a character that exists only as a voice – is used to build the suspense of an approaching, unknown threat. Acousmatization also portrays stalking as violence that is out of the victim's control.

I will close listen to the film's music and sound, keeping in mind the existential phenomenology of the Finnish philosopher Lauri Rauhala.<sup>7</sup> Rauhala aligns with the same tradition as Martin Heidegger's existential phenomenology, emphasising the human experience in relation to its connection to the world, or in Rauhala's words, the situationality.<sup>8</sup> Fear, according to Heidegger and Rauhala, is experienced in the resonance between the subjective and singular situation. Thus, fear might be difficult or even impossible to convey completely to others because their situation is likewise singular. However, the conception of the human being theorized in Rauhala's thought can help to articulate how a sonic sign, such as the sound of a ringing telephone, can be experienced in quadruple relation (as will be explained later in the article) to the three intertwined dimensions of being a human: the mind, the body and the situationality.

While paying attention to the details of the sonic text, I am also considering the socio-cultural context and how the work of art represents the social reality. The connection between the studied artwork and the socio-cultural framework can be discussed through close reading and close listening. According to the musicologist John Richardson,<sup>9</sup> close reading or close listening should also prompt discussion of the relationship between the representation and the lived experience associated with it. Drawing on ideas of the sociologist Erwin Goffman<sup>10</sup> and the cultural theorist Mieke Bal,<sup>11</sup> Richardson applies the method of close reading and close listening to an ecological approach to music research. In his reading the method takes into account not only the textual and socio-cultural levels of each studied case, but also the multi-modal (sensory, material and embodied) nature of the (represented) experience. This gives close reading and close listening a phenomenological ethos.

*When a Stranger Calls* is a horror-slasher film that can also be considered as a stalker film, as stalking is crucial to its narration. While stalker films and particularly their music and sound have been infrequently studied thus far, music and sound in the horror genre have been thoroughly discussed. Especially the sonic representation of fear has been the focus of multiple studies. This article belongs to the field of music and violence studies,<sup>12</sup> the study of (horror and stalker) film music<sup>13</sup> and sound as well as the phenomenological study of (musically represented) experience.<sup>14</sup>

I will begin by briefly describing the representations of the weaponized telephone in stalker films and the sonic representation of telephone terror and stalking in the film *When a Stranger Calls*, and continue by discussing the effect of telephone terror on the human experience in light of Rauhala's theory. This will lead me to a deeper analysis of the film and particularly its first scene. I will argue how the music heard in the opening scene depicts the sense of the transitoriness of life and the beginning of a symbolic night for the stalked character, Jill Johnson (Carol Kane). Furthermore, the analysis reveals that the acousmatization of the stalker character, Curt Duncan (Tony Beckley), affects Jill's situationality in a way that gives Curt exceptional power over his victim and encloses Jill in a fixed framework of fear, which can even be described as an invisible prison or a torture chamber.

### **Weaponized telephone in stalker films**

In *When a Stranger Calls*, as in many stalker films, the telephone is used to signify the loss of control of a private space and a violated intimacy. The film also resembles the often-represented setting of stalker films in which the weaponized telephone is used as a tool for sexually-infused harassment such as auditory peeping<sup>15</sup> and symbolic penetration.<sup>16</sup> The telephone was one of the first electric devices to be used in private homes in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Since then, telephone technology has changed in remarkable ways the experience of private and public space as well as ways of communicating.<sup>17</sup> Given its history, it is no wonder that the telephone has had a significant role in representations of stalking; in essence, stalking is about blurring the boundaries between the private and the public and trespassing virtually on someone's private, intimate space.<sup>18</sup> In the 20<sup>th</sup> century mobile technology accelerated this development and turned the telephone into a surveillance device, both on an interpersonal and an institutional level. While in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the landline telephone opened homes for public space<sup>19</sup> mobile technology has continued to challenge the border between acceptable and unacceptable social conduct. The experience of being harassed and stalked via a landline is somewhat different from being stalked via mobile telephone. A landline telephone does not reveal the caller's identity in the same way as the mobile telephone does. With a landline the intrusion targets one's domestic space. However, with the mobile telephone the victim carries the threat in his or her pocket, and the stalker is free to change location and follow the victim while creating an ongoing sense of constant (interpersonal) surveillance.

*When a Stranger Calls* represents the telephone as a means of inducing terror; however, numerous stalker films emphasise the nature of stalking as sexual harassment by way of communication technology. Often the use of telephone technology is connected with music or other audio technology in ways that suggest the nature of stalking. For instance, an early stalker film, *Play Misty for Me* (1971), featured a stalker by the name of Evelyn (Jessica Walter) who relentlessly called the object of her pathological desire, a radio DJ named Dave (Clint Eastwood). Evelyn calls Dave's radio show over and over again, requesting Erroll Garner's jazz standard *Misty*, which in the film signifies a pathological love obsession. Another film from the same period, Alan J. Pakula's *Klute* (1971), uses portable audio technology: the film opens with the recorded voice of a call girl, Bree (Jane Fonda), played back over her telephone by the stalker. The stalker uses a small "spy" recorder, small enough to be carried around unnoticed. Like *Klute*, stalker films often associate obsessive love with extreme violence and death. This is the case in another film of the same period, an early television film by John Carpenter: in *Someone's Watching Me!* (1978) the murderous stalker keeps calling his victim, Leigh (Lauren Hutton), and even records her best friend Sophie's (Adrienne Barbeau) death so that he can play it for Leigh, again over the telephone.

While stalker films exploit the latest telephone technology as a stalking tool, the strategies, motives and practices for using communication technology are also wide ranging. In many films the stalker's voice functions as a sonic mask or an auditive camouflage to hide his identity. The stalker's voice may also be used to suggest forced love obsession, such as erotomania, and symbolic rape in the form of penetrating music or a voice. In Martin Scorsese's *The*

*King of Comedy* (1982), the sidekicks, Masha (Sandra Bernhard) and Rupert (Robert De Niro), practice telephone stalking and use their voices to intimidate their victim. After kidnapping the late night host Jerry Langford (Jerry Lewis), Masha sings a threatening love ballad. Murderous ballads – sonic symbols of the nature of stalking – are mentioned in many films dealing with stalking and the telephone as an auditive stalking device. A stalker-slasher film classic, *Scream* (1996), parodies the genre with a reference to John Carpenter’s horror classic *Halloween* (1978) by using Gus Black’s (Anthony Penaloza) acoustic ballad version of “Don’t fear the reaper”, originally performed by the American rock band Blue Öyster Cult. Furthermore, *Scream* repeats a cliché of telephone terror with a “Ghost Face”<sup>20</sup> killer who stalks his victims by telephoning them and making them guess where he is calling from. A similar setting is used in the stalker-thriller film *The Seduction* (1982), which has a “peeping Tom” who keeps calling his victim to let her know he is watching her. The film *Phone Booth* (2002) mixes the themes of telephone stalking and sniper thriller, by depicting a scene, where the hero of the film is stuck in a phone booth with a stalker-sniper threatening his life. In Alan Shapiro’s *The Crush* (1993), the psychotic teen-heroine Adrian (Alicia Silverstone) leaves nearly one hundred messages on her idol’s voice mail to prove her attraction to him. Perhaps the most famous stalker character of all times, Alex Forrest<sup>21</sup> (Glenn Close), who torments her love interest in the film *Fatal Attraction* (1987), tries to reach him by telephone. In fact, the (erotomaniac) telephoning stalker is such a cliché that it is parodied in Ben Stiller’s film *The Cable Guy* (1996), where Jim Carrey plays the unfortunate stalker character.

### **Sonic narration of *When a Stranger Calls***

*When a Stranger Calls* is a typical horror-slasher-stalker film in the sense that it relies heavily on music and sound to convey the defining affective characteristics of its genre: fear and horror. The film has original orchestral music composed by Dana Kaproff. The music, sound and voice all have a prominent role in depicting the film’s violence and its experience.

The opening scene, which takes up almost a quarter of the film’s entire duration, relies heavily on the representation of Jill’s auditory perception and an acousmatization of the stalker, Curt. During the scene, Jill is seen alone in the large living room of Mr and Mrs Mandrakis (Carmen Argenziano and Rutanya Alda). On the level of the screen image there is no visible threat. Yet Jill is shown listening to her surroundings and being anxious about what she can hear – the audience can sense her fear in the expressive, atonal music.

The music and sound suggest a violent narrative by using conventions of the genre: creating a dark atmosphere, suggesting violence with sudden musical bursts (“stings”) and suggesting the sensation of a racing heart with pulsating music. Unlike classic Hollywood film mu-

sic, *When a Stranger Calls* does not use leitmotifs in the sense that its music could be anchored clearly to a specific character. Instead, the same musical material narrates the theme of the film, namely stalking or a hunt. It also depicts power relations in which the victim, Jill, is experiencing fear and terror, while the stalker-slasher Curt is represented as an unstable subject and a murderous “Other”. Furthermore, the film has typical horror film music in the sense that it uses atonal, harmonically dissonant orchestral music, reminiscent of the modernist tradition, including unconventional instrumentation, such as a prepared piano.<sup>22</sup> The prepared piano is used in the film as an improvisatory, haptic instrument reflecting Curt’s violent nature: it is said that he can kill his victims with his bare hands. In the film score, the piano is treated like a percussion instrument, its strings violently plucked and struck, over and over again. The percussive nature of the piano reflects the startling effects in the film, while the improvisatory nature of the playing may be interpreted as reflecting the unpredictable nature of the stalker-killer Curt.

*When a Stranger Calls* begins with Jill arriving at the Mandrakis’ house to babysit their children. After leaving her with the telephone number of the restaurant where they are planning to dine, Mr and Mrs Mandrakis leave Jill alone. The scene continues with Jill focusing on her studies and talking to a girlfriend on the telephone, asking her to give the number of the house to a boy on whom she has a crush. After this phone call Jill waits for the boy, Bobby, to call.

Jill’s subjective auditory horizon is built on the diegetic<sup>23</sup> sound of the repeated ringing of a telephone. During the scene there are thirteen phone calls (none from Bobby), of which Jill makes four and the police call Jill once: Jill is shown calling the restaurant in an attempt to reach Mr and Mrs Mandrakis, but fails to reach them. She also calls the police twice to report a stalker. The stalker, Curt, calls Jill eight times. At first, he doesn’t say anything; later he asks her repeatedly during different phone calls if she has checked on the children (see Table 1). It turns out that the question is meant to make Jill go upstairs, where the children are dead in their beds and the stalker-murderer is waiting to kill her too. The scene ends with the police tracing the phone calls to the house and telephoning Jill to leave the house at once.<sup>24</sup> The end of the scene is marked with a sonic sign, “Jill’s scream”.

After the opening scene the story’s focus shifts from Jill and Curt to the police officer John Clifford (Charles Durning), who is hunting for Curt. This is another point at which the music ceases to refer clearly to Jill or Curt. From now on, the music also depicts the hunt being conducted by John, reflecting his state of mind. After the opening scene, seven years have passed, and Curt has escaped from the mental facility where he was confined after murdering Mr and Mrs Mandrakis’ children and terrorizing Jill. John visits the facility. Again, sonic cues are used to reveal the characters, their intentions and states of mind. To give John an idea

of the personality he is dealing with, the doctor plays an audio recording of a dialogue she had with Curt when he was first brought to the hospital. The audio track reverberates with paranoia and monstrosity: Curt, who does not trust doctors, screams uncontrollably. The voice suggests monstrosity and otherness similar to that conveyed by the atonal orchestral music earlier in the film: he is an unknown and “uncoded” stranger who does not communicate with usual human codes but moans and screams “like an animal”.<sup>25</sup>

After Curt’s escape from the hospital, the film shows him meeting a woman called Tracy (Colleen Dewhurst) in a bar. An experienced and independent character, Tracy manages to keep a safe distance from Curt while appearing to be friendly to him. In the scenes in which Curt is following Tracy, the opening scene music is heard again. However, this time it reflects less Tracy’s fear than Curt’s state of mind: atonality refers to Curt’s dark side and the way he “loses himself” to his old violent ways. John asks Tracy for help in apprehending Curt, and she agrees to act as a decoy. Later, after a confrontation with John, Curt escapes again.

The film ends with an epilogue, which takes place a few years later and shows Jill, who is now living with her husband and two children, leaving for a night out with her husband. At the restaurant she receives a call from Curt, who asks a familiar question: “Have you checked the children?” Jill and her husband rush home. Curt has broken in, but this time, instead of attacking the children, he hides and murders Jill’s husband. In the end, Curt is caught after he struggles with Jill, who finally manages to overcome her tormentor.

### **The quadruple effect of telephone terror**

Lauri Rauhala’s existential-phenomenological conception of human beings can help to articulate how something as abstract as a voice – or sound of a ringing telephone – can be experienced as violent. According to Rauhala, the human being is constructed ontologically as 1) the mind (psychological-spiritual being), 2) the body (Ger. *Leiblichkeit*), and 3) situationality.<sup>26</sup> These are necessary conditions for any human experience to be possible at all. Rauhala does not see the relationship between the three as strictly causal. Rather they are intertwined, with each playing a role in the signification process. None of the three sides of human existence can exist without the other two, and all exist in relation to each other, resonating and affecting one another.<sup>27</sup>

The recognition (of violent experience as violence) takes place in human consciousness, where the signification process recognises different phenomena, naming and evaluating them. The problem with certain phenomena such as stalking is that socio-culturally they may not be recognised and thus may not have a conceptual framework in which a subject can locate them. For instance, stalking was named and recognised in the West only in the early 1990s.<sup>28</sup> Before this the English word stalking did not refer to intrusive behaviour but to hunting prey; in the

1980s stalking-like behaviour was first referred to either as “psychological rape” or “obsessive following”.<sup>29</sup> While these terms succeed depicting the stalking phenomena to some degree, they do not depict the phenomena as a whole. For instance, forensic psychologists Paul E. Mullen, Michele Pathé and Rosemary Purcell point out that while some stalkers are obsessive, others are not.<sup>30</sup> Also, as the term “psychological rape” depicts stalking as psychological sexual violence, it excludes the cases where stalking is not experienced as a violation to one’s sexual intimacy. Thus, at the time of the release of *When a Stranger Calls* in the late 1970s, stalking was neither conceptualized nor culturally acknowledged or identified as we understand the phenomena today.

However, according to Rauhala, we can know that a phenomenon is something real or of some quality, even if we do not have conceptual knowledge (recognition) of it. For instance, different sides of human experience have ways of non-conceptually knowing and acknowledging factors from their situationality, even if consciousness fails to recognise and name them. This kind of knowing can take place, for example, as intuition, or other (bodily) sensations, such as being startled.

Rauhala identifies two kinds of experiences that take place in the human mind: non-intentional and intentional. The non-intentional experience does not have a clear reference point and can be experienced both as conscious and unconscious. Intentional experience is named and recognised in consciousness.<sup>31</sup> Thus, according to Rauhala, the signification process is not affected merely by consciousness, but also by unconscious and bodily experience as well as a sense of situationality. The human mind is in direct relationship with the things experienced in the material realism of the human body and the given situation. Furthermore, signification is affected by the quality of each situation and the way the subject is connected to it.<sup>32</sup> For instance, in the case of stalking, the quality of the stalking behaviour, such as telephone terror, affects the signification process, and the sound of a ringing telephone experienced as threatening (either on the conscious or unconscious level) may be recognised as part of a network of violent stalking behaviour. When the bodily sensations and the situation offer the consciousness certain themes or motifs, the mind refracts these through previous experiences and signification processes as well as in relation to the expected future. According to Rauhala, significations can either be in harmony or in dissonance with a given situationality, that is, in connection to the world.<sup>33</sup> When harmonious, the positive significations offer subject positive qualities, such as clarity, joy, happiness and fulfilment. When negative, as in the case of violence, the effects are the opposite of these qualities.<sup>34</sup> In the case of a violent experience, the situationality is made more complex – and the experience more difficult – if the socio-cultural reality does not coincide with the individual experience and does not validate it.

Thus, all human experience is constructed in the mind and the lived bodily experience in relation to the world itself, that is, the situation. Furthermore, the situation is constructed of all cultural and environmental elements, all ideological and materialist realities that touch on human existence.<sup>35</sup> The situation, which is always unique, is never static, but in constant motion and development.<sup>36</sup>

The fluctuating and perpetually changing nature of the human experience is also articulated in the theory of the experience of fear (Ger. *Furcht*) according to Martin Heidegger. Heidegger argues that the essence and the very nature of fear is that it is non-static, rooted in a singular situation, and it takes place in the experience of the approaching of that which is fearsome. Approaching is a dynamic state, which connects the subject and that which is fearsome to what Heidegger calls time-space, and may be understood as the world, the environment or the situationality. In Heidegger's existential-phenomenology, the ontology of fear is three-fold: 1) confronting the fear, 2) fear itself, and 3) that which is fearsome. In confronting the fear,<sup>37</sup> we are responding to the fearsome something and are afraid because it is threatening our well-being.<sup>38</sup> However, according to Heidegger, we can also be fearful of something that is unlikely to reach us: that which is fearsome can either strike us down or pass us by.<sup>39</sup> Fear is not justified only when (likely) confronting that which is fearsome, but also when anticipating it. It is caused by a particular something that threatens us.

Rauhala's take on human experience is most crucial when looking at experiences such as stalking and telephone terror, which can be hard to recognise, either because it is unconventional (psychological) violence or because it is constructed according to its own inner laws, logic and processes that do not follow the patterns of socially accepted and expected behaviour<sup>40</sup> nor the general understanding of what violence is. Thus, the significance of stalking behaviour may be different for someone observing the events from outside than for the person who is actually living the reality of being stalked. Significantly, Rauhala emphasises that human experience cannot be evaluated through strict causality with the expectation of a certain experience to follow from a certain situation.<sup>41</sup> Rather, Rauhala sees a human experience as a whole, wherein all the ontological dimensions of the structures of human existence resemble and resonate with each other. Thus, every experience and situation is unique and should be assessed as such.<sup>42</sup>

Rauhala's holistic approach to the human experience can help us to understand the quadruple effect of telephone terror and stalking and their sonic representations. Drawing on Rauhala's theory, the sound of the telephone and the stalker's voice in *When a Stranger Calls* can be interpreted as representing 1) the sense (quality) of the represented object (the nature of stalking and the character of the stalker as powerful, but not yet completely identified or objectified as a mental and corporeal experience); in other words, a non-intentional experi-

ence; 2) the significance of the represented object to the subject (the threat posed by the stalker to the victim recognised in human consciousness), that is, an intentional experience; 3) the bodily sensation of the represented experience (how being stalked *feels* and how it is experienced in physically); and 4) the relationship between the represented world and the represented subject (situationality).

### **The sound of a transitory life**

The music and sound in the film *When a Stranger Calls* resonate with Rauhala’s four points on the human experience and specifically here on the relationship between the world and the self. The different qualities of the experience, such as bodily sensations and the apprehension of an approaching fearsome stalker are depicted with different musical and sound effects, such as dissonant harmonies, glissandos and startling sonic effects. In addition, there are other audible signs that suggest the experience of fear and approaching terror.

In the film’s opening scene the sonic representation of stalking and telephone terror is constructed with the sound of a ringing telephone, the stalker’s voice heard over the telephone, the non-diegetic music and the silences between the telephone calls. The silent moments have ambient sounds, sonic symbols that signify the main themes of the film: hunting a prey, death, approaching fearsome stalker, and destruction. (Table 1)

| <b>Time</b>        | <b>Phone Call</b>                                   | <b>Sound and music</b>  |
|--------------------|---|---|
| 00:03:05–00:04:08  | Jill calls her friend                               | Clock striking nine times   |
| 00:04:24–00:04:33  | Curt calls, no dialogue                             | Clock ticking   |
| 00:04:46–00:04:57  | Curt calls, “Have you checked the children?”        | Clock ticking   |
| 00:05:27–00:05:44  | Curt calls, “Have you checked the children?”        | Clock ticking, music starts playing shortly after the phone call  |
| 00:07:21–00:08:01  | Curt calls, “Have you checked the children?”        | Music stops when the phone starts ringing, emphasized dial tone   |
| 00:08:35–00:09:06  | Curt calls, no dialogue                             | Music starts to play when Jill answers the phone and continues after the call                           |
| 00:09:30–00:010:16 | Jill calls the restaurant                           | Music plays during the phone call, the sound of the clock ticking                                       |
| 00:10:28–00:11:59  | Jill calls the police                               | Music stops when the police officer answers the phone   |
| 00:12:16–00:12:30  | Curt calls, “Why haven’t you checked the children?” | Music starts to play right after the Curt’s question, strong crescendo                                  |
| 00:13:35–00:14:13  | Telephone ringing, Jill lets it ring                | Music stops when the phone starts ringing, the sound of the crickets.                                   |
| 00:14:46–00:17:06  | Jill calls the police                               | Music starts to play when Jill makes the phone call and continues to play even after the call has ended |
| 00:17:57–00:20:18  | Curt calls  | Music continues to play through the dialogue  |
| 00:20:37–00:21:26  | Police calls to warn Jill                           | Music continues to play, strong crescendo, the scene ends with Jill’s scream                            |

Table 1. The telephone calls in the opening scene of the film *When a Stranger Calls* and the sonic/musical material connected to them.

The sonic symbolism is audible already in the opening credits. We hear the sound of crickets as Jill is seen walking along a dark road towards the Mandrakis' house. In classic *vanitas* (Lat. vanity; also emptiness) insects signify metamorphosis, a process leading to death from which new life can be born. Thus, different insects, such as caterpillars or crickets, have a religious undertone and can be read as signs of resurrection.<sup>43</sup> However, in the film the chirping crickets are often repeated sonic signs suggesting (symbolic) night. They have a darker connotation, which in the context of *When a Stranger Calls*, does not signify resurrection or salvation. The sound of the crickets returns later in the scene, when Jill is already paralysed with fear (Table 1). The presence of death can be heard in another ambient, sonic *vanitas* sign – the ticking clock. The camera even focuses on the clock a few times to highlight its symbolic significance (at the time markers 00:09:59, 00:12:04 and 00:17:30).

An hourglass or a clock, a typical *vanitas* sign in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, has the connotation of life's fleeting nature and the passing of earthly pleasures. Early in the scene, after Mr and Mrs Mandrakis have left Jill alone and she is talking to her girlfriend on the telephone, the sound of the clock striking the hour, nine o'clock (00:03:10–00:03:43), is heard in the background. This sonic sign serves as a gateway to the symbolic night and Jill's nightmare.<sup>44</sup> Later in the scene, the clock ticking can be interpreted as a symbol of the brevity of life, death, and the Last Judgement.

The ticking clock is heard in silent sequences in between the moments with music. These moments are repeatedly interrupted by the startling sound of the ringing telephone. In fact, while the music suggests Jill's fear, it often stops just before the telephone starts to ring, highlighting the significance of the telephone bell as a sign of the ultimate threat.

There is a moment, early in the scene, when Jill thinks she hears something or someone moving in the house (00:05:51–00:05:52). The camera focuses on the staircase as if to suggest that the sound is coming from upstairs. (Is Curt murdering the children at this very moment?) She wanders into the kitchen to find that the sound is coming from an ice machine. Jill takes an ice cream cone from the freezer. Later the melted ice cream is shown in a close-up image (00:17:35). It can be interpreted as another (postmodern) *vanitas* sign, with connotations such as deforming, disappearing and decaying (fleeting life) as well as dirt; the symbol of youth and innocence, ice cream, becomes a dirty object that is thrown to the horrors of sexual harassment and violence in the form of telephone terror and stalking.<sup>45</sup>



Picture 1: A melted ice cream signifies the loss of youth and innocence, becoming a sign of a dirt and transitory life. Picture © Melvin Simon Productions & Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

The above-mentioned kitchen scene is accompanied by dark musical sounds from the syncopated and percussive prepared piano. The sound of the piano is another sign of deformation, a sound altered by attaching various objects to the instrument's strings. The prepared piano is audible a number of times: when Curt calls Jill for the fourth time (00:03:36–00:11:02), when she realises he can see her (00:12:17–00:13:35), when she is seen sitting alone at the bottom of the stairs, afraid, (00:17:11–00:17:58), and when she telephones the police for the second time (00:14:26–00:17:11).

As the scene unfolds, the silences between the calls grow shorter, and the volume of the music gets louder, highlighting the intensifying terror (see Table 1). Ultimately, the whole scene is filled with the sonic signs of fear. As Jill grows more and more fearful, her perception becomes fixed on the telephone, and even the smallest harmless-looking details seem to signify the approaching threat. In Jill's experience the world and the environment are represented as being permeated by the significations of stalking, threats, and fear. Her reaction reflects the findings of psychoanalytic studies on music and sound that have pointed out how stressful and fearful situations are often experienced as heightened audible perceptions.<sup>46</sup>

The effect of fear on perception can be analysed using the concept of sense (Ger. *Sinn*, Gr. *noema*, Finn. *mieli*), which Rauhala explains as frameworks that constitute understanding. There is an unlimited number of senses. For Rauhala, senses can be anything that affects the signification process and experience. These can be emotions such as happiness, fear, love,

and aggression or qualities such as colours or things or subjectivities such as people and material realities. Each has a certain sense. The senses determine what we experience things to be. When humans perceive the world, the perceived object appears in its sense (e.g. colour, shape, quality etc.).<sup>47</sup> Thus, when someone observes a simple event, such as the sound of a text message arriving in a mobile phone, the sense of the event may vary according to the given situationality; in an everyday context the sound of the arriving text message may seem harmless, but in the situationality of a stalked victim, it may signify fear, threat and anxiety. The quality of a situation affects the ways sense and signification appear in our experiences and perceptions. In stalking – especially if the stalking continues over a long period of time – the threatening framework can become exceptionally strong and fixed to the point that it will affect the whole being and the profound experience of the self and the world.

After the third phone call Jill's fear seems to build. The shift in her experience is heard in the music; soon after the call, she thinks she hears someone moving inside the house and she begins listening to her environment. The shift in her perception is evident: the stalking has taken over her, and she starts to observe her surroundings as being affected by it. We can hear this in the sound of the ringing telephone, which is mixed with close-up images of the telephone in the foreground. The fear of the telephone is represented particularly well during the fifth call from Curt (00:8:35–00:90:06): the screen image is focused on the telephone from where the camera slides along the telephone cord to Jill's face. The movement is accompanied by orchestral music depicting her fear; we hear a sinking feeling in a downward glissando, reflecting her fear of the approaching threat. Then the volume of the music rises, reflecting her intensifying fear. The final seconds before the scene ends are accompanied by an orchestral crescendo and a rapidly accelerating tempo. Here the violins play a reference to the "murder music" in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, composed by Bernard Herrmann.<sup>48</sup> The scene ends with Jill's horrified scream.

### **The acousmatization of Curt Duncan**

Although Curt is a significant character from the film's very beginning, he remains unseen for the first thirty minutes. Before this moment he is present only as a voice on the telephone. This makes him an *acousmêtre*, or an acousmatic character, a being that exists only as a voice. Acousmatic characters are typically those who are supposedly able to see and hear everything and possess omniscience and omnipotence. In addition they are said to have ubiquitous attributes, which allow them to be in several locations at the same time. All-seeing and all-hearing are in close connection with the character's supposed ability to know everything.<sup>49</sup>

While acousmatization attaches certain qualities to the acousmatic character, it also suggests a certain experience when someone encounters an acousmatic being. Chion writes how, over the decades, sound technology has altered the auditive experience of the world. According to Chion, the systematic acousmatization of sound, which is the case with technological acousmatization such as telephone and radio, the experience of hearing without seeing may have two consequences: First, the listener might find the technologized sound obscure and notices the sound itself because of its peculiar attributes. Second, the listener might be left wondering about the source of the sound. In this case, according to Chion, the listener is haunted and the mind monopolised by the sound and its source.<sup>50</sup>

When Jill hears Curt's voice, she is terrified because she is unaware of who – or what – is approaching her. The acousmatization helps Curt hide his humane attributes; it is as if he is veiled behind the maliciously divine curtain of a voice, like monsters hidden in the dark in classic horror films. In this sense, the telephone functions as an invisible or virtual curtain that hides the acousmatic being; the acousmatization veils Curt's character, intentions and location. Indeed, an archetype of an acousmatic speaker, Pythagoras, hid behind a curtain to make sure that his students would pay attention to his voice and not to his physical appearance.<sup>51</sup>



Picture 2: The close-up images of a telephone represent the presence of an acousmatic stalker character and a telephone as a fear trigger. Picture © Melvin Simon Productions & Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

Reflected in the light of Rauhala's theory, the acousmatization of a stalker character adds particularly frightening and anxiety-producing characteristics to the experience of being stalked. An acousmatic stalker is a ubiquitous character. Its situation is unclear: as a voice it

cannot be located in any one place, but casts its shadow over the whole situationality of its victim. In fact, the source of an acousmatic voice is the whole situationality of the listener. This makes the experience of encountering an acousmatic being partially non-intentional. While consciousness may be directed towards that which is fearsome, such as the stalker, the acousmatization makes the stalker difficult to locate, thus affecting the whole situationality and being of a subject. Indeed, acousmatic characters are efficient symbols of stalking: as fearsome beings that are hard to code and to make sense of (to recognise), they cannot be traced back to any particular event or source.

It might seem almost impossible to resist a being that is everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Acousmatization enables the stalker character to penetrate and invade its victim's life maliciously. It is often said that one cannot close one's ears to music and sound like one can close one's eyes and thereby shut out a visual threat.

Hiding is crucial to the acousmatic being. At precisely the moment when the physical characteristics of an acousmatic character are seen, he loses some of his otherworldly attributes. The exposing of the acousmatic character makes him seem more human and less dangerous. In fact, revealing Curt's physical appearance gives the audience a chance to sympathise with him.<sup>52</sup>

Curt is seen for the first time in the scene where he has escaped from the mental institution and meets Tracy in a bar (00:29:41). A cross-fade from the hospital and the reel-to-reel recorder (with a sound of a screaming Curt) to Curt's eyes draws a parallel with the eyes and the voice as "mirrors of the soul" – and to the idea of the soul as a "recording" of one's psyche. When the camera finally shows his eyes, Curt appears to be a human being: a fragile man suffering from mental illness. We learn that Curt is a stranger in a strange country, an Englishman who has left his family behind when he came to the United States. He is a psychotic with a broken sense of the self. The de-acousmatization of Curt unveils him and makes him seem less dangerous. After all, he is not a monster, but a man. Curt's sense of a broken self (as well as his attribute as a character who is veering between the humane and inhumane) is emphasised later in the film, where, after escaping from John and hiding in dark alleys, Curt is seen murmuring to himself: "I don't exist. I wasn't born. No one can see me. No one can hear me. No one touches me. I'm not here..."

### **Sonic situationality – an invisible prison**

Even though Curt loses some of his monstrous characteristics after his de-acousmatization, in the opening scene where he is still presented as an acousmatic being, his monstrosity is evident. As an acousmatic character, Curt intends to inflict the defining affect of the experience of being stalked, fear.

Fear can have a powerful impact on a person. According to Rauhala, fear can affect the perception in such a way that even objects that may or may not have anything to do with the cause of the fear itself can be experienced as fearsome.<sup>53</sup> Thus, it is no surprise that in the film, the perception of the telephone, which indeed has a clear connection with the experience of being stalked, is affected with fear. For instance, after the third time Curt asks Jill his obscure question about checking the children, Jill's fear is shown as being directed to the telephone by an intense dial tone. After Curt hangs up, the volume of the dial tone becomes remarkably loud, and the camera zooms in for a close-up of the telephone (00:08:01).



Picture 3: Jill's fear is directed to the sound of a ringing telephone. Picture © Melvin Simon Productions & Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

Building the music's volume towards the end of the scene shows how Jill's fear intensifies gradually and explodes into a sensation of the stalker *being near*. The approaching and coming closer is particularly powerful at the moment Jill realises that she is being watched. This happens right after the telephone rings for the sixth time (00:09:30–00:10:16). From Curt's words Jill realises that he can see what she is doing. Now we can hear her fear "open up" in the glissandos of the orchestra as she drops the receiver and turns towards the window with an overwhelming feeling that the stalker is watching her.

According to Chion, the gaze of an acousmatic character is often understood as a primary identification with the camera's gaze.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, it seems to come from all directions at once. Although the camera's point of view does not reveal the location of the acousmatic character, it does suggest that the character at least knows everything that the audience does.

In a sense acousmatic stalker characters are unreliable narrators,<sup>55</sup> to borrow a concept from literature studies. Just like Curt, acousmatic stalker characters are likely to perceive the world through the lens of their own madness, making the audience and their victims believe that their point of view is the only possible “truth”.

As an acousmatic character, Curt exerts exceptional power over Jill. His power is partially based on pan-auditory techniques, intended to virtually imprison her with fear. Fear is an overwhelming sensation that lowers the subject’s ability to act. It makes the world withdraw from the subject’s reach and is paralysing.<sup>56</sup> In Jill’s case, it even seems that instilling fear is used to “hold her down”.

Pan-auditory power is the sonic equivalent of pan-opticism, where the targets of the surveillance are living under the assumption that they are being constantly watched. In a pan-auditory situation, however, the surveilled subject is constantly being listened to as well as addressed auditively. Like the 18<sup>th</sup>-century architectural model of confinement, the Panopticon, pan-auditory surveillance is in essence about virtual imprisonment, a theatre of power.<sup>57</sup> The theatre props in the Panopticon are the lantern (the gaze) and the watchman’s voice.<sup>58</sup> As Curt’s props, he has his voice and the telephone.<sup>59</sup>

The Panopticon was planned to represent the severest possible punishment and suffering, while in fact imposing the least possible suffering.<sup>60</sup> In Curt’s stalking behaviour, the aim of the theatre is the reverse. Curt operates on the border of socially acceptable behaviour by terrorizing his victims with voice and sound. Studies have shown that sonic violence is often unrecognised, supposedly because as an abstract force, sound may not seem as threatening as physical tools of violence.<sup>61</sup>

Likewise, in his analysis of Panopticon, Michel Foucault focused on the gaze, neglecting the auditory side of pan-opticism by claiming that the voice was “too symmetrical” to reflect the power of the Panopticon.<sup>62</sup> However, this notion does not take into account that pan-opticism is based on surveillance technology, where the surveillance tools are under the control of the watchman more than the inmates. For instance, the surveillance technology of the Panopticon is used according to the rules planned by the watchman, not the inmates. This is also true in *When a Stranger Calls*, where Curt decides on the “rules of the game”. As in many other stalker films, the telephoning stalker forces his violent behavioural pattern on the victim who has to obey. At the same time the stalker creates a state of chronic fear. The phenomenon also has an analogy in real-life stalking cases, where the victims of stalkers feel overwhelmed and traumatized due to the stalker’s repetitive intrusions. Some might even feel that physical violence would be preferable to the psychological torment if it meant that their agony would end.<sup>63</sup>

In the Panopticon prison walls would eventually be obsolete, as the prisoners would start to guard themselves, making even the watchman irrelevant.<sup>64</sup> This is also true in stalking and telephone terror. The surveillance power in stalking and telephone terror is designed to be experienced as continuous, rather than occasional, observation. This is the foundation of a psychological prison, where the prisoners start to observe themselves, even though no one else is watching or listening.

In *When a Stranger Calls* Jill's virtual imprisonment is implied by the visual imagery: the *vanitas* symbols of a fleeting life suggest imprisonment where a person serves due time before being condemned to death. The recurring images of the longcase clock and its pendulum, the chain on the door, and the fire in the fireplace decorate Jill's prison as if in a torture chamber where the telephone is a tool for torturing. The weaponization of the telephone resembles so-called "no touch torture". As in modern warfare, telephone terror is used to unbalance Jill's very being, her connection to her mind, body and situationality. Telephone terror aims to silence her voice, disrupt her sense of balance and cause spatial disorientation, rendering her psychologically defenceless against her stalker – distorting her situationality in such a way that she loses the control over her own life.<sup>65</sup>

### **Listening to the fear**

As violence that is defined by the fear experienced by the victim, stalking can be difficult to recognise. Recognising such violence is made even more difficult by the nature of stalking – a psychological rather than physical violence. The use of auditive weapons, such as the weaponized telephone, reflects the nature of stalking as an intrusion into private space and as a transgression that operates on the border of socially acceptable and condemned behaviour. Although telephone terror and stalking can have serious consequences for the victim, it does not leave visible marks on human body tissue. However, as the analysis of telephone terror and stalking in *When a Stranger Calls* has shown, art has the ability to articulate and make non-recognised violence visible. It can do this both by naming the violence or, as in the case of *When a Stranger Calls*, by articulating the fourfold experience of violence and its effect on the human being: the mind, the body and the situationality.

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<sup>1</sup> The stalker film is not a genre *per se*, but rather a narrative-thematic film type. Amongst stalker films are films from many different genres, such as horror, slasher, drama, thriller and romantic comedy. The film discussed in this essay, *When a Stranger Calls*, is a slasher film with characteristics of a stalker film. On the definition of stalker films, see Sini Mononen, "Raiskaava ja vainoava musiikki. Vainoaminen off-screen raiskauksena ja akusmatisoitu vainoaja-raiskaaja elokuvassa *Hirveä kosto*" (*Widerscreen*, nr 3–4, 2016). See also <http://widerscreen.fi/numerot/2016-3-4/raiskaava->

vainoava-musiikki-vainoaminen-off-screen-raiskauksena-akusmatisoitu-vainoaja-raiskaaja-elokuvassa-hirvea-kosto/ (accessed 5 May 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Paul E. Mullen, Michelle Pathé and Rosemary Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> The early definitions of stalking emphasise the repetitive nature of stalking acts. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century forensic psychologists suggested definitions that take into account the victim's experience, the defining one being fear. On definitions of stalking, see, for example, Mullen, Pathé and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*, 6–10.

<sup>4</sup> The film has a sequence *When a Stranger Calls Back* (1993), also directed by Fred Walton and starring Carol Kane as Jill Johnson.

<sup>5</sup> The 2006 remake of the film, *When a Stranger Calls* (dir. Simon West), was strongly influenced by the opening scene of the original version. The remake places the film in the tradition of horror films with clear allusions to Stanley Kubrick's *Shining* (1980) and Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) and *The Birds* (1963). In the remake, almost the entire setting of the film takes place in the Mandrakis' house, and the narration is an adaptation of the opening scene of the original version. While in the original film the stalker telephones Jill nine times, the remake has twenty-seven phone calls of which five are from the stalker. Rather than emphasising the relentless approach of the stalker via the telephone, which is also evident in the film, Jill seems to be unable to connect to the world outside the house, even though she is surrounded by modern technology, including cell-phones.

<sup>6</sup> Michel Chion has previously conceptualised the phenomenon of *de-acousmatization*, which means the moment when the *acousmêtre* is revealed – its face is unmasked – and it loses its power. Thus, acousmatization is a reverse process: it sonically masks the character to suggest omnipotent attributes of the *acousmêtre*. See Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999 [1982]), 27–29.

<sup>7</sup> Lauri Rauhala, *Eksistentiaalinen fenomenologia hermeneuttisen tieteenfilosofian menetelmänä* (Tampere, Finland: Suomen fenomenologinen instituutti, 1993); and Lauri Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä* (Helsinki, Finland: Yliopistopaino, 2005 [1983]).

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Rauhala, *Eksistentiaalinen fenomenologia*, 99.

<sup>9</sup> John Richardson, "Close Reading and Framing in Ecocritical Music Research" in *Music Moves: Musical Dynamics of Relation, Knowledge and Transformation*, ed. Charissa Granger, Friedlich Riedel, Eva-Maria Alexandra van Straaten and Gerline Feller (Hildesheim, Zürich & New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2016), 157–193.

<sup>10</sup> Erwin Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organisation of Experience* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1974).

<sup>11</sup> Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> On the relation of violence and popular music, see, for example, Martin Cloonan and Bruce Johnson, *Dark Side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009). On the use of music and sound in war, see Steve Goodman, *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and Ecology of Fear* (Cambridge & London: The MIT Press, 2012); on the use of music as torture, see Suzanne G. Cusick, "Music as torture/Music as weapon", *Trans: Revista transcultural de música* 10 (2006), <http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/152/music-as-torture-music-as-weapon> (accessed 7 May 2017).

<sup>13</sup> On the music of horror films, see Kevin Donnelly, *The Spectre of Sound: Music in Film and Television* (London: The British Film Institute, 2005), and Kevin Donnelly, "Hearing Deep Seated Fears: John Carpenter's *The Fog* (1980)," in *Music in the Horror Film: Listening to Fear*, ed. Neil Lerner (New York & London: Routledge, 2010), 152–167; as well as Carlo Cenciarelli, "Dr Lecter's Taste for 'Goldberg', or: The Horror of Bach in the Hannibal Franchise," in *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 137 nr 1 (2012): 107–134, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2012.669929> (accessed 8 May 2017); and Philip Hayward (ed.) *Terror Tracks: Music, Sound and Horror Cinema* (London & Oakville: Equinox Publishing, 2009); and Neil Lerner (ed.) *Music in the Horror Film: Listening to Fear* (New York & London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> On the application to musicology of Lauri Rauhala's theorization of human beings, see Juha Torvinen, "Intentionality, non-intentionality and musical experience", in *Music and the Arts 1: Proceedings from ICMS 7*, ed. Eero Tarasti (Imatra 20

& Helsinki, Finland: International Semiotics Institute & Semiotic Society of Finland, 2006). On the phenomenological study of music see, for example, Juha Torvinen, *Musiikki ahdistuksen taitona: Filosofinen tutkimus musiikin eksistentiaalis-ontologisesta merkityksestä* (Helsinki: Suomen musiikkiteollinen seura, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> On auditive peeping and telephone scatologia, see, for example, Mullen, Pathé and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*, 102.

<sup>16</sup> On the sonic representation of stalking as psychological rape, see Mononen, “Raiskaava ja vainoava musiikki”.

<sup>17</sup> Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electric Communication in the Late Nineteenth Century* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Mullen, Pathé and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*; and Anna Nikupeteri and Merja Laitinen, “Vaino naisiin kohdistuvana eronjälkeisenä väkivaltana” in *Naistutkimus* 26 (2): 2013, 29–43.

<sup>19</sup> Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New*, 6.

<sup>20</sup> The opening scene of the film *Scream* (1996) makes a reference to the opening of *When a Stranger Calls* (1979). Thus, Curt can be seen as an early inspiration for “Ghost Face”.

<sup>21</sup> The character of Alex Forrest is often mentioned in connection with obsessive stalking behaviour. For instance, in the television series *Gilmore Girls* Rory Gilmore describes how Emily is afraid that Sherri would “boil a bunny” (Season 2, Episode 14) – in *Fatal Attraction* Alex boils her victim’s daughter’s pet rabbit.

<sup>22</sup> On the conventions of horror film music, see Donnelly, “Hearing Deep Seated Fears”.

<sup>23</sup> Diegetic sound and music have their source in the diegesis of the storyworld, meaning that the characters can hear it too. In contrast, non-diegetic sound and music have their sources outside the storyworld, which means that they are audible only to the audience, not the characters. See Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (London: British Film Institute, 1987).

<sup>24</sup> In popular culture, the film *When a Stranger Calls* is referred to when someone wants to emphasise danger coming from “inside”. For instance, in the television series *The Good Wife* (season 1, episode 16, “Fleas”) the film is mentioned when the central character is told that her problems arise from her own family, from “inside the house”. Also, the television series *Orange Is the New Black* makes a parody of *When a Stranger Calls* (season 5, episode 9, “The Tightening”).

<sup>25</sup> While Curt’s unstable subjectivity is depicted with dissonant atonal music, the psyche of murderous film villains is often represented by complex harmonies. See, for example, how Hannibal Lecter’s intellectual capacity is reflected in the *Goldberg Variations*, in Carlo Cenciarelli, “Dr. Lecter’s Taste for ‘Goldberg’, or: The Horror of Bach in the Hannibal Franchise”, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 137 nr1 (2012), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02690403.2012.669929> (accessed 10 May 2017).

<sup>26</sup> Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*, 32.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 96, 112; see also Anneli Pere and Juha Torvinen, “Laulupedagogisten käytäntöjen jäsentäminen eksistentiaalis-fenomenologisen ihmiskäsityksen valossa. Teoreettis-filosofinen reflektio”, *Musiikkikasvatus* 19 (01): 45.

<sup>28</sup> Bran Nicol, *Stalking* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 7; Mullen, Pathé, and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*, 18–19.

<sup>29</sup> Kathleen S. Lowney and Joel Best, “Stalking Strangers and Lovers: Changing Media Typifications of a New Crime Problem”, in *Images of Issues: Typifying Contemporary Social Problems*, ed. Joel Best (London & New York: Routledge, 2017 [1995]), 37–39.

<sup>30</sup> Mullen, Pathé, and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*, 164.

<sup>32</sup> Lauri Rauhala, *Eksistentiaalinen fenomenologia hermeneuttisen tieteenfilosofian menetelmänä* (Tampere, Finland: Suomen fenomenologinen instituutti, 1993), 96.

<sup>33</sup> Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*, 115.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 114–115.

<sup>37</sup> We can also be afraid on behalf of someone else, which may explain why an audience can experience fear, even though there is no real threat to them. However, following Heidegger, one could argue that the audience is indeed afraid for themselves – for the unpleasant feeling they would have to experience if the character is threatened or harmed. This feeling, which resembles the concept of *art horror*, is different from the fear experienced outside the context of art. On fear, see Martin Heidegger, *Oleminen ja aika*, trans. Reijo Kupiainen (Tampere: Osuuskunta vastapaino, 2000 [1927]), § 30; and Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World. A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time. Division I* (Cambridge & London: The MIT Press, 1991) 176. On art horror, see Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart* (New York & London: Routledge, 1990), 12.

<sup>38</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Oleminen ja aika*, § 30; Stephen Mulhall, *Heidegger and Being and Time* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), 77.

<sup>39</sup> Heidegger, *Oleminen ja aika*, § 30; Paul Gornier, *Heidegger's Being and Time: An Introduction* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 115–116.

<sup>40</sup> On behavioural patterns of stalking, see, for example, Nikupeteri and Laitinen, “Vaino naisiin kohdistuvana eronjälkeisenä väkivaltana”; on non-recognition of crimes, see Riikka Kotanen, *Näkymättömästä näkökulmaksi. Parisuhdeväkivallan uhrin ja oikeudellisen sääntelyn muutos Suomessa* (Helsinki: Unigrafia, 2013).

<sup>41</sup> Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*, 61.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>43</sup> Early seventeenth-century Dutch still-life painters often depicted insects realistically, adding Christian connotations to them. See Harry Berger, Jr, *Caterpillars: Reflections on Seventeenth-Century Dutch Still-Life Painting* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 14.

<sup>44</sup> See Susanna Välimäki, *Muutoksen musiikki: Pervoja ja ekologisia utopioita audiosivuaalisessa kulttuurissa* (Tampere, Finland: Tampere University Press, 2015), 134, on how film music creates a powerful sense of a present moment with attributes of flowing onward and constant pacing (such as a ticking clock) without actually going anywhere.

<sup>45</sup> The monstrosity itself can be understood as a transgression and blurring of boundaries, and thus as a manifestation of dirt. See Cenciarelli, “Dr Lecter’s Taste for ‘Goldberg’”. On the classification of dirt, see Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Ark paperbacks, 1984 [1966]).

<sup>46</sup> Susanna Välimäki, *Miten sota soi? Sotaelokuva, ääni ja musiikki* (Tampere, Finland: Tampere University Press, 2008).

<sup>47</sup> Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*, 34–35.

<sup>48</sup> On the rip-off of the “murder music” of *Psycho* in slasher films, see James Wierzbicki, “Psycho-analysis: Form and function in Bernard Hermann’s Music for Hitchcock’s Masterpiece”, in *Terror Tracks: Music, Sound and Horror Cinema*, ed. Philip Hayward (London & Oakville: Equinox Publishing, 2009), 16–17.

<sup>49</sup> On *acousmètre* see, for example, Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994 [1990]), 129–131; and Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*.

<sup>50</sup> Michel Chion, *Sound: An Acoulogical Treatise*, trans. James A. Steintrager (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2016 [2010]), 134.

<sup>51</sup> Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 19.

<sup>52</sup> On the unveiling of the *acousmètre* (de-acousmatization), see Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, 131; and Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, 27–29.

<sup>53</sup> Human beings have a tendency to attach meanings and affects, such as fear, to different objects in their situationality. See Rauhala, *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*, 58–60.

<sup>54</sup> Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, 129–130.

<sup>55</sup> On unreliable narrators, see, for example, Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 344.

<sup>56</sup> Heidegger, *Oleminen ja aika*, § 30.

<sup>57</sup> Miran Božovic, "Introduction: An Utterly Dark Spot", in Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings* (London & New York: Verso, 1995), 2–8.

<sup>58</sup> On the lantern in the Panopticon, see, Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 105–107; on the voice in the Panopticon, see, Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, 36–37, 110–112.

<sup>59</sup> In fact, the theatrical aspect of Panopticon went as far as Jeremy Bentham designing masks for actors to wear so that they could represent the suffering of the inmates to the public. See Božovic, "Introduction: An Utterly Dark Spot", 5–6.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 2–8.

<sup>61</sup> Cusick, "Music as torture/music as weapon".

<sup>62</sup> Michel Foucault, *Tarkkailla ja rangaista*, trans. Eevi Nivanka (Helsinki: Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava, 2013 [1975]), 275, reference 4. See also Lauri Siisiäinen, *Foucault and the Politics of Hearing* (London & New York: Routledge, 2013), 57.

<sup>63</sup> Mullen, Pathé, and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*, 62–63.

<sup>64</sup> Božovic, "Introduction: An Utterly Dark Spot", 17.

<sup>65</sup> On the effects of the use of music and sound as a tool for torture and "no touch torture", see Cusick, "Music as torture/music as weapon".

### Research material

Walton, Fred, dir. *When a Stranger Calls*, USA, 1979. Music by Dana Kaproff.

### Audiovisual material

Films:

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Eastwood, Clint, dir. *Play Misty for Me*, USA, 1971.

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Kubrick, Stanley, dir. *Shining*, UK/USA, 1980.

Lyne, Adrian, dir. *Fatal Attraction*, USA, 1987.

Pakula, Alan J., dir. *Klute*, USA, 1971.

Schmoeller, David, dir. *The Seduction*, USA, 1982.

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Television series:

*Gilmore Girls*, created by Amy Sherman-Palladino, USA, 2000–2007.

*Orange is the New Black*, created by Jenji Kohan, USA, 2013–

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