Lisa Erdman

PERFORMING FALSE HOPE

Ethical outcomes of fictitious pharmaceutical advertising as a public art intervention

Aalto University

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the dialogical outcomes and ethical issues that emerged from Finnexia®, the primary artistic production of this research. The Finnexia production consisted of a multimedia advertisement campaign for a (fictitious) medication that helps people learn the Finnish language. Finnexia was presented as a performance intervention in the Helsinki Railway Station over the course of three days, in 2012. The performance intended to generate a space for public dialogue about the experience of the foreigner in Finland and the process of learning the Finnish language. As a secondary goal, Finnexia aimed to present a satirical critique of overmedicalization and the proliferation of pill-based treatments for human ailments. Public art interventions often employ audience participation and dialogical frameworks to encourage open discussion about social and political issues.

The dissertation problematizes the approach of framing public performance art as fictitious, satirical pharmaceutical advertising. It describes and analyzes the unexpected emotional, ethical, and legal issues that arose from the response of audience members, performers, and Finnish organizations. The dissertation addresses the following questions, based on the outcomes of the Finnexia artistic production: What is the relationship between artistic decisions and ethical outcomes in public performance? What is the responsibility of the artist in public art interventions, and in artistic research? What can be learned from the dialogues, and from the unexpected outcomes of the performance?

The research was carried out within the framework of artistic research, which focuses on art practice as the primary form of knowledge creation. In this context, the research employed methods of performance art intervention, pharmaceutical advertising, and ethnography. The dissertation draws from theoretical concepts and literature in the areas of performance, socially engaged art, culture jamming, interventionist art, public pedagogy, and Bakhtin's theories of dialogue, answerability, and unfinalizability. Through an interplay of ideas from various theorists, the literature also explores ethics in relation to art practice and artistic research. The thesis examines the ethical and legal consequences of generating *false hope* in the public eye. In this case, 'false hope' refers to the scenario in which some audience members expressed a growing sense of belief in the existence of Finnexia. The dissertation reveals the paradoxes, insights, and potential risks that may arise through artistic interventions in public space. The text also examines the perceived successes and failures of the Finnexia performance, in terms of its dialogical outcomes, and through the interactions with audience members

throughout and after the performance. The thesis proposes that artists and artist-researchers might reach for a balance between pragmatism and radicality, through dialogical and self-reflective methods. Alongside this, it emphasizes the importance of preserving the original intent of an artwork in the midst of ethical negotiations.

Keywords: performance art, ethics, satire, pharmaceuticals, advertising, medicalization, art interventions, public dialogue, language learning, Finnish culture

Tiivistelmä

Valheellisen toivon performanssi: Julkisena taideinterventiona toteutetun fiktiivisen lääkemarkkinoinnin eettiset seuraukset

Lisa Erdman, Taiteen laitos
Aalto-yliopiston taiteiden ja suunnittelun korkeakoulu

Väitöskirjassa tutkitaan dialogisia yllätyksiä ja eettisiä ongelmia, jotka syntyvät tätä tutkimusta varten alun perin tehdyn taiteellisen Finnexia®-tuotannon seurauksena. Finnexia-tuotanto oli (fiktiivisen) suomen kielen oppimista helpottavan lääkkeen multimediamainoskampanja. Finnexiaa markkinoitiin Helsingin rautatieasemalla suorituskykyä parantavana valmisteena kolmen päivän ajan vuonna 2012. Performanssin tarkoituksena oli luoda tilaisuus avoimelle dialogille ulkomaalaisten kokemuksista Suomessa ja suomen kielen oppimisprosessista. Toissijaisena tavoitteena Finnexian avulla pyrittiin esittämään satiirista kritiikkiä yletöntä medikalisaatiota ja ihmisen erilaisten vaivojen pilleripohjaista hoitoa kohtaan. Julkisissa taideinterventioissa hyödynnetään usein yleisön mukaanottoa ja vuorovaikutteisia puitteita, joiden avulla rohkaistaan avoimeen keskusteluun yhteiskunnallisista ja poliittisista asioista.

Väitöskirjassa paneudutaan fiktiivisen, satiirisen lääkemainonnan muotoon puettuun julkisen performanssin hyödyntämisen problematiikkaan. Siinä kuvataan ja analysoidaan odottamattomia emotionaalisia, eettisiä ja oikeudellisia ongelmia, joita nousi esiin yleisön, esiintyjien ja suomalaisten organisaatioiden reaktioissa. Väitöskirjassa pohditaan seuraavia Finnexia-produktion seurausten herättämiä kysymyksiä: Millainen on taiteellisten ratkaisujen ja eettisten seurausten välinen suhde? Millainen on taitelijan vastuu julkisissa taideinterventioissa ja taiteellisessa tutkimuksessa? Mitä käydyistä vuoropuheluista ja performanssin odottamattomista seurauksista voidaan oppia? Tutkimus toteutettiin taiteellisen tutkimuksen kehyksessä, joka keskittyy taiteenharjoittamiseen tiedon synnyttämisen ensisijaisena muotona. Tässä kontekstissa tutkimus hyödynsi performanssitaiteen interventioiden, lääkemarkkinoinnin ja etnografian menetelmiä. Väitöskirja pohjautuu performanssitaiteen, yhteiskunnallisesti kantaa ottavan taiteen, kulttuurihäirinnän, interventiotaiteen, ja julkisen pedagogiikan teoreettisille käsitteille ja kirjallisuudelle sekä Bahtinin dialogia, vastuullisuutta (answerability) ja määrittelemättömyyttä (unfinalizability) käsitteleville teorioille.

Eri teoreetikkojen ajatusten vuorovaikutuksen kautta kirjallisuus käsittelee myös taiteenharjoittamisen ja taiteentutkimuksen etiikkaa.

Tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan *valheellisen toivon* julkisen herättämisen eettisiä ja oikeudellisia seurauksia. Tässä tapauksessa ”valheellinen toivo” viittaa skenaarioon, jossa jotkut yleisöstä vaikuttivat ottavan Finnexian® hyvinkin tosissaan. Väitöskirja nostaa esiin paradokseja, oivalluksia ja potentiaalisia riskejä, joita saattaa syntyä, kun taiteellisia interventioita toteutetaan julkisessa tilassa. Tutkimuksessa pohditaan myös Finnexia-performanssin onnistuneita ja epäonnistuneita puolia dialogisten seurausten sekä yleisön edustajien kanssa performanssin aikana ja sen jälkeen käydyn vuorovaikutuksen pohjalta. Opinnäytetyössä esitetään, että taiteilijoiden ja taiteilija-tutkijoiden voisi olla mahdollista löytää tasapaino pragmaattisuuden ja radikaalisuden välille dialogisten ja itsereflektion menetelmien avulla. Tämän ohella väitöskirjassa korostetaan taideteoksen alkuperäisen tarkoituksen säilyttämisen tärkeyttä samalla, kun eettiset seikat otetaan huomioon.

Asiasanat: performanssitaide, etiikka, satiiri, mainonta, lääketiede, lääketieteellinen hoito, taiteen interventiot, julkinen vuoropuhelu, kieltenoppiminen, suomalainen kulttuuri

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This dissertation is the result of inspiring and challenging conversations over the course of nearly a decade, with faculty members, research colleagues, students, medical professionals, artists – and with a variety of people I have encountered in the Helsinki Railway Station.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my father, John Erdman, who passed away just before the pre-evaluation phase of the dissertation. He always supported my artistic endeavors and never doubted that I would one day finish the writing of this thesis.

Dad – this is for you.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1 Introduction

> *"Good afternoon, everyone and thank you for coming out here today. This is an exciting day for us… this is the public launch of Finnexia®, the new medication that helps people learning the Finnish language. Finnexia®[1] is proud to be a leader in the exciting revolution of language enhancement."* – (Finnexia performance, Helsinki Railway Station, Finland, September, 2012.)

The excerpt above comes from a sales pitch during the live performance of Finnexia, an advertisement campaign for a (fictitious) medication that helps people learn the Finnish language. The performance was meant to evoke an alternate reality that promotes conversation about issues surrounding language acquisition and cultural integration in Finland. The event also aimed to present a satirical commentary on overmedicalization and an increasing reliance on pill-based medical treatments. Finnexia was produced in 2012 as the primary artistic production of this doctoral research, presented as a live commercial performance event in the West Wing of the Helsinki Railway Station in Finland (Figure 1). Over the course of three days, Finnexia sales representatives engaged the public audience through sales presentations, consumer surveys, prize giveaways, and interviews with the public audience, about their experience of learning the Finnish language. A product promotion booth, a live sales pitch, and a round dialogue table served as the main elements of the Finnexia performance.

1.1 Finnexia and Finnish Culture

The Finnexia project originally aimed to open a space from which public dialogue can emerge in Finland, regarding language acquisition and the experience of the foreigner in Finland. With the increase of immigration and internationalization[2] of Finnish culture, there is a need for alternate cultural

1 The term "Finnexia®" includes the registered trademark, "®", when mentioned as a brand name, in or in a commercial excerpt. Otherwise, throughout the body text of the dissertation, Finnexia appears without the registered trademark symbol.

2 Here I refer to an increase in the refugee immigrant population of Finland during the mid-1990s-early 2000's, as well as the increase in labor migration to Finland beginning around 2006 (Saukkonen & Pyykkönen, 2008; Lobodzinska, 2011). Finland's internationalization has seen the expanded use of the English language in higher education institutions, and in everyday life (Saarinen, 2012; Leinonen, 2012).

Figure 1. Finnexia (2012). Performance. Helsinki Central Railway Station, Finland. Lisa Erdman. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

spaces that offer non-Finns the opportunity for creative self-expression, and discussion of sociopolitical topics among Finns and non-Finns (Saukkonen & Pyykkönen, 2008). Traditionally, these venues take the form of commentary in news media, online forums, within panel discussions on television, or through multicultural venues. However, most of these formats may require certain levels of competency in the Finnish language, and thus may exclude a significant portion of the non-Finnish population from the discussion table. As a performance art intervention,[3] Finnexia aimed to address this need, in its attempt to offer a space with open, multilingual dialogue for both Finns and non-Finns.

3 The terms 'performance art' and 'intervention' will be discussed in greater detail in the literature review chapter.

1.2 Medicalization in Context

Through performing Finnexia, I also wanted to learn how others would respond to the ideas of a pill as a simple solution to the problem of language acquisition. Towards this end, Finnexia situated itself within the medical realm where the neoliberal discourse associated with this industry is now familiar to many people on a personal and global level. For example, prescription medical advertising takes on an increasingly international presence within the media landscape.[4] In general, pharmaceutical discourse reveals a cultural desire for instant relief from ailments, as well as our intimate relationship with the consumerist framework which drives such desires. While pharmaceutical developments offer cures, health benefits, and the possibility to improve quality of life, the excess consumption of these technologies raises concerns (Tavin & Erdman, 2015). From this pharmaceutical framework, one goal of Finnexia was to present a playful critique of the growing popularity of pill-based treatments for a widening array of ailments. Finnexia also satirizes the excesses within medicalization in society.

In this dissertation, I refer to medicalization according to Zola's notion of the pathologization of everyday life and Conrad's emphasis on medical authority. In this sense, medicalization can be seen as a "process whereby more and more of everyday life has come under medical dominion, influence and supervision" (Zola, 1983, p.295). The process involves the act of "defining behavior as a medical problem or illness and mandating or licensing the medical profession to provide some type of treatment for it" (Conrad, 1975, p.12). Examples of medicalizing include the use of medical intervention in childbirth, the categorization of new conditions, including attention deficit disorder, restless leg syndrome, and medical treatments indicated for life phases such as menopause and male impotence. Medicalization has also been ap-

4 While approaches of medical marketing become increasingly globalized, there remain differences in medical marketing protocols among countries. For example, since the mid-1990s, only the United States and New Zealand allow direct-to-consumer advertising (DTCA) of prescription pharmaceutical medications such as anti-depressants and sleep aids, etc. (Coney, 2002). In the U.S., such DTCA advertising via print media and television has been cited as a contributing factor in the medicalization of certain human conditions (Conrad & Leiter, 2004). Within the last decade, efforts have been made to globalize DTCA through digital media (Mackey, 2012). Generally, Finnish health care providers do not support the notion of DTCA of pharmaceuticals (Toivianen, Vuorenkoski, & Hemminki, 2004). The Finnish medical regulatory body prohibits such direct advertising, allowing public advertising of only over-the-counter medications such as moderate painkillers, anti-inflammatory creams, etc., that are available to consumers at local pharmacies without a prescription.

plied to what is perceived as deviant behavior, ranging from homosexuality to hyperactivity. Historically, medicalization has its origins in capitalist notions of consumption as a social and economic engine (Conrad, 2007). Proponents of medicalization point out that this process may reduce the stigma associated with some conditions such as extreme obesity and offer individuals a greater range of support in dealing with their life situation (Puhl & Heur, 2009). Critics of medicalization, such as Navarro (1986) argue that medicalization, in this context, diverts attention from the fundamental cause of the condition, which may involve socioeconomic disparities. This position argues that medicalization defines the responsibility for health as an individual issue.

1.3 Finnexia and the Finnish Language

The original concept of Finnexia – a pill to stimulate language learning – grew out of a feeling of shame and frustration, in the realization that I had lived in Finland for three years without speaking Finnish as fluently as I felt I should – relying mostly on English in my daily life. My desire to learn more Finnish also stemmed from a wish to feel as though I played a more integral part in Finnish society. By this I refer to social interaction with Finns, better understanding Finnish culture, and a sense of directly contributing to Finnish society. While one can survive with only English in urban areas of Finland, some language skills in Finnish are beneficial in the case of long-term residency, and Finnish language competency testing is required for Finnish citizenship via application (Finnish Immigration, 2018). Finnish is often perceived as a difficult language to master. According to Branch (2018a, 2018b), this perception of Finnish may come from the fact that the language itself is not directly related to any Indo-European language, although it does borrow words from other languages such as Swedish. Rather, Finnish is part of a small family of Finno-Ugric languages that include Estonian, Hungarian and Sámi (spoken by the indigenous people of northern Finland). Some characteristics of Finnish that may contribute to its learning challenges include long words due to the syntax and structure of the language, many grammatical cases, and the use of postpositions as well as prepositions (Branch, 2018a).

1.4 Preliminary Experiments

At the start of my doctoral studies in 2008, I entered Finland (from the United States) with a few medical advertisements already in hand. These included: Consumerin® (stimulates consumer behavior), Jesurex® (strengthens faith in Jesus Christ), Patriotec® (makes one more patriotic – especially during wartime), Ethnivox® (changes one's racial or ethnic identity), Abstinen® (promotes sexual abstinence in teens and unmarried adults), and finally Homotrol® (controls homosexual thoughts and behavior). I had created these medical advertisements earlier in 2005, while teaching art and design at Florida Southern College. The advertisements represented my own personal and satirical response towards domestic policies implemented in the post-9/11 political environment of the United States. I was curious as to how such issues touch and are shaped by people on a personal level.

After beginning doctoral studies in Finland, I expanded on this desire, speculating on how I might extend the dialogical capabilities of these fictitious advertisements, with the possibility of using them as a means of generating public conversation about political concerns in the minds of people in Finland. I conducted a series of performative experiments in public spaces, through the creation of a variety of fictitious environments. In once scenario, I took my existing advertisement for Consumerin, repackaged its visual components in Finnish, and presented it as a live commercial in market areas in Pori, Finland and Lancaster, U.K. (2009-10). The satirical performance consisted of a live sales pitch for 'Consumerin®,' a (fictitious) medical drug that stimulates consumer buying habits in order to strengthen the economy (Figure 2). In several instances, the Consumerin medication was presented in public space as though it was a real medication. In this performance, I experimented with the audience interaction methods of consumer surveys, prize giveaways, and interviews. In another scenario, it was presented alongside the work of other researchers at the Pori University Consortium (Figure 3). In this presentation, samples of Consumerin 'pills' were offered to the public audience. The pills were actually sugar-coated licorice that appeared in a large form that resembled a pill capsule (Figure 4). In this performance of Consumerin, there were some audience members who came to believe that the university had created Consumerin as a real drug, through experimental pharmaceutical research. In another iteration of the performance in Lancaster, U.K., I added twelve chairs to the sales performance, intending to encourage the audience to sit and converse about their personal experiences with economic challenges. Instead, the audience ended up using the chairs primarily as a place to sit and fill out the consumer survey. As a result, the focus ended up being placed on the processing of the surveys, rather than any dialogical interaction.

Figure 2. Consumerin advertisement (2010). Digital print. Pori, Finland.

Figure 3. Consumerin (2010). Performance at Researcher's Day. Pori, Finland.
Photo credit: Jukka Kostet.

Figure 4. Consumerin (2010). Sugar-coated licorice candy, offered as pills in a public performance. Pori, Finland.
Photo credit: Jukka Kostet.

Another arts-based experiment during my research involved the creation of the Worry Machine®, a device that transforms human anxiety into an energy fuel source for plants and automobiles. The physical apparatus of the Worry Machine consisted of different combinations of the following materials, depending on where it was presented: an old-fashioned hair drying machine, a kitchen food blender, or mixer, an aluminum mixing bowl, a heat lamp, and an 'eye-link communicator' spy headset (children's toy). Performers played the role of research assistants to operate the Worry Machine and have visitors test it out, in art galleries. Visitors who tried the Worry Machine were asked to type their worries or anxious thoughts into the 'eye-link communicator' keypad, or in some cases, on paper. These thoughts would then be transmitted to the 'blender,' with the help of the heat lamp/hair dryer. In the blender, a new reusable fuel source would be generated from the person's anxiety-ridden brainwaves (Figures 5 & 6). The Worry Machine proved to be a useful experiment in generating a playful make-believe environment around possibilities of speculative science. It was also an exercise of trust, with the audience sharing a variety of personal thoughts about their own life concerns. The Worry Machine was presented in Finland in 2010 at the Generator Gallery in Pori, and at the Ptarmigan Gallery in Helsinki.

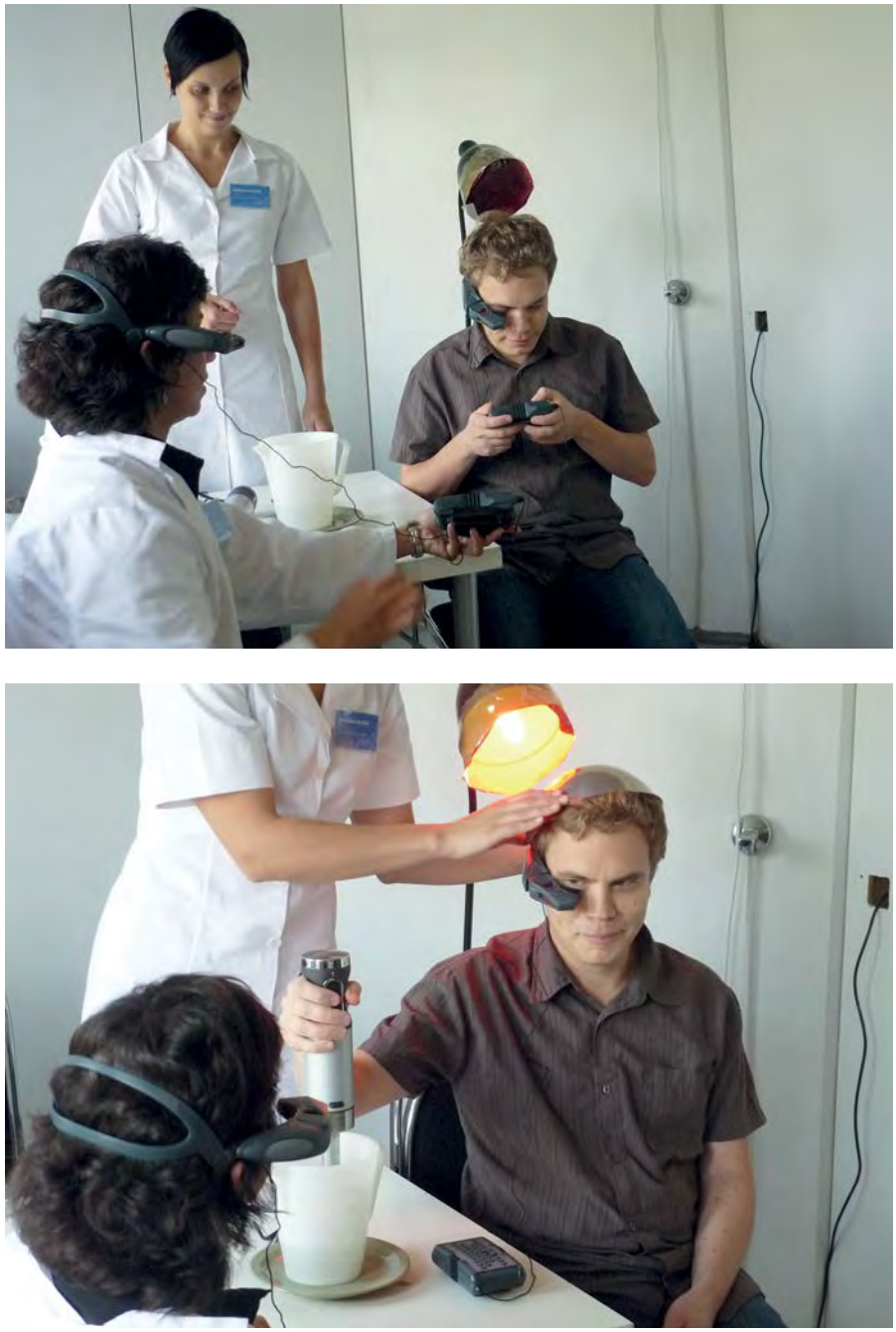

Figure 5. Worry Machine (2010). Performance and installation. Ptarmigan Gallery, Helsinki, Finland Gallery. Juha types his worrisome thoughts into the keypad (top). Juha's words are transferred to the visual display in my headset, and then into the container through the Worry Machine (bottom). Photo credit: John Fail and Yik Chow.

Figure 6. Plants grown with biofuel fertilizer generated by the Worry Machine (2010). Performance and installation. Generator Gallery. Pori, Finland. Photo credit: Lisa Erdman.

Figure 7. Homotrol advertisement (2010). De Speld satirical Dutch news website. Lisa Erdman. Dutch language translation by Bas den Herder.

Figure 8. Jesurex advertisement (2010). *De Speld* satirical Dutch news website. Lisa Erdman. Language translation to Dutch: Bas den Herder.

In a third experiment, I collaborated with a communications researcher from the University of Rotterdam. My colleague and I worked with two existing advertisements that I had created a few years earlier in the United States: Homotrol® (controls homosexual thoughts and behavior) and Jesurex® (brings you closer to Jesus). We repackaged them in the Dutch language, then presented them online as interactive advertisements on *De Speld,* a satirical, fictitious Dutch news website (Figures 7 & 8). Readers were able to post their comments via a discussion thread located directly below the advertisement. The project generated primarily light-hearted, satirical commentary towards the medications and aspects of Dutch politics.

Of these experiments, Consumerin offered the most informative experiences in terms of dialogue and audience engagement in a public space. This piece most directly influenced the performative development of the Finnexia project. In my view, the format of Consumerin, through the experimentation of marketing and interaction methods (surveys, prizes, interviews, sales pitch) introduced additional layers to the relationship between performer and audience within a fictitious framework. Through this, the possibilities

for exchange through verbal dialogue were heightened. In the Consumerin public performances, the communication among performers and audience held a more fluid dynamic in the public space. This gave the audience the opportunity to respond directly to the performance, ask questions, and even challenge the content and message of the performance.

Following this series of experiments, I felt that what was needed was a new pill for Finland. Before I could invite others into public discussion, I thought it best to have a relevant question to ask others in Finnish culture, one that could be presented through a new medication that addressed a relevant social concern. So, I posed the question to colleagues and friends in the local community of Helsinki – "What does Finland need?" Answers varied. In the end, I realized that this question was best addressed to myself, as a foreigner living in Finland – "What do *I* need in Finland?" My answer – a pill to learn Finnish, faster and better.

1.5 Professional Experience and Medical Satire

Although I had taught art and graphic design in the past, I did not enter the art practice of this research as a pedagogue.[5] I approached the project(s) from the standpoint of an artist with a desire to learn how others experienced life in Finland as a foreigner. I was curious to learn about how people navigate Finnish culture with or without knowledge of the Finnish language. The notion of using medicine as a format for my artwork emerged from my brief experience as a medical graphic designer. As a designer working for Harte-Hanks Interactive, a direct marketing company in Woodstock/Lake Katrine, NY (1997-2001), my work involved creating consumer websites and instructional media for pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer, Roche, Novartis, and Genentech. As a result of this experience, I adopted the visual language of pharmacy and applied it to a series of six fictitious medical ads that I produced for a solo art exhibition in 2005, in the Melvin Art Gallery at Florida Southern College. The exhibition, entitled *Annual Checkup: Pharmaceuticals for the 21st Century* consisted of a series of six satirical advertisements for medica-

5 At the time, I did not see myself as entering the art practice with conscious intentions of traditional pedagogical instruction. It is now, after a period self-reflection, that I see how socially engaged art practice can be essentially pedagogical, through the relationship artist-educators have with the public audience and the greater community. Furthermore, I now more clearly understand how the artist's desire to learn is inherently a pedagogical position, in its potential to be directed towards learning or teaching.

tions that cure symptoms of sociopolitical 'ills': lack of patriotism (Patriotec®), homosexuality (Homotrol®), sexual promiscuity in teens and young adults (Abstinen®), racial discrimination (Ethnivox®), economic recession (Consumerin®), and lack of religious faith (Jesurex®). In the gallery space, the advertisements were presented in multiple formats: in large-scale prints mounted on aluminum plating, brochures, and in video format.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I created the advertisements as a satirical personal response to shifting policies towards domestic civil liberties in the post-9/11 atmosphere of the United States. In this series of six advertisements, the intent was not to condemn the pharmaceutical and medical industry. Rather, the idea was to use medical authority as a vehicle through which to explore and playfully critique current sociopolitical issues. In my mind, I was simply using the visual language that came natural to me at that time. I was thinking of the problem-solution relationship from the perspective of the artist. What made sense for me at the time was to express my personal opinions towards political issues through the language of the medical, as it had become an intimate language for me. In this case, the use of satirical pharmaceutical advertising as my artistic format presented a double-edged voice towards the graphic style of pharmaceutical advertising: 1) a celebration of its corporate slickness, its utopian images of smiling individuals, and hopeful offering of improved health, and 2) a critique of the homogeneity of its form, and the creative limitations inherent therein. In the early stages of my doctoral research in Finland, these six fictitious advertisements would serve as a conceptual springboard in experimenting with the framework of pharmaceutical advertising as a format for public dialogue. On the following pages, I include examples of the six advertisements, as they appeared in the format of a digital print. In addition, the Patriotec, Jesurex, and Abstinen video advertisements may be viewed online on YouTube.

Figure. 9 Patriotec advertisement (2005). Digital print. Lisa Erdman.

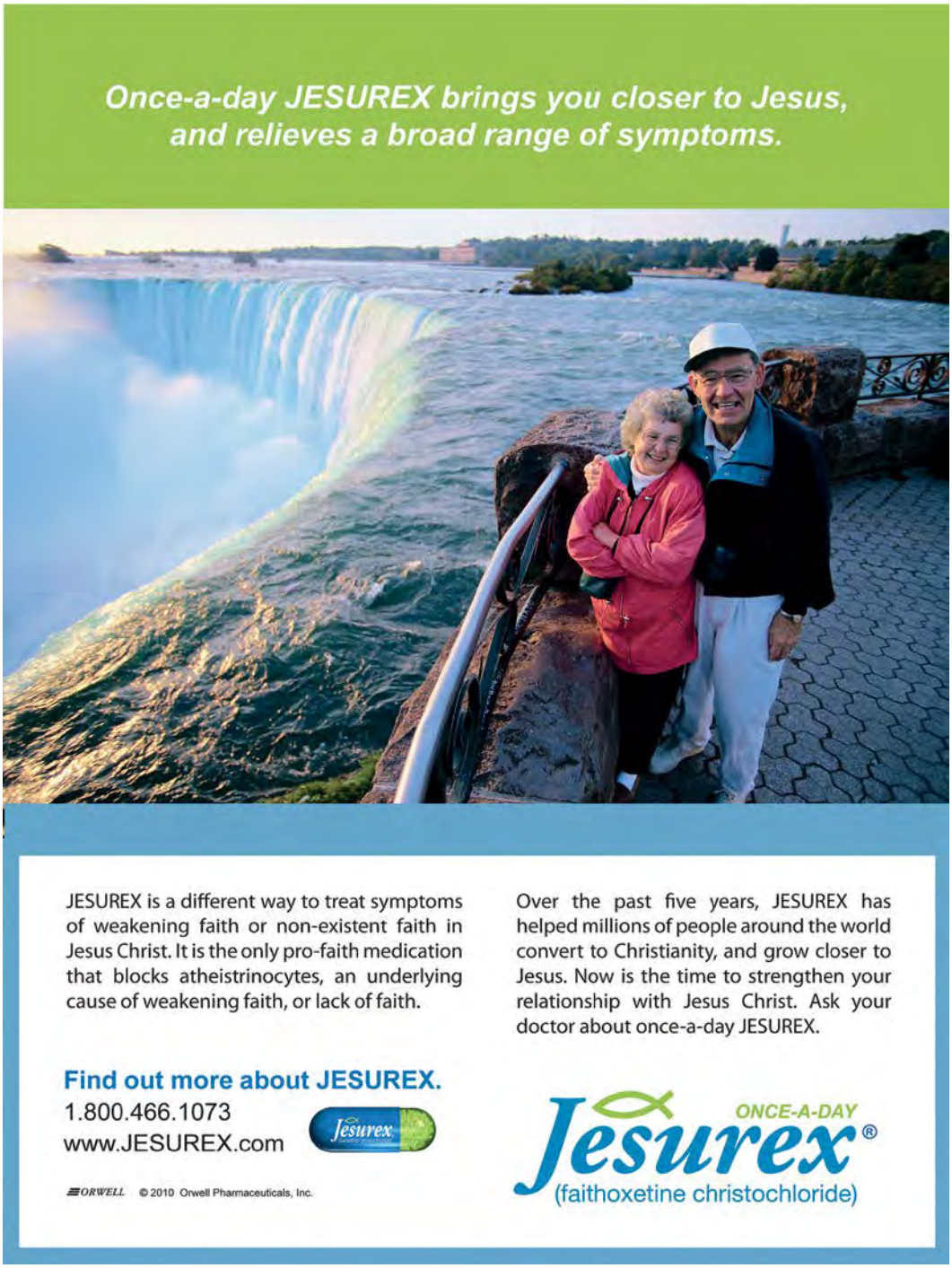

Figure 10. Jesurex advertisement (2005). Digital print. Lisa Erdman

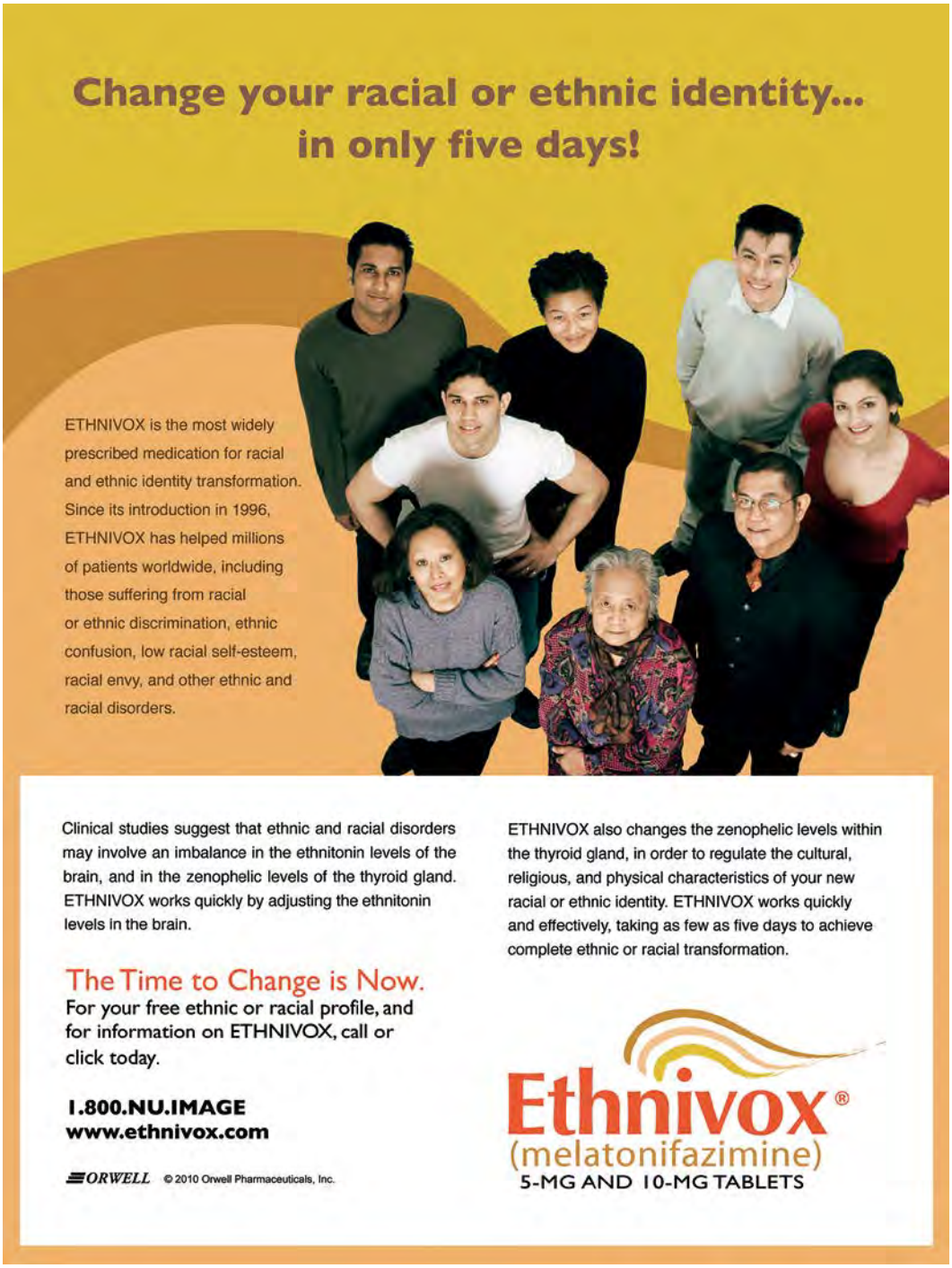

Figure 11. Ethnivox advertisement (2005). Digital print. Lisa Erdman.

Figure 12. Abstinen advertisement. (2005). Digital print. Lisa Erdman.

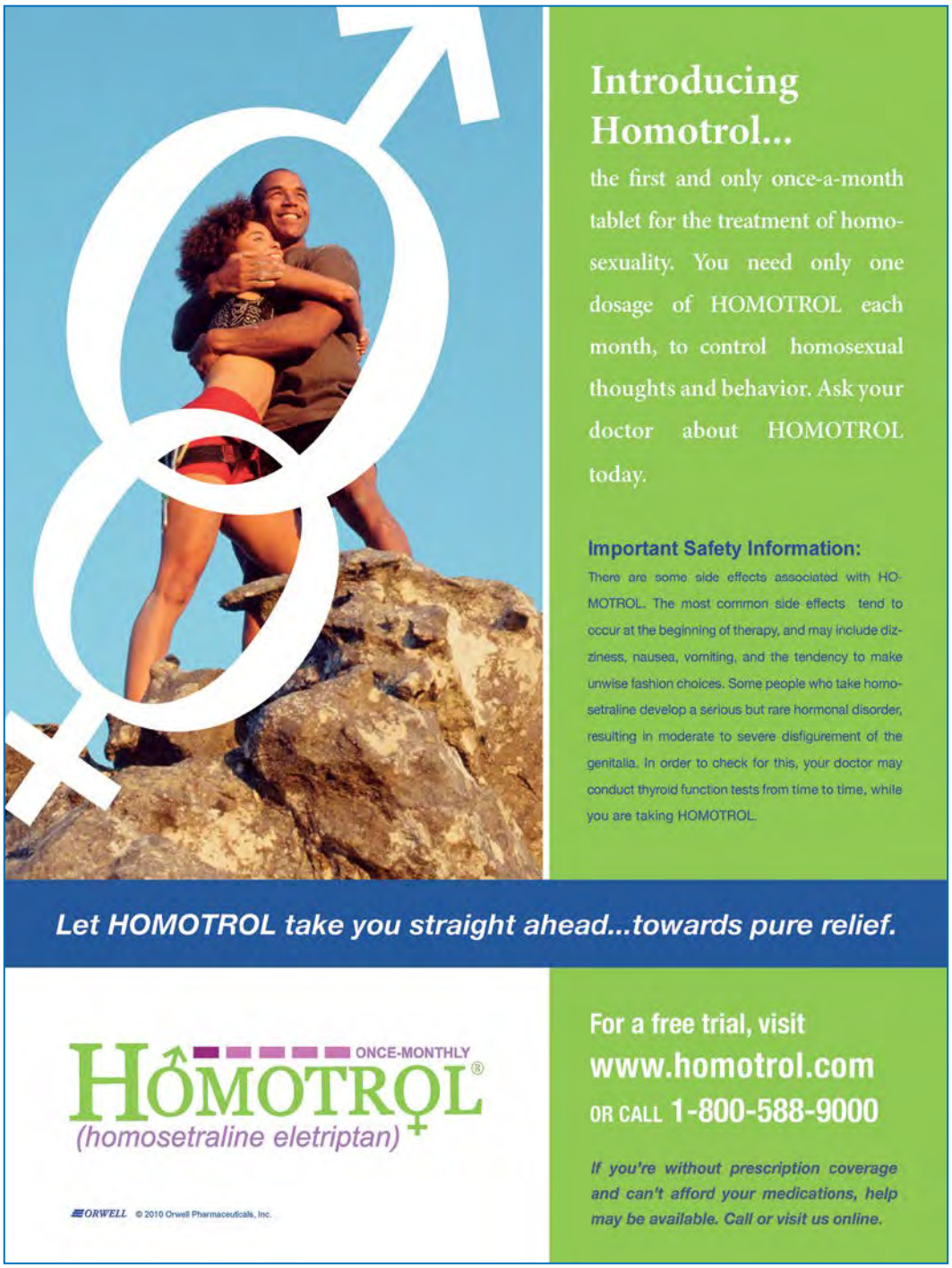

Figure 13. Homotrol advertisement (2005). Digital print. Lisa Erdman.

Figure 14. Consumerin advertisement (2005). Digital print. Lisa Erdman.

1.6 Methods, Aims, and Research Questions

The doctoral research took place in the cities of Pori and Helsinki, Finland during the periods of 2008-2012 and 2015-2018. I came to Finland as an American-born artist and arts educator from the United States, seeking a cultural experience in which I did not know the national language, where the terrain and culture were completely new to me. The choice of Finland as the site for the research also came from a decision to conduct my doctoral degree at an institution that supported experimentality and open artistic exploration. The mode of operation in the research originated from the viewpoint of artistic research. In this context, the research develops within a mindset of artistic thinking. In my view, compared with traditional qualitative or quantitative research, artistic thinking operates in a manner that more often emphasizes intuitive, personal, and self-expressive methods.

Throughout its trajectory, the research drew from the areas of pharmaceutical advertising, satire, public art, ethnography, performance, and pedagogy. In this sense, it is a bricolage of methods, in which the researcher uses a diverse range of methods that they find necessary to serve the driving concept of the research. This research appropriated artistic methods from the interventionist and subversive traditions of the Dadaists, the Situationist International, and culture jammers such as the Yes Men (2009), and the spoof ads of the Adbusters Media Foundation (1989-2018). I discuss the work of these groups further, in the practice review of Chapter 2. The research also borrowed visual methods from contemporary artists who have adopted the use of medical imagery in their work as a way to examine the dynamics of medical authority. For example, Dana Wyse (1996) in her collection of pills suggests that we can make a significant change in our lives – instantly. Through her series of satirical pill treatments, Wyse offers us the chance to better understand our own mother, become Canadian, and ensure the heterosexuality of our children (Wyse, Hunt, Hockertz, Obrist, & Lebovici, 2007). Damien Hirst (1999), in his pharmacy installation and pharmaceutical paintings, raises questions about the nature of belief in medicine and the faith towards pharmaceutical drugs to ease our ailments. Justine Cooper (2007) satirizes the eternal quest for happiness by offering a new medication that promises the perfect life. Cooper's fictitious advertisement campaign proved to be quite convincing, inspiring some people to seek out the Havidol medication. I discuss Cooper's artwork further in the practice review of Chapter 2. Through her video, *Second Opinion*, Kaisu Koski (2008) explores the performative aspect of the medical gaze through gestures and movements of a patient and doctor in an examination room (Figure 15). In the video, Koski plays these two roles, becoming both subject and object in the medical scenario. Koski

Figure 15. Second Opinion (2008). Video Still. Kaisu Koski. Photo: Courtesy of Kaisu Koski.

(2011) points out that the activity of artists employing medical themes originates from a desire to increase the visibility of the mechanisms and democracy of the medical domain. In the process, this artwork often raises questions about the power relationships and limitations in current medical practices (p. 1). Ultimately, the artist is not obligated to present a solution to pathological and biomedical dilemmas. Instead, as Broderick (2011) notes, arts practices can introduce a discursive space that can offer critique and commentary about the relationship between society and medicine (pp. 95-109).

As in the works created by the previously mentioned artists, the satirical advertisements within my doctoral research offer multilayered investigations. They not only reveal my own responses towards overmedicalization and political issues, but they also aim to challenge the audience's assumptions towards current social issues by presenting periodic disruptions within systems of visual culture and public spaces.[6] While drawing upon pharmaceutical advertising, this dissertation does not include an in-depth analysis of the practices of the pharmaceutical industry and medicalization. Rather,

6 Critchley (2002) points out that satire and humor can change a situation, by way of introducing an element of incongruity to an otherwise normal-looking scenario. In this sense, satire is pedagogical. It brings us back to what we already know, often by generating feelings of anxiety, discomfort, or confusion (p. 74). In its way of operating, "satire only functions with a common cultural base, or congruence, and the humor in satire exists in the attack of those shared beliefs" (Meijer-Drees & de Leeuw, 2015, p.188).

the research borrows from concepts within these fields, primarily to serve the purposes of the artistic production.

In this dissertation, I describe, analyze, and interpret the dialogical outcomes and ethical issues that emerged from the Finnexia performance. The dissertation addresses the following research questions: Based on the outcomes of the Finnexia artistic production,

1. what is the relationship between artistic decisions and ethical outcomes in public performance?
2. what is the responsibility of the artist in public art interventions, and in artistic research?
3. what can be learned from the dialogues, and from the unexpected outcomes of the performance?

The ethical issues that emerged from Finnexia involved: 1) concerns over the realistic commercial representation of a fictitious medication in a public space within the perceived vulnerability of the public and, 2) tensions among performers around the act of playing the role of a Finnexia sales person while sharing fictitious medical information with the public audience. The dissertation problematizes the framing of public dialogue through fictitious medical advertising. It examines the unexpected, emotionally charged audience response to the Finnexia project. On the part of the Finnexia performers, such responses included discomfort in taking on the role of a fictitious sales person and persuading the public to learn about a fictitious medication. The response of the public audience involved a range of emotions including surprise, skepticism, interest, hope, disappointment, and in some cases, anger.

In this light, these research outcomes served as a critical entry point to the theoretical discussion of the dissertation, surrounding the ethics of art and public dialogue. The thesis examines the ethical consequences of generating false hope in the public eye. In this case, 'false hope' refers to the scenario in which some audience members expressed a growing sense of belief in the existence of Finnexia, even in the face of its fictitious facade. On a terminological note – while the artistic production of Finnexia can be described in the context of art intervention, an event, installation, or socially engaged public art – I primarily use the term 'performance' throughout this dissertation in reference to the Finnexia project.

1.7 Investigating Ethics

In writing this thesis, my choice to examine the ethical issues surrounding Finnexia emerged from several encounters during the research process: 1) my personal encounters with audience members and performers, surrounding discomfort towards the methods of the Finnexia performance, 2) a detailed reading of the interview data, revealing the affective outcomes for audience members and performers, and 3) my experience interacting with audience responses at academic conferences where the outcomes of the Finnexia project were presented.

In 2010-11, during the preliminary art intervention experiments of the doctoral research (i.e. Consumerin®, Worry Machine®), I inquired with faculty and staff within the arts department at Aalto University, posing questions about ethical procedures in preparation for the development of the final thesis art production. From what I was told, no formal ethics guidelines were recommended, since my work took place within the context of artistic research. The only specific ethical guidelines discussed were those relating to academic writing. Given this, I felt a bit unsettled. However, I went forward in conceptualizing and planning the Finnexia doctoral production, responding in my own way to ethical concerns that arose unexpectedly through various stages of the project.

In the few years following the Finnexia performance (2013-14), I purposefully chose not to read any of the documentation from the ethical contentions that arose through the outcomes of the performance. To me, the prospect of reading through these documents in detail seemed emotionally daunting. On some level, I knew that by doing so, I might open up a Pandora's box of uncomfortable emotions and new considerations around Finnexia. This is precisely what happened in early 2015,[7] when I began reviewing the details of performer and audience testimonials. In a close reading of all this material, I felt a surge of emotions – surprise, worry, and shame. Above all, I felt a fascination towards what this data seemed to reveal: a complex emotional landscape of the public audience of Finnexia, and a picture of the broader repercussions that such a performance might have the potential to incite.

The stories and statements that emerged from the Finnexia interviews with performers and audience members surprised me in the depth of hope and emotional experience that some people expressed towards this project.

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7 I returned to the research in 2015, following maternity leave, and a one-year term of teaching full-time at an institution outside of the university.

I had entered the Finnexia performance primarily with an expectation for open dialogue with a handful of people in the Helsinki Railway Station about experiences learning the Finnish language and living in Finland. What resulted from the Finnexia performance both challenged and surprised me, in terms of the dialogical content and the scope of emotional repercussions. On a deep level, the results of Finnexia led me to reconsider my own ethical responsibility as an artist performing in public space, and as a researcher.[8] The project created an environment that ultimately encouraged me to see Finnexia not only as an artwork, but also as a *product*, through the eyes of other performers, public audience members, and the Finnish pharmaceutical industry.

From early 2015, Finnexia was presented at various artistic and arts-based research conferences at universities in Portugal, Sweden, and Finland. During each of these presentations, while I described the outcomes of the research, questions were raised by scholars in the audience regarding the ethics of the Finnexia project.

I was asked what sort of ethics review, if any, was involved in creating Finnexia. Questions were raised regarding the ethics surrounding my artistic methods and my choices in framing Finnexia as though it were a real product. Through these conference presentations involving Finnexia, I found myself surprised and frustrated at continually being confronted with such questions – to the point at which other aspects of the performance seemed to be left unaddressed. Through this, I realized that there was no escape from addressing the ethical dimension behind the research. At that point in time, I made the choice to address the ethics of my research directly within the written thesis, and to open myself up to whatever questions might arise from this path.

For me, ethics is fundamentally about what is done based on relational considerations of a given moment; how one's actions may affect the well-being of others, as well as that of oneself. In my view, ethics also operates within a fluid sense of the relational. I believe that the process by which one makes an ethical decision is context-dependent. At the same time, this process may be influenced by several factors; the momentary circumstances of the individual, cultural norms, a set of transcendental rules of behavior, legal codes, and religiously defined morals. Oftentimes, ethics and morals are discussed separately, with morals referring to the specificity of an individual's behavior in relation to others, and ethics pointing to a more general code of ideals or 'truths' that might motivate a person's actions (Hutchingson, 2015). For the purposes of the dissertation, I use the term *ethics* to encompass

8 It was not until the later stages of writing this dissertation, that I more clearly understood this ethical responsibility in the context of my role as a public pedagogue.

the whole of these behavioral and theoretical aspects. In the case of the artistic practice of socially engaged performance, ethical decisions become part of the process of making artistic decisions. In this sense, ethical and aesthetic issues may overlap in the creative process, as well as in the experience of presenting the work in public. For me, what remains unresolved is the degree to which artistic freedom weighs in ethical decisions. This factor becomes particularly critical within the context of artistic research, in which artistic decisions are typically questioned by an ethics review committee before the artwork is produced. Throughout the dissertation, I further elaborate on ethical considerations in relation to artistic research and socially engaged art in public space. To this end, the literature review section in Chapter 2 explores various perspectives on ethics. Chapter 8 examines specific ethical concerns that arose from the unexpected emotional and legal outcomes of the Finnexia event. Finally, in Chapter 9, I reflect on possible interpretations around the ethical and legal outcomes of the research.

1.8. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation structure consists of the following: Chapter 2 offers an overview of concepts and theories relating to performative arts, issues of ethical responsibility in the arts and artistic research, and public pedagogy. Chapter 3 describes the methodology in terms of artistic research. Chapters 4 offers a background on the conceptualization of the Finnexia medication, and the process of branding Finnexia as a realistic pharmaceutical product. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the planning and live presentation of the Finnexia performance. Chapter 7 offers an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the emotional responses of the public audience of Finnexia, particularly around the concept of 'false hope.' Chapter 8 describes the ethical and legal concerns raised around the Finnexia performance as a result of the responses from a Finnexia performer, some audience members, and Finnish organizations. Chapter 9 offers a broad discussion, analysis, and interpretation of the research outcomes. In doing so, the chapter responds to the research questions while drawing from theories and concepts of the literature review. Chapter 10 concludes with a summary of the research aims, addresses the successes and failures of the research, and suggests new questions for further consideration. The dissertation as a whole contains a description of the research outcomes, as well as a good amount of interview data. To protect the identity of the research participants, pseudonyms are used in place of their real names. There are some exceptions to this case, which are indicated with a footnote within the text.

1.9 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of my own background and art practice within the context of pharmaceutical advertising. It provided a basic cultural framework for the Finnexia production. Through this chapter, I also described the rationale behind my choice of focusing the research questions around the ethical and legal issues that arose from Finnexia. Finally, the chapter offered a brief description of the dissertation content. The next chapter provides theoretical background to the research, outlining theories of performance and socially engaged art practice, ethical considerations related to public performance and artistic research, and finally a description of public pedagogy as a means of understanding the relationships among performance art, public dialogue, and the responsibilities of the artist.

2 PRACTICE REVIEW AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2 Practice Review and Literature Review

This chapter presents a practice review of artistic methods, and a literature review of theoretical concepts that inform my research. The theories and practices described in this chapter offer a foundation from which to question, analyze, and interpret the primary artistic production of my research – which I carry out near the end of the dissertation. In artistic research, the literature review commonly includes not only a reading of related texts, but also a *practice review*; a contextualization of the researcher's own art practice within the field, engaging their work with historical and contemporary influences (Barrett & Bolt, 2010). In this practice review, I parse several forms of art, whose strategies provided a framework for the art practice component of my research: 1) performance art 2) socially engaged art 3) art interventions, and 4) culture jamming. I contextualize these art forms by discussing characteristics of each that are most relevant to my research. I also present examples of work by related artists.

The *literature review* section of the chapter engages with the relationships among ethics, performance, artistic research, and notions of public pedagogy. First, I examine perspectives on ethical considerations within the practice of socially engaged public performance within the context of contemporary art. I then describe questions and issues that arise in relation to artistic research carried out within the framework of an academic institution. The final section of the literature review introduces the concept of public pedagogy – in which forces of dominant discourse (i.e. public and corporate institutions), as well as interventionist art might take the role of pedagogical forces in society.

2.1 Practice Review

In this section, I offer a brief discussion of several art forms that contributed to the development of the art practice component of my research. My doctoral art production resulted as a hybrid of these different areas of art, and so I do not categorize my art practice within any one of these particular forms or their methods. While the art forms discussed in this section share many commonalities in terms of methods and intent, I will highlight the distinctive aspects of each that informed my doctoral research. In this chapter, the examples of artwork that I draw from include works from the 1990s, as well as more recent works. The historically broad range of works included here

reflect examples of art that have inspired my doctoral art production. Despite the relatively distant historical placement of a number of these socially engaged artworks, all of the selected works address social and political issues pertinent to contemporary society. The artworks here also exemplify strategies that I have taken up in my own work, such as dialogical orchestration in public space, and the creation of a fictitious framework that potentially challenges the public's perception of reality.

2.1.1 Performance Art

The definition of performance art is characteristically elusive and open-ended, defying any precise definition. Its methods draw from a broad range of media and disciplines – painting, dance, drawing, digital media, video, theater, photography, architecture (Goldberg, 1998). Performance art is not so much a medium as it is a tool (Tate Museum of Modern Art, 2017). Its character is ephemeral, fleeting, and temporal (Phelan, 1993). It is based on contingency and improvisation. Performance art can potentially take place at any time, in any location. Its aims are often to make its audience see the world in a new way, and to challenge societal norms. Performance art asks what it means to be here in this moment (Tate, 2017). This art form typically borrows tactics and methods from other disciplines and may incorporate a wide variety of props, settings, and media such as public spaces, galleries, video, animation, film, digital data (Goldberg, 1998).

Performance art has taken on different terms: live art, time-based art, and body art (Coogan, 2011). While each of these terms suggests a different emphasis within the performative realm; action, duration, and corporeality – all remain valid today, within the context of contemporary art (Coogan, 2011). In this dissertation, I use the term *performance art,* since this is the term I have become most familiar with in my studies and practice as an artist and researcher. The term 'performance art' came into use in the 1970s, on the heels of conceptual art, which valued ideas over product, and favored art that could not be bought or sold. Performance acted as a break from existing definitions of what art could be. Performance served as a way to present those ideas within conceptual art (Goldberg, 2011). It emerged as form of experimentation with a variety of media. At its core, performance is anarchic, in the sense that historically, performance has shown itself to be a medium without boundaries, employed by artists wishing to expand beyond the limits of established art forms, whose aim it was to "take their art directly to the public" (Goldberg, 2011, p. 9).

Historically, performance draws its philosophy and strategies from the art movements of the early 1900s – Dadaists, Surrealists, Futurists, as well

Figure 16. Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit the West. (1992-1994). Performance.Coco Fusco & Guillermo Gómez-Peña. Photo: Courtesy of Coco Fusco.

as art movements of the 1960s such as Fluxus, and the Situationist Internationale. At the core of these movements was a desire to question traditional notions of art, and to experiment with blurring the line between art and everyday life (Carlson, 2013). Bronson and Gale (1979) point out an historical distinction between performance as produced by American/Canadian artists in comparison with European artists. American and Canadian performance is more often associated with spectacle, elements of narration, and entertainment-based methods. In European traditions of performance art, the artists tend to take a more theoretical, political, and intellectual approach – an outgrowth of reactions towards social movements and political revolutions (Goldberg, 1998; Bronson & Gale, 1979).

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to go further into a broad history of performance art. Rather, for my purposes here, I now focus on the following aspects of performance art as they relate to my research: 1) performance as a provocative form of cultural critique (Goldberg, 1998), 2) corporeal presence as an implication of the real (Phelan 1993; Goldberg, 2001), and 3) the creation of a liminal state between artist and audience (Fischer-Lichte,

2008; Coven et al, 2007). One example of performance art that exemplifies these qualities is a piece called *Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit the West* in which, over the course of several days, Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña placed themselves on display in a large cage at a natural history museum in the U.S (Figure 16). The corporeal presence of the disguised artists generated a sense of authority in the display, giving the audience the impression that Fusco and Gómez-Peña were in fact, real 'newly discovered Amerindians' in an actual museum exhibition, freshly arrived from an island off the Mexican coast (Helguera, 2011). The "Amerindians" performance explored concerns around spectatorship, colonization, race relations, and the touristic gaze, among others (Carlson, 2013).

Experimentation is typically at the forefront of performance methods – often with the intention of challenging societal norms, political views, and pushing the boundaries of space, location, endurance, and audience interaction (Carlson, 2013, p. 114). The structure of a performance may be scripted or improvised – thus as an event, its outcomes may be unpredictable. The foundational elements of performance include body, site, audience, and time. These elements working in tandem produce a charged moment in time, through the presence of the human body. It is the presence and action of the human body that denotes this as performance. This charged moment of corporeality contributes to the sense of what is real, implicating a validity of presence (Phelan, 1993). As Goldberg (2001) elaborates, "the live presence of the artist, and the focus on the artist's body, became central to notions of 'the real', and a yardstick for installation and video art" (p. 10).

Performance art differs from theater in the sense that theater productions commonly build on a narrative framework. In performance art, these structures are often fractured (Carlson, 2013). According to Coogan (2011), the performers are not acting within a theatrical context, and their role lies between that of an actor and themselves – not completely one or the other. Moreover, the performance frame exists temporarily. It is contingent, "holding the performer in a liminal, provisional and suspended place" (p.10).

Some points of contention in the realm of performance involve the approach of blurring the boundaries between art and life, and its potential ethical consequences for the performer-audience relationship. As Coven et al. (2007) point out, when the boundary between fiction and reality is dissolved, a sense of vulnerability may be experienced by the audience. Although the performance may attempt to engage with real-life situations, it may alienate its audience in the process. Another point of debate, according to Fischer-Lichte (2008), involves the process of meaning-making from the perspective of the audience. In other words, "can performances be understood?" (p. 155). Since a performance unfolds in time and space, the audience must construct

its meaning from moment to moment, according to its own interpretation of the perceived elements. In this sense, the audience's understanding of the performance coincides with its aesthetic experience of it. In the shifting movement of the performance event, particularly if anomalous elements are overtly introduced to the audience, a sense of destabilization arises. If this liminal phase of instability is not recuperated at some point during the performance, then the audience may feel confusion or a lack of control, or even enter a state of crisis (Fischer-Lichte, 2008). As a result, the audience's aesthetic experience of the event may be shaped more by this indeterminacy than by any attempt to understand the performance.

In my own practice, I acknowledge the potential risks of blurring boundaries, particularly within public space. I believe that these risks may be minimized, although perhaps at the expense of compromising the original intent of the artwork itself. In terms of the process of meaning-making in in performance, I empathize with the concern about the effects of prolonged liminality on the audience. In my work, it is my hope that the very experience of unresolved liminality may also constitute a unique space for dialogical engagement, as I elaborate on later in the dissertation.

2.1.2 Socially Engaged Art

As in the case of performance art, the definition of socially engaged art remains in a constant state of evolution. Here, I focus on the following characteristics of this art form: 1) audience participation, 2) dialogue among diverse groups of people, and 3) the possibilities of building community among disparate groups. Generally, the term *socially engaged art* is defined as art that is process-oriented, and whose methods center around social interaction. This type of art also flows from the traditions of conceptual process art (Helguera, 2011). Socially engaged art may take place virtually anywhere – within a public space, in nature, on the street, or within an art gallery setting. Socially engaged practice relates to a lineage of art experience involving community, dialogue, social interaction, voice, public space, and social issues. These include new genre public art (Lacy, 1995), relational aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998), and dialogical art (Kester, 2013). Socially engaged art is rooted in the desire to merge life and art. It borrows from the 20st century histories of Russian Constructivism, Fluxus, Happenings, Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed, as well as the civil rights movements within the U.S and Europe (Thompson, 2012).

Art created in the spirit of the social and dialogical may serve as a vehicle to bring people of diverse backgrounds (students, residents, immigrants,

Figure 17. The Roof is on Fire (1993-1994). Public installation. Suzanne Lacy, Annice Jacoby, and Chris Johnson. Photo: Courtesy of Suzanne Lacy.

tourists, neighbors, artists) into a space where commonalities may be discovered through shared creative activities (Helguera, 2011). Suzanne Lacy's public performance, *The Roof is on Fire* (1994), brought together 220 local high school students on a rooftop parking garage in Oakland, California. During the performance, the youth sat together in 100 parked cars over extended periods of time, discussing their own views on racial profiling, media stereotypes, and funding needs of public schools. In Lacy's project, the process of active listening was a critical component of public dialogues. One of Lacy's intentions in *The Roof is on Fire* – as in many of her works – was an effort to create a safe space where people of diverse backgrounds might feel comfortable sharing their opinions, emotions, and concerns towards social and political issues affecting their own life and community (Kester, 2013).

Artists who create socially engaged art are primarily concerned with a type of "collective art that affects the public sphere in a deep and meaningful way, not in [only] creating representation – like a theatrical play – of a social issue" (Helguera, 2011, p. 7). Towards this end, artists operating with socially engaged art find themselves in a continual process of balancing the poetic, the symbolic, the mediated, and the practical (Thompson, 2012). In this realm of art, communicative action is the primary force. Any symbolic

action is inherently meshed with the meaning of a conceptual gesture (Helguera, 2011). Similar to activist art in the feminist traditions of the 1960s and 70s, socially engaged art has its own political motivations. However, its aims are not as much an act of protest, as the generation of social interaction, dialogue, and a framework for the participation of others, so that the "effects of the project may outlast its ephemeral presentation" (Helguera, 2011, p. 12).

There may be varying levels of participation in socially engaged art, ranging from minimal to immersive participation, taking place in a single encounter of a few minutes or hours, to more collaborative interactions taking place over a period of a day, months, or even years. Audience participation may take the form of either negotiated or antagonistic interaction. For example, some socially engaged works are carried out with an intention and plan that is made transparent to their audience and participants. In other cases, the audience may involuntarily find itself in the middle of an event that has turned into something it did not expect (Helguera, 2011).

Among the points of contention within socially engaged art, there is a debate regarding the role of dialogue within the practice, and the extent to which this relational aspect may constitute the aesthetic framework of a socially engaged project. According to Kester (2013), the conversational qualities of socially engaged art constitute the primary aesthetic dimension of the work, along with its potential to offer a voice to the underprivileged or underrepresented. Here, Kester refers to the conversation within the process and planning between artists and co-participants, as well as conversations taking place during the public presentation of the project with audience members. He describes this dialogical quality as one that is important to the possibilities of mutual openness, consensus, and understanding of the other. Gablik (1995) elaborates on this notion, emphasizing an empathic approach to dialogue, through a connective aesthetics of deep listening. Bishop (2012), while recognizing the potential for political change of socially engaged art, values the antagonistic potential of dialogue in socially engaged art. For Bishop, it is the diversity of perspectives and moments of heightened emotional tension among participants that can spark new ideas leading to change.

Sholette (2011) describes this type of dematerialized, politically oriented, socially engaged art as disrupting traditional notions of aesthetics in artistic production. He refers to such artwork as 'dark matter' – art that evades normative notions of object-based production – becoming, in a sense, invisible. For Sholette, this art focuses on process, and the creative potential in the activities of everyday life. According to Bishop (2006), there need not be a stark separation between the value of autonomy (as an aesthetic object) and heteronomy (blurring of life and art) in socially engaged art. Bishop views the entanglement of these two qualities as potentially productive towards social change.

For Lacy (1995), the aesthetics of socially engaged art inherently combine elements of the intangible (dialogical) and physical presentation (visual objects). Lacy's public works exemplify the use of visual decisions and a conversational framework that work together in order to create an aesthetic experience for the participants and viewer of her work. While here Lacy applies this aesthetic approach to what she defines as 'new genre public,' the same may be said for similar work produced in the realm of contemporary socially engaged art. As Lacy explains,

> *... the perception of beauty, subject as it is to cultural training and political manipulation, is still a necessary aspect of human existence. The quality of imagery and use of materials, including time and interaction, must be included in critical analysis of new genre public art.* (Lacy, 1995, p. 44)

Thompson (2012) points out that oftentimes there is an ongoing unresolved tension involving the "efficacy and pedagogy between the symbolic, the mediated and the practical" within socially engaged art (p. 32). To this end, Thompson poses the following questions to socially engaged artists: "When is a project working? What are its intentions? Who is the intended audience? Are these socially engaged works perhaps little too sympathetic with the prevailing values of our time and, thus, make themselves vulnerable to state instrumentalization?" (p. 32). Throughout the dissertation, I take up these questions while describing the planning and outcomes of my own doctoral art production. In addition, Thompson highlights the importance of considering the affective impact of socially engaged works. He encourages artists to develop an understanding of how an (art) work makes people think, versus how it makes people feel.

2.1.3 Art Interventions

Art interventions aim to disrupt the rhythm of everyday life, and to bring political issues to people within public spaces. This rupture of space and time employs tactics of performance, media appropriation, humor, pranks, etc. Intervention artists are informed by the art world, aspects of visual culture, and the personal histories and identities of the artists themselves (Thompson et al., 2004). Tactics can be thought of as tools such as a hammer screwdriver, used as a "means for building and deconstructing a given situation" (Thompson et al., 2004, p. 14). In this section, I focus on the following aspects of art interventions: 1) the disruption of existing structural or media frameworks (Thompson, 2015), 2) the use of tactics such as camouflage with-

in the local environment (de Certeau, 1984), and 3) the creation of a spectacle in public space (Debord, 2005).

There are many crossovers between art intervention, public art, and culture jamming, since their aims often intertwine in terms of disrupting normative forms of behavior, media landscape, and organization of public space. Many culture jammers consider their interventionist approaches as a method within their practice. The emphasis on each of these types of art is slightly different, and dependent on each of their respective goals and motivations. According to Doherty (2015), in the case of interventionist art within public spaces, the audience's expectations are often challenged or manipulated by the artist, oftentimes subverted. While it seems the intent of this type of work could be received as antagonistic, most often its effects can be a sharpening of the senses, challenging our view of the everyday, and our trust in existing cultural norms. As Doherty describes, "It is a process of re-familiarization by coming into contact with the unfamiliar" (p. 127). To this end, interventionist art in public spaces employs tactics of disorientation and incongruity, to create an aesthetic of the "wrong place" (Kwon, 2000, p. 36), drawing its audience closer to the playful atmosphere of the Situationist dérive, or drifting without clear resolution (Doherty, 2015).

The Yes Men presented an example of an intervention as a disruption through corporate parody and 'identity correction'. The Yes Men are an anonymous collective of activists who, using false identities representing real organizations, attempt to reveal perceived injustices within global corporations. Although the Yes Men are not a formal artist group, they are sometimes categorized with interventionist art.

The group has carried out large-scale media pranks while posing as representatives of Exxon Mobil and World Trade Organization. In 2001, The Yes Men presented the Management Leisure Suit in Tampere, Finland, at a conference entitled, "Textile of the Future." In the presentation, Andy Bichlabaum of the Yes Men (disguised as Hank Hardy Unruh) proposed the use of the golden suit (complete with a phallus-like surveillance monitor) as a revolutionary system for the remote management of employees (Thompson et al., 2004).

Interventionist artists make the most of their surrounding environment, along with the use of selective tactics, in order to engage their audience (Richardson 2010), often via the use of camouflage techniques (Thompson et al., 2004). As a result, audience members are challenged to experience a given place in an unexpected way. Interventions often take place in public spaces such as railway stations or shopping centers, but can also take place in a gallery setting. The expectations of the public and the history and usage of a space are important to the process of setting up an intervention artwork.

Some of the debates around interventionist art revolve around the use of spectacle, questioning the type of community created from this form of art, and the political value of the absurdist tactics employed by such works. Debord (2005) defines the spectacle as a system of thought aimed at unifying society via a collection of media images. One of the critiques of interventionist art that employs appropriated media content as a disruptive tactic is that it risks being overlooked and recuperated into the normative everyday media spectacle of life. In this case, what may be sacrificed in is the potential to offer a critical, self-reflective experience to the audience (Haiven, 2007).

In terms of community-building potential, Richardson (2010) examines the pedagogical possibilities of interventionist art, highlighting the ways in which this potential can arise through the creation of 'contingent communities.' In public space, this type of provisional community is formed around the very discourses that the intervention implants within a location. Richardson argues that this community, although most often temporary in duration, may bring about new social structures and generate new knowledge.

For Mouffe (2008), the political power of artistic interventions is most productive when this form of critical art generates dissensus, making "visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate" (p. 12). In this respect, Mouffe favors an agonistic approach to art intervention – one that maintains a state of productive, dynamic flux in the midst of a diversity of perspectives, rather than one that aims at promoting resolution through forced consensus. In her view, it is this agonistic approach that can most effectively challenge existing hegemonic systems. Thompson (2015) identifies a large part of the power of artistic interventions in their poetic gesture. He poses the question "what are the political uses of the absurd, the corrosive, the curious?" (p. 43). Thompson explains that these artworks that evade a clear, singular meaning offer a poetic gesture that holds potential for multiple interpretations.

2.1.4 Culture Jamming

Culture jamming involves the practice of creatively subverting normative messages within commercial cultural discourse. Culture jamming takes the format of interventions, public performances, hoaxes, and tactical media pranks. Through such tactics, culture jamming aims to inspire dialogue and debate surrounding what it views as social political injustices inherent within the policies of its targeted subjects (primary those of large corporations). The term 'culture jam' was coined by the San Francisco band Negativland, who used term on the album Jamcon '84 (Klein, 2002). In this section,

I focus on the following aspects of culture jamming: 1) media appropriation and the use of parody (Lasn, 1999; Adbusters, 1989, 2018), 2) the cultivation of playfulness (Sandlin & Milam, 2008; Reverend Billy, 2018), and 3) visual disruption with the intent to challenge existing assumptions around advertising and society (Reilly, 2013; The Yes Men, 2008).

Culture jamming is a specific method of engaging in cultural critique, in many cases towards a specific industry, organization, or corporate entity. The culture jammer works towards revealing what they perceive to be social or political injustices at the core of an organization's practices (Sandlin & Milam, 2008). In this pursuit, the jammers not only attempt to invert the intended message of a media advertisement or billboard; they often aim at improving, augmenting and changing it to reflect what they consider as a positive alternative to the original message (Klein, 2002).

To achieve this, a culture jammer employs various tactics such as *détournement* (the creation of a double meaning) in the form of the visual appropriation of corporate logos or the use of existing advertising formats. *Dérive* is another tactic used in a performative sense, similar to the concept of intervention, that serves to divert one from the flow of everyday life and encourage spontaneous actions and decisions in physical and psychological space (Lasn, 1999).

In culture jamming, the notion of presenting an alternative vision to a consumer reality is at stake, using détournement, and satire or parody. For example, in their New York Times hoax that took place on November 12, 2008, The Yes Men appropriated the newspaper's format, presenting an alternate version of the world news (Reilly, 2013). These (fake) new stories announced the end of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the establishment of a national health plan in the United States, and the declaration of all universities to become tuition-free (Firat & Kuryel, 2010).

Interestingly, those readers who looked closely enough at the news text would realize that the news stories were pre-dated in the future, in July 4, 2009 (Figure 18). While the prank left many perplexed, I believe the event may have also generated a collective (albeit short-lived) surge of hope towards positive change on a global scale. The emphasis here is on the power of an alternate visualization presented to the public, and how this might bring people to believe that change is possible (Firat & Kuryel, 2010). Similarly, Justine Cooper's fictitious medical ad campaign for Havidol®[9] (2007) claims to offer its audience the hope of relief from the malaise and dissatisfaction of everyday life. Her medication offers treatment for Dysphoric Social Atten-

9 See Cooper's website: http://havidol.com

Figure 18. New York Times (2009). Culture jam and intervention. The Yes Men. Photo: Courtesy of The Yes Men.

tion Consumption Deficit Anxiety Disorder (DSACDAD), a fictitious medical condition which Cooper invented (Figure 19). Havidol®'s promise of a near-perfect life experience through ingestion of a pill, was perceived by many in the United States as believable – causing some people to contact the art gallery for prescription information (Coombes, 2007). Cooper explains that her intent was to create an advertisement with the potential to fool its audience, and that this intent emerged as a satirical contrast to what she perceived as hyperbolic tensions within mainstream direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising. As Cooper states:

> *The drug ads themselves are sometimes so comedic. I couldn't be outrageously spoofy, so I really wanted it to be a more subtle kind of parody that draws you in, makes you want this thing and then makes you wonder why you want it and maybe where you can get it.* (Cooper, 2007)

Cooper's Havidol® has circulated into a worldwide art–as–hoax phenomenon since its creation in 2007, and has even appeared on medical websites and in pharmaceutical publications.

The conceptual origins of culture jamming are derived from a number of counterculture revolutionary groups of the 20th century – hippies, punk groups, as well as the Dadaists, surrealists, and, in particular, the Situationist Internationale group. These groups moved against the current of established bodies of authority, in the spirit of spontaneous defiance. As Lasn (1999)

Figure 19. Havidol® website (2007). Justine Cooper. Photo: Courtesy of Justin Cooper.

points out, it was the Situationist International who first challenged the mass media culture beginning in the 1950s, through an anarchic sensibility. Their experimental tactics of resistance were also employed in response to the 1968 student uprisings in Paris (Klein, 2002). The Situationist group acted out of an understanding of how the media (primarily commercial messages – but also television, film, magazines, and newspapers) created a spectacle society. Their concern was that this media spectacle might eventually erode the human psyche, diminishing the possibility for spontaneous, authentic living (Lasn, 1999).

Culture jammers often aim to engage the emotions of their audience, through their use of détournement, in order to inspire action or initiate new, transformative thought (Sandlin & Milam, 2008). Adbusters, based in Vancouver, Canada, is an example of an activist organization that employs subvertising as a culture-jamming approach. In its critiques, Adbusters address primarily issues of consumerism, the environment, and the inner workings of global corporations. In its subvertisements, Adbusters subverts the original message behind the ad. In Adbuster's subvert of a Calvin Klein ad for Obsession perfume, for example, generates a new meaning for the concept of slenderness in female models. The subvertisement, with the Obsession logo at its head, displays a black and white image of a young, extremely thin woman leaning over a toilet bowl. The image generates a sense of unease, associating the original Calvin Klein fashion and perfume ads with eating disorders often experienced by young models hired to pose in such ads. This points to the broader expectations presented in the media towards distorted standards of beauty and health (Sandlin & Milam, 2008).

Wettergen (2009) highlights the use of emotional influence in culture jamming, from the standpoint of creating an atmosphere of fun and playfulness, with the potential for community-building. In culture jamming, according to Wettergen, these concepts relate to the "emotional regime of late capitalism in the articulations of the tension between 'fake' and 'true' emotion" (p. 12). The mechanisms behind 'real' and 'fake' fun in turn, originate from the distinction between *utopian* (carnivalesque) and satirical laughter. Utopian laughter challenges the existing order, presenting new possibilities. The modern laughter of *satire* challenges the status quo with no intent of transformation (Wettergen, 2009). According to Wettergen, then, fun and protest in the practice of some forms of culture jamming can be considered as utopian, in the process of opening up the moment to new possibilities.

Critics of culture jamming claim some of its methods to be antithetical to the goal of persuading the public towards its side. In other words, the very act of telling people how they should think, or what products they should not

buy, may have a reverse effect, and provoke retaliation in the form of resistance against the message behind the culture jam itself. In this case, the audience may end up viewing the culture jammer in a negative light (Sandlin & Milam, 2008). Ellsworth (1988) elaborates on this dilemma, pointing out that these audience members, in their response to the culture jam, are reacting to what they perceive as oppressive media environments. Ellsworth (2005) discusses this in the context of public pedagogy, delineating the difference between learning that emerges through an experiential process and learning as a means of directly adopting and absorbing a given set of concepts. According to Ellsworth, by allowing the presence of momentary indeterminacy and self-suspension, a culture jam may hold more potential for learning and self-transformation in the audience's experience.

In addition, not everyone who encounters a culture jam event/intervention may 'get' the jam. The satirical/parodic force in subvertising generates the antihegemonic force. In the case of culture jamming, these tactics are used in order to break the spell of the media spectacle (Lasn, 1999). However, it is this very practice that may obscure the culture jam's message. According to Haiven (2007), culture jammers should not count on the public to instantly understand the context of the jam, nor should jammers expect that it will have any substantial effect on the public at large. As Haiven explains:

> *There will be extremely few who will walk by a jammed ad or billboard... and re-evaluate global capitalism or their life practices. People are probably less stupid and duped and more hopeless and cynical. Being told the enjoyment of their few material pleasures afforded them guarantees their damnation is unlikely to sway many.* (Haiven 2007, p. 107)

My own art practice resonates with the aspects of culture jamming that promote play, freedom of expression, and a return to creative, spontaneous acts, and critical, reflective thinking. However, my approach does not entirely align with what I see as the nihilistic, overtly cynical aspects of culture jamming – the notion that consumer capitalism and global corporations must be completely stopped or eliminated in order for people in the world to be restored to a happier state. While I do see a need for movement towards social and environmental justice, I do not believe that the existing economic orders will ever be, or should be, completely abolished. Most likely they will evolve, shift, and transform over time. Much of the work towards global change must, in my view, take place alongside and within existing economic structures. My art practice towards this end involves more of an appropriation of consumerist media elements, in order to generate experimental, playful environments that offer the possibility for authentic personal connection. My

way of thinking involves working within existing systems, places, and organizations to work towards a shift to openness and spontaneity through performance, détournement, and public dialogue.

2.1.5 Summary

In this practice review, I offered a brief description of the art forms that I employed in my artistic research: performance art, socially engaged art, interventions, and culture jamming. These forms have several qualities in common: the use of experimental, oftentimes subversive methods aimed at direct communication with a public audience about social and political issues. At the core of each art form, there is a desire to merge the public and the private, and to offer a discursive space open to new possibilities, where the unexpected is welcome to occur. These common qualities are the ones that have most informed my doctoral research – ones I have used towards building a framework for public dialogue through performative interventionist art. The differences among these art forms lie in how each emphasizes a distinctive aspect of its own respective methods. In performance art, which focuses on action and corporeality, it is the artist's body that becomes the focus of action. In socially engaged art, the interaction between the artist(s) and the audience is what primarily constitutes the material. Interventionist art relies on the temporary disruption of a place or space through physical action or audio/visual methods, in order to direct attention to an issue or idea. Culture jamming employs various combinations of corporate parody, performance, and media appropriation.

2.2 Literature Review

In this section, I give an overview of issues linking ethics in performance art and ethical considerations of artistic research within academia. In the second part of the literature review, I discuss the relationships among performative art, dominant discourse, and public pedagogy. Here in the literature review, I touch on the key aspects of each of these areas that informed my doctoral research. Later, the dissertation will take up all of these points, in relation to the dialogical outcomes of and ethical issues surrounding Finnexia, the primary artistic production of my research. In this chapter, the relationship between ethics and aesthetics and their intertwinings are touched upon as well. For the purpose of the dissertation, I define aesthetics in a practical sense, not in the traditional notion of the neo-Kantian defi-

nition involving quality of form in an artwork. Here, in the case of the Finnexia project, I refer to aesthetics in the sense of practical decisions made by the artist during the planning of the performance and during its presentation in public space.

2.2.1 Ethics and Performance Art in Public Space

Goldberg (2013) points out that in Moscow, in 1909 through the mid-1920s, artists of all genres, writers, poets, visual artists, Russian constructivists, came to together, to confront one another, and pooled ideas, thinking about, "What is the aesthetic of the new ethics?" As Golberg elaborates:

> *This frame came from Lenin in the early 20s, when he said, 'Ethics is the aesthetics of the future'. So we are [now] looking at what is means to be an ethical human being, an ethical artist. And to make work that actually conjures up new kinds of ethics. An ethics that is about the 21st century.* (Goldberg, 2013, conference lecture on video)

Goldberg describes an ethics related to the art world during her time as an artist in New York in the 1970s. For Goldberg, at that time, ethics in art was about maintaining an ethos surrounding performance. It entailed a commitment to producing art that is not related to profit, art that has an ethical and moral code built into it (Goldberg, 2013). How do we define an ethical approach to art, and is this carried out according to a standard set of transcendent rules, or can we consider the ethical considerations of a work as a situational matter, contingent upon the given conditions? In public performance-based art, the potential arises for intense emotional experiences on the part of both the audience and the artist(s). The time-based, improvisational, and oftentimes political nature of such work inherently prompts situations of risk.

Möntmann (2013) proposes a discussion of ethics in art that takes into account the global power structures ultimately linked to the politics of art, to this end, suggesting a framework for addressing ethics in art that sits between criticality and affirmation, and, at the same time, avoids catering to a form of ethics that favors a strictly 'correct' behavior and overprotective policies. Kester (2013) refers to what he considers a priority for socially engaged artists to consider the face-to-face encounter as the highest level of ethical encounter. Ridout (2009) looks a several examples of performance art and the notion of presence and interaction between audience and artist as an eth-

ical requirement. For Beshty (2015), the question of ethics in contemporary art calls for a repositioning of the relationships between aesthetics and ethical decisions. Referring to the 'paradox' of political art that often uses propagandistic forms, Beshty points out the possibility of this art form reifying the same power structures that it seeks to critique. From this, Beshty proposes an aesthetics of ethics that examines the means by which an artwork communicates its message. Here, there is a slight move away from hermeneutic approaches which emphasize systemic analysis as an end, towards an observation of how an artist creates an environment of engagement. Here, the primary concern of ethics in art is not necessarily whether a work does something good or bad in ethical terms. Rather, in the case of participation-based, socially engaged work, a key concern would be the "aesthetic implications of an action that modifies social relations" (Beshty, 2015, p. 20).

Rancière (2011), discusses how a controversial artwork, or the actions of an artist, may provoke anger or disgust in the public eye. Rancière encourages critics of political art to look at such work's potential to point to broader societal truths, rather than clinging to moral judgments made towards the artwork, or the artist's decisions Read (1993) describes the context of ethics in performance as one of possibility. He suggests that performers enter into an unknown ethical situation without guaranteed resolution, "like the ethical relation which awaits creation" (p. 90).

In reference to dialogical, socially engaged public art, Nealon (1998) addresses the ethical demand of dialogue-based, performative art as one that is inherently complex, involving the construction of subjectivity through the act of face-to-face communication. Nealon draws from Bakhtin's notion of answerability in dialogical experience, and Levina's idea of responsibility. Through this, he describes the common aim of both these threads as generating a fundamental acknowledgement of the Other, without assigning a scripted directive in our response to the Other. Given this, our capability for ethical judgment may not come from a transcendent subjectivity, but from a given "dialogic situation" (Nealon, 1998, p. 37). A person responds to this unique situation, taking into account its "sense-validity" as well as "all its concrete historicity and individuality" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 28). In this scenario, ethics is experienced through face-to-face encounters with another, with the corporeal presence serving as a basis for understanding ethical experience (Kester, 2013).

Nealon (1998), Haynes (2008, 2013), and Kester (2013) have applied Bakhtin's ideas of dialogue and answerability in contemporary art. For Bakhtin (1981), the notion of dialogue originates from a literary context, from the idea of a single word containing dialogic potential, with multiple voices. In this realm, words, utterances and speech acts escape any stasis or homogeniza-

tion. In this sense, Bakhtin's notion of dialogue can be viewed as a metaphor for the creative process (Emerson, 2000, p. 36). Bakhtin attributes dialogism with a quality of unfinalizability, in that all words, phrases, or utterances exist continually in relation to each other. Thus, they are never resolved or completed. Rather, they are always changing, and contain the possibility for creating something new (Emerson, 2000). In terms of the act of artistic creation, Bakhtin's notion of the dialogic allows an ongoing interaction between artist (author) and participant (reader). For Bakhtin, the life of an artwork is completed, in part, through the witnessing and response of the spectator (Bakhtin, 1990).

Bakhtin's idea of answerability suggests a responsibility and an ongoing relationship between the artist's self, their creation, and the Other. This relationship is a dynamic one, potentially shifting during the creation of a work, and with each instance of an encounter between the art and its audience (spectator). In this sense, a Bakhtinian notion of ethics in art can be articulated as one not based on transcendental, fixed rules. Rather, his ethical approach – although ultimately stemming from a perspective returning to the self, plays out through dialogical forces arising from the situational context of a particular moment (Bakhtin, 1993).

Grehan (2009) examines a series of performance art pieces that introduce levels of unease to their audience. She engages with Levinas's idea of responsibility (Levinas, 1988, 1998, 1999) and Bauman's writings on ambivalence (1993, 1998) in order to examine notions of responsibility, ethics, and spectatorship in performance art. Through this, Grehan aims to uncover the ways in which audiences may engage with new ethical questions as a result of witnessing performance art. As Grehan states:

> *I am not only interested in describing the complexity of emotional and intellectual responses a performance might engender, I also want to understand how these responses, during and after the performance, liberate (or have the potential to liberate) certain kinds of ethical challenges for spectators as citizens in the wider world.* (p. 6)

In terms of ethical considerations in public art, Thompson proposes four phases of ethics, in the form of the following questions: Does the project actually provoke a reaction? Whom is it for? How does it resist instrumentalization? And finally, how does it line up within a larger framework of instrumentalization and power? (as cited in Möntmann, 2013, pp. 117). At various points in the dissertation, I address these questions within the context of the Finnexia performance. For Thompson, one of the primary aims of socially engaged art is to bypass the clutter of daily life in order to offer someone a

profound emotional and intellectual experience, with the possibility of clarity and insight. This, Thompson points out, "comes with an ethical position" (p. 110). Thompson explains that an audience may not clearly understand the expectations of, or the framing of, art in a public space. The audience may constitute a broad demographic, from which a variety of interpretations are drawn. As Thompson elaborates:

> *In this position of making meaning across the range of a broad public, the ethical position in terms of aesthetics must come into play. Whom is the work for? Aesthetic decisions must be made in order to gear a project toward a set of expectations for an audience. This is an ethical decision because one is choosing whom an artwork is and for whom it's not for.* (as cited in Möntmann, 2013, p. 112)

Thompson asks how an artwork challenges existing forms of "instrumentalizing logic of power" in order to communicate its message. He notes that, particularly in the case of artworks that borrow media structures such as advertising formats, the message of the art may be absorbed by the commercial framework – becoming simply a means to an end. As Thompson explains, "it [the artwork] no longer evokes agency or curiosity, but instead is reduced to a flattened sense of the imagination based on the simplest levels of association and consumption" (as cited in Möntmann, 2013, p. 115). Understanding where and how an artwork is instrumentalized (or used as a tool) is dependent on the conditions of the particular political environment. As a warning towards this end, Thomson states, "the more one knows about art, often the less one knows how the general public is going to interpret it" (as cited in Möntmann, 2013, p. 116).

The contentions around ethics in the artworld include the notion of what kind of responsibility of the artist and the audience hold towards the creation, experience, and presentation of the art. According to Varto (2017), "art is a free and liberated space where people can be exposed to anything that does not harm them for good. And people [of the audience] are responsible for the use of some rational choice" (personal communication, January 2017). Along these lines, a place of artistic creation is a psychological space, according to Marcuse, where all possibilities are open. Towards this, he states:

> *Art is committed to that perception of the world which alienates individuals from their functional existence and performance in society – it is committed to an emancipation of sensibility, imagination, and reason in all spheres of subjectivity and objectivity.* (Marcuse, 1978, p. 9)

Regarding the relation of art, hegemonic forces, and reality, Marcuse describes art as an agent with the freedom to challenge existing frameworks of perception. He explains:

> *The truth of art lies in its power to break the monopoly of established reality (i.e., of those who established it) to define what is real. In this rupture, which is the achievement of the aesthetic form, the fictitious world of art appears as true as reality.* (Marcuse, 1978, p. 9)

Read (1993) suggests that performance has an obligation not solely to representation of ideas or 'facts,' but rather to suggest scenarios of new possible worlds through challenging existing norms and through the dissolution of certainties. Defining it within the realm of praxis, de Certeau (1986) describes ethics as "articulated through effective operations and it defines a distance between what is, and what ought to be. This distance designates a space where we have something to do" (de Certeau, 1986, p. 199).

Within public art interventions as art practice, the need for ethical decisions will arise. How the artist(s) respond to the ethical demands during the planning process or within the midst of a performance is of importance, and will depend partly on the artist's situation at a given moment. Their response will be affected by variables dictated by improvisational frameworks, moment-to-moment decisions and actions made out of responses to audience members or other performers. Given the often unexpected nature of public performance interventions, such ethical demands will sometimes need to be dealt with as they unfold, and may involve quick decision-making, without consultation with a committee. In artistic practice, I believe that artists operate in a field of relative freedom, compared with that of artistic research carried out in an institution. To this extent, I agree with Marcuse and Varto in their notion of art practice as an open space for expression and freedom to challenge existing norms, with the audience taking on a measure of responsibility for their response to the work. I believe that to enter the creative process of the art practice, this approach is essential.

However, when the public is unaware that they are entering into the space of an artwork or performance art, the issue of audience responsibility may become problematic. Particularly within the scope of a media-rich global landscape, the politics of participation in society and within artistic events is increasingly complex (Breemen, 2017; Kester, 2013, Rancière, 2011). Even so, I believe that, to a certain extent, spectators/citizens in contemporary society hold a basic level of responsibility in terms of deciding for themselves what they choose to interact with on a daily basis in the world around them. The point here is not so much an emphasis on forcing a public audience to

participate or choosing to overtly deceive people, but rather to create an opportunity for "deepening and changing the positions we already occupy in society" with the potential to elicit critical thinking (Breemen, 2017, p. 15). In the environment of art practice in public spaces, this intention can be countered with a more conscious approach to ethical considerations surrounding a given artistic event.

Artforms that employ methods of deception in public space have, in recent years, been more closely examined in terms of their ethical approaches. For example, in the practice of Invisible Theater (Boal, 1985), a theatrical approach is used that, through a level of deception, addresses themes of societal and political oppression in a public space. Performers in these scenarios enact dramatic scenes of interpersonal conflict involving racism, political discussion, sexual discrimination, and even suicidal crisis. The performance interventions, which may appear in, for example, railway stations, restaurants, or shopping malls, are all framed as real scenarios, with no disclosure to the public that the scene is purely theatrical. According to Boal, the intent of Invisible Theater is to provide a pedagogical opportunity for public involvement and responsiveness to a critical situation that may lead to new perspectives around political conflict (Burstow, 2008).

Such approaches employed through Invisible Theater have been critiqued for their potentially extreme emotional and traumatic effects on the public audience. Working towards a more ethically balanced method of engaging the public, Invisible Theater practitioners have often modified their interventions, depending on the intensity of the dramatic event involved (Burstow, 2008). These include, for example, offering brochures explaining the theatrical intent to those members of the public audience who have finished witnessing the intervention. In in the planning of Invisible Theater events, some considerations have been made to alter or tone down some dramatic scenes between performers in order to lessen the chance that local police will become involved. In the planning of some interventions, performer teams have been created solely for the purpose of addressing ethical concerns directly with the public audience as they arise during the performance. For Invisible Theater practitioners, all this means striking a balance between performative/educational goals and artistic content, "adjusting each to create a program which is at once worth doing and ethical" (Burstow, 2008, p. 283). In a sense, then, performers might incorporate a practice within their practice – of looking for the unexpected, problematizing ethical issues, and possibly reframing their work accordingly (p. 284).

As in these approaches I have just described towards self-reflective Invisible Theater practice, all artists working in the public realm might consider working towards an awareness and the ethical concerns that arise during

the creative process and in the presentation of artistic events. I consider this process of reflection not as a form of self-censorship, or as a way of diminishing the original creative intent, but rather as a way of contributing to the aliveness of the work as a dialogue between life and art. In practice, this ethical awareness may not result in immediate action or sudden adjustments in the midst of a performance. I believe the approach of self-reflection and thought towards ethical consideration may contribute to the evolution of the art itself in a later iteration, or in self-reflective writings by the artist and in subsequent dialogues about the work.

2.2.2 Ethics Protocols in Artistic Research

Here I look at ethical considerations in artistic research, in particular, those relating to performative, socially engaged public art. Sahlin (2017) presents the argument that artist-researchers share the same ethical responsibilities as those of non-art researchers. According to Sahlin, if an arts-based project involves interaction with humans, animals, or other types of similar engagement – and potentially poses a risk to these subjects (physically or emotionally), then the artwork should be subject to an ethics review. Ravini (2017) believes that artistic researchers need not 'tame' their artistic practice to meet the requirements of research ethical reviews. In Ravini's view, artwork – even within the context of academic research, requires the fullest freedom possible, particularly in the case of politically oriented works that to point towards broader social injustices.

Bolt and Vincs (2015) explore varying perspectives on the relation between ethics guidelines and artistic research within the Australian academic environment. They present data from a survey they conducted regarding the opinions of both students and supervisors towards the perceived role of, and their personal experience with, ethics reviews and ethics protocols. Ultimately, Bolt and Vincs suggest that, in the research context, ethics guidelines should be viewed not as bureaucratic obstacles, or as reasons for self-censorship, but rather as an integral part of the creative process. They propose that the questions around ethics can serve as a dialogical process informing the research experience (Bolt & Vincs, 2015).

Blair presents an overview of challenges surrounding ethical issues introduced by artistic research, and describes a guideline of standard ethical approval processes for research participants (both human and animal). According to Blair, artist-researchers can be encouraged to consider how ethical decisions might affect participants. Regarding issues around artistic research, Blair notes that, "artistic research complicates many of these [eth-

ical] principles, including notions of who is a participant" (as cited in Sinner, Irwin, & Adams, in press). Cashell (2009) challenges the popular notion of transgression in art as negatively controversial. She points out that in many cases, strong emotions such as shame, outrage, repulsion, or confusion are intended as part of the aesthetic experience of a work. This emotional and ethical provocation, according to these artists, is part of an outcome that may, on a broader level, contribute to greater societal understanding. On a personal level, the encounter may offer a cathartic experience to the audience. Boydell et al. (2011) point out the possibility of unexpected emotional outcomes in art performances and exhibitions. They claim that such outcomes reflect an intrinsic quality of the arts that stimulates both the cognitive and emotional aspects of human experience, without treating them as separate elements. According to Boydell et al. (2011), artist-researchers and ethics review boards may not be well-informed about how to handle the possibility of unexpected emotional outcomes of such types of arts-based research experiences. In this case, it becomes important to address questions regarding whether it might be appropriate to include preparation and/or debriefing and emotional counseling for audience members and participants involved in the research.

Within the context of artistic research, I favor the notion of a bridge between academic research ethics guidelines and artistic freedom. While I believe that artistic freedom of expression is of the utmost importance, once an artist enters an academic institution, then the artwork – to a certain extent, also falls under this responsibility. I do believe that despite an ethics review of artistic production plans, however, there remain unknowable variables in terms of what will happen during the actual presentation of a public performance. For example, if the artist introduces improvisational elements to the piece, the outcome of the event may be even less predictable in terms of the audience's reception and emotional response.

In 2008, the Government of Canada Panel on Research Ethics implemented a supplementary chapter entitled, "Research Involving Creative Practices: A Chapter for Inclusion in the Tri-City Council Policy Statement (TCPS)" (Blackstone, et al., 2008).The document was created by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Special Working Committee (SSHWC): A Working Committee of The Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics (PRE). The authors wrote the guidelines based on feedback from creative arts researchers and their response to a TCPS statement on ethical guidelines for research involving humans. This new document reflects special concerns and needs of creative practitioners in research and within the contemporary art world, such as the desire to maintain the potential for surprise and discovery, and the freedom to challenge existing

cultural norms. At the same time, this document proposes ways to incorporate ethical reflection within arts-based research. It also addresses special concerns around the treatment of human participants that arise once artistic practice enters the public sphere. While the committee raises crucial issues for art practitioners to consider in this ethical context, the authoring committee also cautions against the possibility of ethics guidelines promoting censorship of creative ideas:

> *While arts-based researchers should reflect on the moral acceptability of their approach to human subjects, it is not in the best interests of these subjects if ethical review becomes a prescriptive mechanism for limiting or diminishing the impact of the arts or for exercising prior restraint or censorship.*
> (Blackstone, et al., 2008, p. 3)

The direct incorporation of concerns and guidelines of the arts-based research community into the Canadian national ethics guidelines serves as a concrete example of a step towards fostering a better understanding of how arts-based research operates and how it can inform other types of research of a quantitative or qualitative nature. The full document, "Research Involving Creative Practices: A Chapter for Inclusion in the TCPS (Tri-City Council Policy Statement)," may be accessed online at: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/archives/policy-politique/reports-rapports/ricp-ripc/

The link leads to a general information page about the chapter, including an option to download a pdf file of the complete document.

2.2.3 Public Pedagogy and the Responsibility of the Artist

In this section, I explore several aspects of public pedagogy as a means of examining the transformative potential of public performance, the possible role of the artist as public intellectual, and the dominant discourse of the medical industry that may play a role in the persuasive forces of pharmaceutical advertising. I came to incorporate these concepts of public pedagogy at the later stages of my doctoral research, out of a desire to better understand the relationships between the discourse of pharmaceutical advertising and the public audience. Aspects of public pedagogy also drew me to investigate the transformative potential of public performance interventions.

Public pedagogy functions as a relatively new concept in contemporary culture. The term, originating from educational scholarship, refers to the notion of education beyond formal schooling (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick,

2011). Among the examples of public pedagogies are those generated by industries, economies and institutions that establish dominant discourses in society (medical associations, government agencies, corporate advertising). There are also those created by informal institutions that act towards questioning hegemonic forces and dominant ideologies by introducing methods of empowerment and agency to individuals, and by proposing alternatives to dominant paradigms. Such forms of public pedagogy include public art, performance interventions and culture jams (Sandlin et al., 2011).

Public pedagogy may involve more informal sites of learning such as public institutions, private businesses, churches, museums, films, literature, the news industry, and public art, for example. Public pedagogy – through ideologies, public attitudes, law, media programming, and pop culture, plays a role in shaping our ways of thinking, our perceptions of the world, our identity, assumptions, and cultural norms. Rather than reserve these categories as purely entertainment or ancillary information, we can view them as integral to the way in which we understand ourselves and the world at large. Public pedagogies, or "spaces, sites, and languages of education and learning that exist outside schools—are just as crucial, if not more so, to our understanding of the formation of identities and social structures as the teaching that goes on within formal classrooms" (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010, p. 349).

Dominant discourse as public pedagogy refers to communication of public policy as defined by the discourse of governmental, legal, and medical institutions. In this sense, public policy informs and influences the construction of public and private identities (Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 352). In this dissertation, the role of medical discourse and pharmaceutical advertising is of particular relevance as a site of public pedagogy that informs consumers and patients. This role of the medical discourse and its manifestations in the artistic production of Finnexia are further discussed in Chapter 4.

Giroux (2004b, 2005) addresses dominant discourse as public pedagogy in the form of neoliberalism and global capitalism. He highlights the impact of economic discourse on the values, identity, and activities of citizens – youth culture in particular. In this discussion, it is the market value of objects, people, and policies that defines and drives activity, thoughts, and desires (Sandlin et al 2011, p.352). From Giroux's standpoint, the 'public' is targeted as an obsolete entity, its relevance overcome by privatization on a market level and in terms of human exchange of information (Giroux, 2005).

There is debate around the notion of who holds the responsibility for educating the public and how it should be done. Giroux (2004a) points out that this role may be taken on by teachers in the classroom, or by activist cultural workers engaging the public audience in critical thinking. In this role, the teacher/activist as public intellectual acts as the primary catalyst for person-

al agency, guiding students/the public to develop the means for independent thinking. Here, the learning process requires an instructor or facilitator in order for a transformational experience to occur – someone who can provide the vocabulary and guidance for the student/learner to learn to see differently and to develop criticality in their thinking. Another view on the role of the public intellectual sees them as purely a facilitator, in which the learner/public comes to their own conclusion via a more open atmosphere of learning (Brady, 2006). Here, the idea is that people have an innate ability to reach a transformational experience on their own. This may occur once a person has entered a space that offers the possibility of this – often a space or experience facilitated by an artist or cultural worker (Ellsworth, 2005).

How these various roles of the public intellectual are carried out varies. In the most general sense of the term, Long gives the example of the president teaching the citizens of a country about values and goals that might unite the people towards a sense of purpose for the good of the public (as cited in Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 355). Supporting Long's concept of disseminating knowledge to the public are Robèrt, Daly, Hawken and Holmberg (1997), who present the idea of informing the public of the way the world operates, with the goal of producing an educated public voting body. The aim is to even out the distribution of knowledge for the purpose of democratizing society and creating a more level playing field in terms of class and politics. In Giroux's view, the public intellectual leads others in encountering their "own sense of political agency" (as cited in Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 358).

Ellsworth (1990) presents concerns with expectations towards the public recognizing agency and coming to that through a public pedagogue. She critiques the notion of critical public pedagogy, in terms of its methods that in and of themselves might constitute and reify the very oppressive structures that they set forth to critique. The debate and contentions here lie with the how the public intellectual functions best – either as an individual within a centralized, institutional setting (i.e. a classroom setting) or in a decentralized position within a community in the midst of grassroots movements, performative activism, and student dialogue.

In my view, the potential for pedagogical experience in public interventions or any type of art, might not lie solely through orchestration by an artist. Rather, I propose that this pedagogical potential manifests through a combination of the artistic intention of the work, coupled with the improvisational and consequential flow of events that take place through the intervention itself. Given this, I believe each audience member ultimately creates their own interpretation of the event, despite any prescribed pedagogical intentions of the artist/public intellectual. I view this power to derive one's own interpretation of the experience as a lived form of agency in itself. The desire

to empower others may most effectively play itself out by allowing a balance among artistic intention and, intellectual frameworks, as well as space and time for dialogue to emerge among diverse individuals.

Public pedagogy as activism and performance is examined in the context of creating decentralized public intellectual bodies, engaging the public and individuals in a collective exploration of agency and empowerment. According to Brady (2006), this entails the creation of a democratic public space through the use of performance, humor, dialogue, and action. In this context, Sandlin and Milam (2008), analyze the work of performative activist Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping. Reverend Billy's dramatic public interventions in Disney stores and large shopping centers, employs the use of humor, embarrassment, and spectacle to engage the public in self-reflection on their own consumerist behavior, and to reconsider the ethics of corporate practices. Brady (2002) examines the methods of the Guerrilla Girls public billboard campaigns, lectures, and public performance interventions. In their work, the Guerilla Girls aim to engage the public in discussion about the role of women in the arts the presence of racism and sexism in the arts, and in culture at large.

According to Brady (2006), groups such as these provide a progressive approach with the potential to question the common practices of public and private organizations and government institutions. These examples provide a way to understand artistic intervention as a form of public pedagogy with the possibility of challenging dominant societal structures. At the same time, the examples offer potential for the expression of alternative viewpoints. (Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 358). From the view of Sandlin et al. (2011), public pedagogy may provide artists a way in which to investigate how "various elements ascribe and reinforce specific forms of citizenship as well as reproduce individual and collective identities" (Sandlin et al., 2011, p. 351).

I agree with the positing of Sandlin et al., on public pedagogy as it relates to the function of art. For me, public pedagogy serves as a means to examine and articulate the ways in which the public and private, personal and political, operate and inform each other in the formation of public dialogue, and in turn, as a potentially transformational experience for both artist and audience. In my view, the discussion of the dynamics of public pedagogy within the dominant discourse and corporate institutions may facilitate an understanding of the ways in which a public audience might interact with media-based public art interventions.

2.3 Summary

This chapter offered an overview of theories and concepts that provide a framework from which to question and interpret the artistic production of the research, and from to discuss the dissertation questions: The concepts addressed included methods of performative arts-based practices, and ethical considerations in performative art practice and in artistic research. The chapter also addressed concepts of public pedagogy that relate to the artistic production of this research: the role of the artist in public interventions, the dynamics of dominant discourse in advertising, and the transformational potential of performance intervention as public pedagogy. The chapter has provided a foundation for discussing the methodology and artistic methods of the research. The next chapter takes on this task, defining my artistic practice of performative, socially engaged art, within the context of artistic research.

3 METHODOLOGY

3 Methodology

This chapter serves as a framework through which to discuss the methods and methodology of my doctoral research. In what follows, I provide a brief overview of artistic research and arts-based research as paradigms of inquiry, and I situate my doctoral research in relation to these. I also describe specific methods implemented in my art practice within this research, as well as the methodology taken up by the written dissertation. Specific examples of the artistic productions, workshops, and interviews carried out within my research are described earlier in the introduction and in subsequent chapters.

3.1 Artistic Research and Arts-Based Research

The terms 'artistic research' and 'arts-based research' are often used interchangeably to refer to research that incorporates arts-related approaches as part of a methodology of creative inquiry. Generally, the term artistic research tends to be used more widely within the European academic research community, as this is where its roots stem from. Arts-based research is a term more often used in the art education community, with origins in the North American academic community (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández, 2017).

Within the Finnish academic community, a key distinction between artistic research and arts-based research is that artistic research tends to investigate the artistic experience itself – its practice, creative process and artistic methods (either that of the researchers themselves, or of other artists). Arts-based research employs artistic methods (material, digital and performative) throughout the inquiry process as a means of exploring questions within a broader social, environmental, political, educational and ethical context (Suominen et al., 2017). Another difference between artistic research and arts-based research lies in the methodological approach. With its primary aim to influence and engage with society on a broader social and political level, arts-based research adopts an approach to knowledge-building that is inherently interdisciplinary, drawing techniques from education, the human-

ities and social sciences.[10] In this context, its methods include ethnography, interviews, narrative methods, participatory action research, and discourse analysis. In terms of outcomes, the production and exhibition of artwork is not the primary aim (Suominen et al., 2017).

In the case of artistic research, the primary means of knowledge-building lies in and through the act of artistic practice itself. As ancillary methods, artistic research may also incorporate methods such as ethnography, interviews, etc. However, the core means of inquiry in artistic research lie in the process of creating or performing in the studio, theater, or public space. Within the framework of artistic research, the motivations originate from the context of contemporary art, in conjunction with the academic field. The outcomes of artistic research take the form of objects or events such as installation, various visual media, performance art, and music (Borgdorff, 2011). For both arts-based and artistic research, historically there has been an emphasis on the "transparency of the research process and the importance of identifying researchers' intentions" (Suominen et al., 2017, p. 105). More recently, the significance of honesty and ethical responsibility in all phases of artistic and arts-based research has become more paramount. Suominen et al. (2017) describe, "For us this means clear devotion to and deep respect for the topic or phenomenon being studied, and a constant critical and ethical conversation concerning the choices one makes at all stages of the study" (Suominen et al., 2017, p. 105).

My own methodology vacillates between artistic research and arts-based research. For example, the artwork generated within my research can be considered as artistic research, since it focuses on the expansion of my own performative practice through the pursuit of public dialogue. The writing of the dissertation takes on characteristics of arts-based research – through situating, contextualizing, and reflecting on the artwork within a social context. Although my research approach may straddle borders, I will, going forward in the dissertation, use the term 'artistic research' in discussing my doctoral research for several reasons: 1) This is the term I have become most familiar within the literature of the field, while carrying out my doctoral studies in Finland, 2) I approached the doctoral research primarily from the perspective of an artist, and 3) the primary methods were carried out in and through art practice (Borgdorff, 2011). By this I mean that I generated questions, worked through ideas, generated insights, and carried out experiments through var-

10 Arts-based research in North America originated in part, from inquiry in art therapy (McNiff, 2008). In its historical trajectory, arts-based research has come to acknowledge arts-based methods as a form of inquiry, "distinctly different, yet complementary to more logical cognition" (McNiff, 2008, p.30).

ious artistic methods such as performance, improvisation, drawing, the creation of visual media artifacts, and reflective journal writing (Gray, 2004).

3.2 Characteristics of Artistic Research

In artistic research, there is an emphasis on the role of tacit, or experiential knowledge. Personal, emotional, and autobiographical motivations are often at the core of the research questions and direct the way in which the research is carried out, analyzed and interpreted (Barrett & Bolt, 2010). Artistic research carried out towards a doctoral degree is created for the benefit of the artist, the art world, and the academic community. It is an intensive, systematic investigation, often starting from a defined research question. Sometimes the research question begins as one thing and ends as something else (Cobussen, 2014a, 2014b). Artistic research often adapts a *bricolage* approach to qualitative methods, borrowing from the fields of humanities and social sciences (Barrett & Bolt, 2010). Ethnographic methods such as interviews and observational field work are commonly incorporated. In this sense, artistic research typically takes on a "methodological abundance" (Hannula, Suoranta, & Vadén, 2005, p. 37), in which several approaches are adopted. This strategy is seen as a productive way of approaching artistic research, as it feeds into the experiential nature of such research (Hannula et al., 2005). Haseman explains that, in this type of practice-led research, since "creative practice is both ongoing and persistent; practitioner researchers do not merely 'think' their way through or out of a problem, but rather they 'practice' to a resolution" (as cited in Barrett & Bolt, 2010, p. 147). Through the process, the role of artist and researcher are simultaneous, and not separate. They occur in one entity (Hannula et al., 2005). In this vein, Varto (2000) suggests that as human beings interpreting experience, we are at times jeopardized, or placed in a position of high pressure. Art practice and artistic research, then, occur in the same realm. To assume otherwise would be to risk a misrepresentation of the original intent of the research. In the case of artistic research, it is the interpretation of the art that is under pressure to articulate itself (Varto, 2000; Hannula et al., 2005).

One point of contention in artistic research is the issue of whether or not art practice can be identified as research in and of itself. Another aspect of this debate includes the question of what the role the artwork plays in the context of academic artistic research. This debate goes back to the 1970s and 80s when economic factors led to questions around the role of arts practice in higher education in the U.K. The discussion extends to the present day, in the form of questions around studio practice as a form of knowledge production

(Sullivan, 2005). According to Haseman (2006), the artwork and its process of creation constitute the research. Haseman attributes a performative element to artistic research, inherent in its practice-led quality. Here, the artist-researcher often works through improvisational methods: jumping in, stopping and starting where they feel necessary, waiting to see what transpires through such actions. He argues that in the context of artistic research, artistic expression and research are one and the same. In this case, the research data are communicated symbolically, rather than quantitatively. Sullivan (2005) also views art practice and the art object as a potential source of knowledge in itself. At the same time, he situates art practice in relation to three existing research perspectives: interpretative, empirical, and critical. As Sullivan points out, a work of art exists as an entity that carries a particular type of knowledge. Describing the process of practice-based inquiry, Sullivan continues:

> *Studio art experiences are inclusive of the full range of ideas and images that inform individual, and cultural actions. These may spark inquiries into issues that subsequently take place within the orbit of the art world or at the institutional level and these can investigate quite different areas and directions.* (Sullivan, 2005, p. 81)

Bolt (2007), while recognizing the significance of the practice-based component, views artistic research as something that culminates primarily in the written articulation of findings. Bolt places emphasis on the value of communicating research outcomes to the academic community. Hernández-Hernández is also a proponent of this view. Moreover, he does not consider an artistic process to be research in and of itself, questioning the role of relativistic and subjective thinking in artistic research (as cited in Leavy, 2017). In support of a standardized approach to research, Hernández-Hernández cites a proposal for inquiry in artistic and arts-based research, as outlined by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (2014):

1. Accessibility: meaning that the research is considered a public act, open to peer review.

2. Transparency: referring to the clarity of the research structure, processes, and results.

3. Transferability: identifying that the research contributes beyond the parameters of a specific project – in terms of both the issues and themes it addresses and its main aims and methodological decisions – and therefore is useful for other researchers in other research contexts.

According to Hernández-Hernández, these guidelines offer a more structured approach to artistic research and arts-based research, allowing arts practice to function more readily within the realm of academia. The guidelines were created to help establish common research practices for 'disciplined inquiry' across fields, and have been used by some academic institutions in the assessment of artworks and publications.

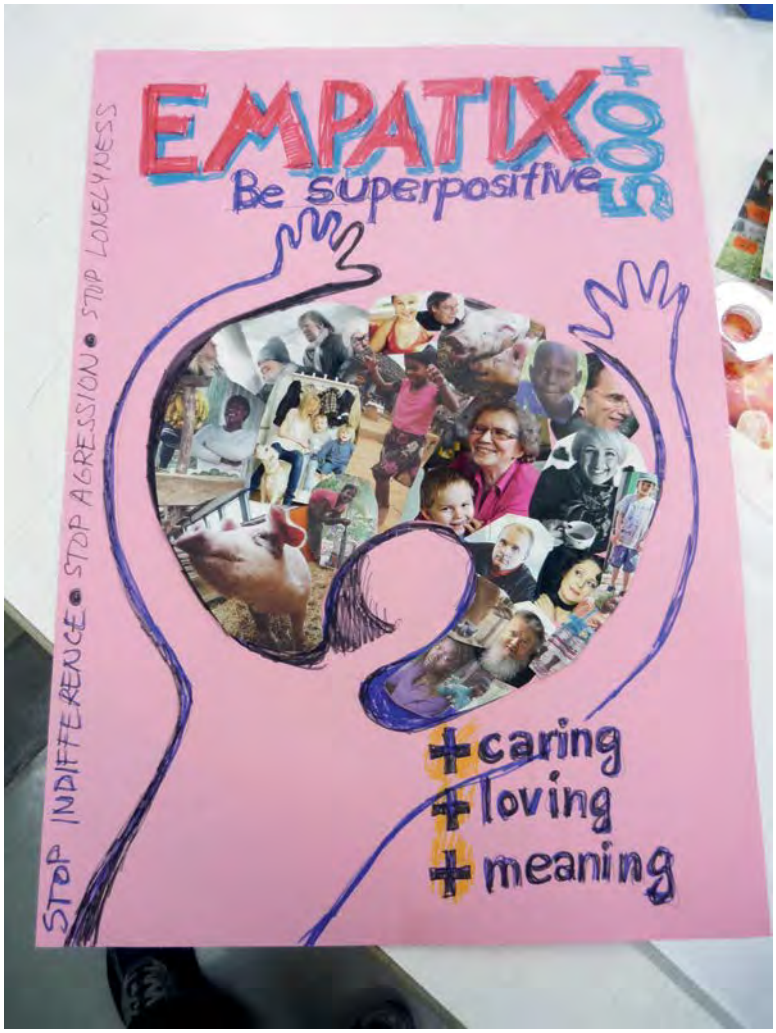
Rosengren (2010) suggests that artistic research and arts-based research should be keenly aware of their own epistemology, or approach towards knowledge construction. Rosengren advises that arts-based and artistic research avoid a relaxed attitude towards relativism in matters of knowledge acquisition. According to Rosengren, artist-researchers need to distinguish fact-based knowledge from subjective observations and beliefs. In the process of separating these, it is important to acknowledge that these constructs exist and operate within the very space within which they are created. At the same time, they are generated through contact with aspects of other academic disciplines.

3.3 Methods and Art Practice

Method involves choices of practice-based approaches, while methodology refers more to the theoretical and philosophical framework of the research (Sullivan 2005). While the art practice of my research was grounded in performance methods, it employed strategies from public intervention, medical advertising, humor, and socially engaged art. The methods also drew from ethnographic practices in the form of interviews with pharmacists and artists whose work addresses medical themes. In this research, the format of pharmaceutical advertising served as the primary visual method, derived from my previous experience as a professional graphic designer of pharmaceutical advertising (as described in the introductory chapter). Certain ethnographic methods informed the conceptual development towards my artistic experiments. Such methods included performative investigations exploring the authoritative values associated with the image of the white medical lab coat, and interviews with former pharmacists in Finland and with artists whose work explores medical themes. Other ethnographic methods included a series of public workshops I conducted (2011-12) entitled, *New Pills for World Ills*. In these workshops, participants worked in small groups to discuss their own concerns about what they viewed as relevant social and political issues in Finland. Afterwards, the participants conceptualized and designed their own fictitious medications to cure what they saw as social and political 'ills' in Finnish culture. For example, one group articulated their

concern around what they perceived to be attitudes of ethnic and racial discrimination existing in Finland. To address the 'symptoms' and cause of this 'illness,' the group designed a new pill medication called 'Empatix' that generates feelings of empathy and compassion in people (Figure 20). This series of workshops informed the artistic process of the final doctoral art production. It also helped me develop practical methods of engaging strangers in dialogue about social and political issues.

Figure 20. Empatix (2011). Fictitious medical advertisement created by participants in the workshop, New Pills for World Ills. Lead designer of the Empatix advertisement: Tarja Toikka. Workshop directed by Lisa Erdman.



3.4 Knowledge Creation

In my research, the ontological perspective from which I operate is relativistic. From this framework, there exist multiple realities among individuals, based on their own experience and interpretation of those experiences. The epistemological view, or the relation of the researcher to the *knowable*, is considered subjective. Here, the researcher and the object of inquiry merge, and the findings reflect an intermingling of the two (Gray & Malins, 2004). This process of knowledge creation in artistic research may operate as a way of converging knowing, doing, and making, by which a third space opens up. Irwin (2004) defines this space as "métissage" (interplay), in which there is an integrated experience of "intellect, feeling, and practice" (p. 29). The concept of métissage emerges from a/r/tography, which conceptualizes artistic making, research, and teaching and writing as an integrated practice.[11] For Irwin, a key intention of a/r/tography is to cultivate a dialogical relation between thinking, relating, and perceiving. Here, as Silverman describes, the emphasis is on the creation of "aesthetic experiences that convey meaning rather than facts" (as cited in Irwin & Cosson, 2004, p. 31). At stake here is the question of what finding knowledge means in this relativistic context. In the end, the outcome may not arrive at universal understandings, but rather open up new directions for further inquiry.

3.5 Methodology of the Dissertation

The methodology of my dissertation is self-reflective and critical, and examines my own process of creating the thesis art production. The style of the dissertation is descriptive and narrative. It investigates and interrogates my own way of thinking through my research process. I question my own intentions and motivations. I examine what I consider to be successful and unsuccessful in relation to the research aims. Through this process, I find it important to retain a sense of transparency in the description of what transpired, to allow room for uncertainty, and to leave open doors to questions that may not have immediate answers. This approach could be thought of as a 'methodology of discomfort' – a term proposed by Burdick and Sandlin, based on the intent of avoiding absolute assumptions and conclusions (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010, p. 353). The term borrows from Pillow's suggestion that research-

11 In addition, ideas around public pedagogy, relational ethics, practice-based research, and interventions have also been explored in various studies engaging with a/r/tography.

ers move away from writing towards familiarity and relinquish the desire to reach a complete knowing of the Other – leaving "what is unfamiliar, unfamiliar" (Pillow, 2003, p. 177). She suggests that researchers at some point surrender to "the knowing of their selves or their subjects as uncomfortable and uncontainable" (Pillow, 2003, p. 188). Furthermore, Pillow encourages researchers to incorporate what she terms 'reflexivities of discomfort,' or methods that bring them to experience and recognize unease, tension and lack of resolution (as cited in Burdick & Sandlin, 2010, p. 354).

Through my art practice in the research, the 'methodology and reflexivities of discomfort' was manifested through my decision to confront the consequences of my own artistic decisions in Finnexia. It also involved the process of responding to my own emotions, through critical self-reflection and by seeking out others (professors and production staff) with whom to discuss the ethical issues that arose from Finnexia. This methodology of discomfort emerged through the psychological tensions involved during my own participation in the Finnexia performance. There were moments in which I and other performers experienced intense emotions through our interactions with the public audience. In this dissertation, I extend the notion of methodologies of discomfort as a means through which to describe the unexpected nature of the research outcomes. Through this methodology, I also interrogate my own motivations for the research and art practice. The writing process involved moving towards areas of unease and uncertainty around ethical and aesthetic decisions that I made and examining their consequences. As I will explain later, this methodology of discomfort also involved a willingness to leave some questions unresolved.

In artistic research, the dissertation writing is not simply a process of writing about one's process of art-making, or about examining the artwork itself. The writing of the dissertation thesis [exegesis] produces new thought, and allows the art practice to generate theory. The ideas generated through this personal reflection on one's own artistic process have the possibility to broaden and potentially challenge existing ways of thinking and operating within the field (Barrett & Bolt, 2010). Goddard suggests that the role of the doctoral thesis exceeds the aim of analyzing or interpreting the artwork. More importantly, the written thesis can reveal the decision-making process of the artist. Unless it is addressed in the writing, this path often remains hidden – even from the artist/researcher (as cited in Barrett & Bolt, 2010). Through the process of writing my own dissertation, I can more clearly see the impact of my art practice on its public audience, the consequences of my own artistic decisions, and the educative potential of the research outcomes. This process has also affected my own understanding of the reality that I perceive.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I described the methodology and methods of my research, within the context of artistic research and arts-based research. This type of research, which often draws from ethnographic methods such as interviews, surveys, and workshops, relies primarily on the method of art practice and the collection of data from this process. Knowledge, in this case, is produced directly through the interactions, dialogues, and events experienced in the practice of performative art interventions in public space. As part of the research, these experiences are analyzed and interpreted in the written dissertation, whereby further knowledge is produced/revealed through this textual investigation. In the next chapter, I describe the artistic methods and strategies of pharmaceutical advertising implemented in the conceptualization and visual design of Finnexia, the primary artistic production of the research.

4 "LEARN FINNISH *FASTER...WITH FINNEXIA®!"*

4 "Learn Finnish *Faster...with Finnexia®!"*

This chapter traces the conceptualization and production of Finnexia, the primary artistic production of the research. The exploration includes a discussion of how and why the medication was conceived, and the practical and conceptual strategies employed in the design process. The chapter includes documentation of concept sketches and conversations from production meetings and brainstorm sessions.

4.1 What Medication Does Finland Need?

In fall of 2011, I began to consider creating a medicine that would address a primary need in Finland. Prior to starting the doctoral research, I had created a series of pills that addressed my feelings towards political issues in the States, and I now wanted to create something that reflected the needs of Finnish society – but *whose* needs in Finnish society? And how to do this without blatantly offending people? Is it possible to accomplish such a thing using satirical advertising? I spoke with professors and colleagues at Aalto University and the Theater Academy of Helsinki. I also revisited the data from the 'fake pill' production workshops I had conducted with the academic and artistic community in Finland in early 2011 (see Chapter 3 for a description of the workshop structure). In many of the workshops, issues around racism and ethnic prejudices arose, along with a desire to foster a greater sense of empathy in Finnish society. Discussions on these topics emerged from two workshops conducted in 2011, and then again in March 2012 during the Art and Medicine seminar I conducted at Aalto University.

I also asked myself the question of what I needed as a foreigner in Finland. Even so, my own needs seemed secondary. After all, I was a researcher inquiring about Finnish society. It occurred to me then, that as an artist-researcher living in Finland, I constituted part of Finnish society. In this case, the personal and cultural were connected, existing symbiotically. I also sent out email surveys to friends and colleagues, asking what sort of pill people would prefer in Finland: 1) Consumerin (stimulates consumer behavior), 2) Ethnivox (changes one's ethnic and racial identity), or 3) Suomenex, (a pill for Finnish language and enhancing Finnish identity). The responses were primarily from professors of art and literature. Half of those who responded to the survey suggested producing all three medications. A small percentage suggested creating both Ethnivox and Suomenex. Once person suggest-

ed producing Consumerin. The email message below contains the questions that were sent to a small sampling of colleagues and faculty within the Finnish academic community. I have also included an email response from one Finnish professor.

Sender: Erdman Lisa
Sent: 22. November 2011 15:38
Receiver: Professor Tuominen
Subject: Your opinion – final thesis medication

Hi, Prof. Tuominen.

I'm in the midst of writing up the final proposal for the thesis production, which will take place in May. It will be a commercial performance with an advertising kiosk. Three outdoor performances in different market plazas throughout Helsinki. At the moment, I need to decide on the one medication that will be promoted: I'm trying to decide among three different possibilities (below). In your opinion, which do you think might be most timely and most provocative in Helsinki. I know that ultimately, I must decide this for myself. But it helps my decision-making process to have some sort of dialogue about this beforehand.

1) Consumerin (makes people go shopping more in order to create economic stimulus) I presented this medication in Pori, Finland, in 2009.
2) Ethnivox (Change your ethnic identity in five days. Go from being Somali to Finnish, or Finnish to Thai, for example). Could open up discussion about cultural dynamics and immigration.
3) Suomex or Suomenex (This drug would help foreigners learn Finnish faster and integrate into Finnish culture. It would help native Finns feel more Finnish. Sort of a nationalist drug intended to open up discussion about immigration and race relations. The pill might even ensure that Finns marry other Finns or 'pure' Finnish heritage, thereby nurturing a traditional concept of Finnish identity. This idea is based on the outcome of one of my pill creation workshops with foreigners and Finns.)

My feeling is that it would be fun to create a new medication, and one that I can relate to on a personal level (Suomex – for example). However, the Ethnivox or Consumerin might be better for reaching a more general audience. Also, if I present a refined version of Consumerin (which has already been presented), it could be interesting to compare the final

outcome of the thesis presentation performance experiment from 2009.
Your thoughts?
Best, Lisa

RE: Your opinion – final thesis medication
Sender: Professor Tuominen
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2011 12:53 PM
To: Erdman Lisa

Hi Lisa!

I am going through the emails from the last 2 weeks so I am answering them in mixed order:

I am too old to know what is going on in the mind of the Finnish audience. From my (dated) viewpoint the Consumerin is most interesting, particularly so in the recent economic discussion that is going on and on in news and coffee tables. It seems that people are not so much interested in racism, ethnocentrism or questions alike since they are really worried both because of the consumerist attitude of the middle class and the euro-catastrophe that is on television every evening. You may as well take this as the question to other doctoral students in the department at Aalto University, and try it with the younger generation; they may know better which is more timely.

Best,
Professor Tuominen

As an artistic project, the concept of the pill needed to reflect not only the public's needs, but also my own, if it was to become a meaningful statement. I remember that during a lunch conversation in early 2010, a professor from Helsinki Theater Academy had suggested that I look internally on a personal level, for the answer to the question of Finland's needs. I responded to her by saying that I felt learning the Finnish language was an important to me, because it could help me socialize more, and better understand the subtleties of Finnish culture. "Then why not create a pill to learn Finnish?" the professor pointed out. The suggestion sounds so simple, so naïve, that I disregarded it at the time. Sometimes the most obvious solutions are placed aside. In addition, the idea of creating a pill to help with language did not seem to me as politi-

cally charged or exciting as, say, a pill to cure racism or to solve political issues. On the other hand, a pill to help one learn a language may seem more scientifically plausible than something to cure political issues. If a goal here it to create a realistic campaign, then this was something to take into consideration. Several months later, the question surfaced again, and the same answer surfaced in my mind, the one that Annette had suggested. Could it be worthwhile to create this medicine, one that I personally wished existed? I felt frustration as foreigner here, surviving primarily with English, yet wanting to speak Finnish better and with more confidence. I felt complacent and lazy living day-to-day within my English-speaking bubble. Were others feeling like this? And how did they operate on a daily basis? I wanted a medicine that would open discussion about personal experiences in Finland as a foreigner.

In the early stages of the doctoral research (2009-2011), before starting the production of Finnexia, I began reading about topics that eventually informed the artistic production: medicalization in society by Conrad (2007) and Illich (1976); I explored Carlson's overview of performance (2004) and Schechner's performance theory (1988), Bakhtin's concept of dialogue (1981), Foucault's ideas on the medical gaze, normality, and deviance (2003, 1977b), as well as Critchley's literature on the power of humor and satire to change a situation (2002). At that point I did not feel that the satirical intent of the artistic practice with medication was out to expose medical authority and medicalization as a problem to be eliminated from society. At this time of writing the dissertation, I still hold this view. Rather, the art practice was an attempt to present a playful critique of the excesses that I perceived in the prescribing of pill-based medication for human ailments, and in the transformation of human conditions into diseases. On a deeper level, it served as personal synthesis for myself – a way to explore my own experiences in Finnish culture through the framework of an alternate reality that offered new solutions through medicine.

4.2 The Artistic Framework of Finnexia

In late autumn of 2011, I had a meeting with an art instructor from my university's department, to discuss my thoughts about the final artistic production for the research. I was feeling indecisive about the theme, the form of the project and other basic aspects of the production. The instructor posed concise questions that helped to extract my own thoughts and opinions, and finally, some decisions. I seemed to have been caught between this feeling of responsibility to fulfill Finland's needs and the desire to address my own personal needs. She asked, "What form will this take – performance, website, sculptural? Form is important. And what is the poetic element? There are

many paradoxes in your art here," she said. "Work with this." I said that the performative element was important, in order to create a sense of validity, a sense of reality in the pill. I said that I was thinking of creating a pill to learn the Finish language. This was the first fictitious advertisement I was creating in which the authenticity of the advert's appearance was paramount. At the time, I could not articulate why this was important to me, but I knew that this approach was the right one for the project at hand. Given this, I decided that a multimedia campaign was indeed the best way to approach the advertisement, to address all the dimensions of creating a 'real,' fictitious pill (the digital, print, corporeal, performative).

4.3 The Branding of Finnexia

From January to March 2012, I spent several months in my office generating concept sketches for the branding identity of this medication, testing out different product names and logo approaches for the drug. The idea was to create something that reflected Finnish identity, ease, hopefulness, fluidity, and ultimately – fluency in the language. I tried combining the ideas of a tongue and the Finnish flag, in various iterations. Included here are sketches from this process (Figure 21).

For the branding color scheme, I consciously chose blue and white, which through the Finnish flag, embody the national identity. Within the pharmaceutical advertising industry, the color blue is associated with trust, integrity, clarity, stability, and efficacy. The name 'Finnexia' came about through a month of brainstorming possible ideas that related to the concept of 'fluidity' and 'fluency,' and those that also fit within the context of brand name structure of existing medications. For me, it was important that the medical brand name of the drug was relatively short in length, that it was easy to pronounce, and that it included a direct connection to the syntax of the word, 'Finnish.' In the conceptualization process of formulating the brand name, I took into consideration the branding approaches of both American and Finnish pharmaceuticals. The end result of the Finnexia advertisement campaign, I believe, reflects elements of both approaches.

The branding promise of Finnexia was important here. Through discussions with my colleague, the idea developed that the branding promise would be something revolutionary, though plausible. Initially, I thought of creating a 'miracle' pill that would instantly render someone able to speak fluent Finnish. This idea would have been exciting, especially to the scientific community, as it might imply the discovery of a new neurotransmitter or receptor in the brain. Instead, I decided to develop a pill that simply helps one learn Finnish

Figure 21. Concept development for Finnexia logo design (2012). Lisa Erdman.

more easily. With this branding promise in mind, I then embarked on developing the product name and logo. I experimented with nearly twenty product name variations based on the words 'Suomen' and 'Finn,' including Suomenex, Finnox, and finally, Finnexia. Throughout the refining process of the logo, I sought feedback from colleagues in the medical advertising industry, as well as those in academia and the arts. The images here represent stages from the conceptual development of Finnexia logo, along with examples of logo variations generated before the final version. Here, the visualization of slightly differing Finnexia logo versions helps to illustrate the subtleties of marketing strategies (Figure 22). This may involve, for example, slight changes in font style and graphic shapes in a logo design, in order to better convey the product's message and to reach the intended target audience.

Figure 22. Final stages of the Finnexia logo development. (2012). Lisa Erdman.

4.4 The Science of Finnexia

To formulate the various elements of the branding campaign in a scientifically convincing manner, I collaborated with Dr. Kimberly Barke,[12] a former colleague of mine from the United States. Dr. Barke's background includes expertise in biochemistry, toxicology, pharmacology, and medical writing. Over the course of three months, during February-May of 2012, my colleague and I formulated the product's branding promise and designed its mechanism of action – or how the medication operates on a molecular level in the human body. Out of this conversation, we determined the product's positioning in the market, working from the premise that "Finnish is difficult" (Barke, personal communication, February 26, 2012).

At the core of Finnexia's branding promise was the offer of a better life, through easier acquisition of the Finnish language – "Learn Finnish … faster!", while offering consumers of the medication the possibility to "connect with family," "make new friends," "create more job opportunities". Through its branding promise, Finnexia indirectly addressed unmet needs in the market of Finnish language learning and pharmaceutical medication. Finnexia, as a product, would offer an alternative way for people to seek help in learning Finnish – without the effort of taking an intensive language course, and, in its OTC (over-the-counter) marketed format, without the need to obtain a prescription from a doctor. This scientific background of the Finnexia product would then form the basis of the medical animation component of the advertisement campaign. Finnexia in its promise to the public, claims to be indicated for the treatment of Finno-Ugric language deficiency. In this sense, the product offers language learning enhancement through the framework of a 'diseased' foreign, non-Finnish speaking population. I was aware that close attention to the details of the scientific framework of Finnexia would contribute to the formation of plausibility in idea of a language-learning medication. It was this scientific development of the Finnexia medication that led me to continue forward with generating the identity style of the advertisement as something plausible, as opposed to creating a medication advertisement that was blatantly satirical. In my earlier fictitious advertisements (e.g. Consumerin, Homotrol), I had created a more transparent satirical approach through, for example, blatantly ridiculous side effects, and through the notion of trying to 'cure' or change something that cannot be changed. Initially, as a molecular basis for Finnexia, I explored the concept behind nootropics, or cognitive enhancement drugs. This approach would

12 Dr. Barke has granted permission to include her real name in the dissertation.

have offered a familiar scientific base of understanding to the public audience through the popular framework of 'smart drugs' and prescription medications used to treat hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder, such as Modafinil, Adrafinil, and Ritalin.

Dr. Barke and I finally decided that a more complex mechanism of action would serve the product image better, as a means of supporting a branding promise that is at once based in real science and revolutionary in its claim. With this in mind, we formulated a mechanism of action for Finnexia based on that of those medications used in the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and neurobiological diseases such as schizophrenia. Currently, some of these drug treatments focus on development of agonists and positive allosteric modulators of the alpha(7) nicotinic acetylcholine receptor (nAChR) (Thompson, Hansen, Timmerman, & Mikkelsen, 2010).

Finnexia works by offering a combination of cognitive enhancement, speech therapy, and anxiety reduction, allowing one to learn the Finnish language faster and more easily. The Finnexia medical animation shows how the medication works in the brain on a molecular level (Figures 23 & 24). (The Finnexia animation is also available for viewing on YouTube, Vimeo, and on the Finnexia website: www.finnexia.fi. As described on the Finnexia website, Finnexia works within the brain to stimulate multiple areas involved with language and speech activity:

> *Finnexia works primarily by activating areas of the frontal and prefrontal cortex of the brain that are responsible for language and speech activity. It contains a unique dual-action mechanism that enhances Finnish language acquisition, while subduing the anxiety often associated with learning a foreign language. Finnexia stimulates the pathways that aid in cognitive processes, memory, and speech comprehension. The primary agent in Finnexia is an Alpha-7 nicotine13 acetylcholine receptor agonist. This type of agonist has been found to enhance cognitive abilities by modulating post-synaptic Alpha-7 receptors in the prefrontal cortex of the brain. Stimulation of the receptor increases calcium permeability and thereby the firing rate of stimulated neurons.* ("How Finnexia Works," Finnexia website, 2012)

13 There is a typographical error on the Finnexia website. The terminology describing the receptor agonist mentioned here on the website should read, "Alpha-7 nicotinic acetylcholine receptor agonist."

Figure 23. Finnexia medical animation. Video stills. (2012).
Concept design: Lisa Erdman. Medical consultation: Dr. Kimberly Barke.
3D visualization and animation: Topi Kauppinen. Music and voiceover: ProVoice USA.

Using 3D visualization technology, the Finnexia animation aims to generate an aura of scientific validation and medical authority around the product. The visualization was produced in collaboration with Dr. Kimberly Barke and Topi Kauppinen,[14] a professional 3D animator. The production of the Finnexia

14 Topi Kauppinen has granted permission to include his real name.

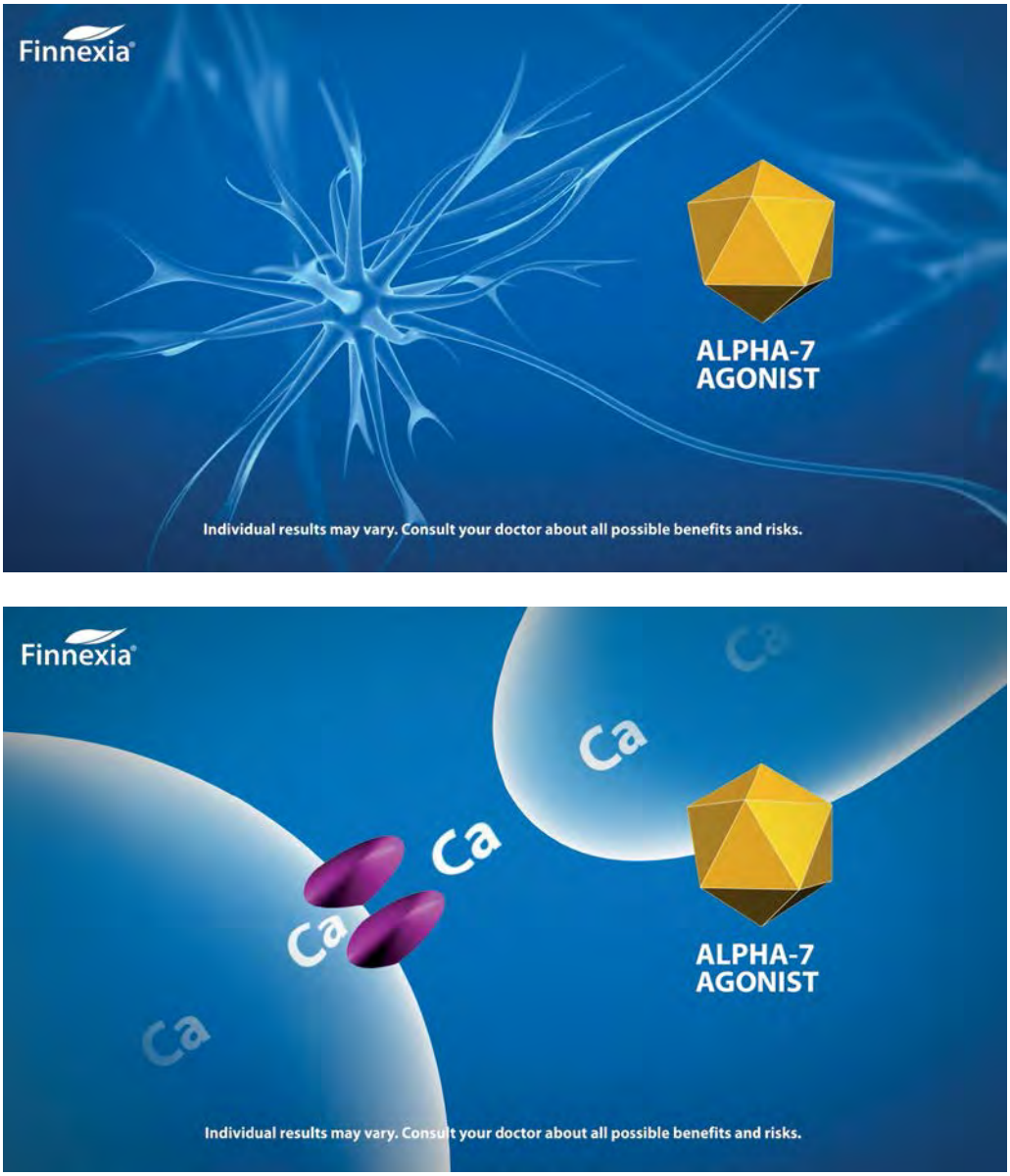


Figure 24. Finnexia medical animation. Video stills. (2012). Concept design: Lisa Erdman. Medical consultation: Dr. Kimberly Barke. 3D visualization and animation: Topi Kauppinen. Music and voiceover: ProVoice USA.

animation presented a significant learning curve for Topi and myself, as it was the first time either of us had produced a piece of work addressing the intricacies of neurotransmission in the human brain.

4.5 The Finnexia Advertisement Campaign

Through funding support from the Arts Promotion Center of Finland and Aalto University, I received the means to generate the Finnexia multimedia campaign. As a result, I had the resources to create a presence for Finnexia via the elements of Web, video, animation, print, and live public presentation. A number of media professionals, Aalto University students, a professional trade show display printing company, and a pharmaceutical packaging company assisted in the production of these elements. In the initial conceptualization stages of the online component of the campaign, I spoke with a Web specialist from the Aalto Media Factory about ways to generate online dialogue about Finnexia, and how to set up a site with hosting for the medication. In February 2012, I began working with graduate design student Sarun Pinyarat[15] to generate the visual layout for the Finnexia website (Figure 25).

During May-June 2012, I met with a professional video producer. We discussed different possibilities for a television ad for Finnexia. However, due to costs and time limitations, I decided to create only the medical animation and not the television ad. I was disappointed, because I had wanted to have a television presence for Finnexia. Although the Finnexia television advertisement was not produced, the conceptualization process was important to the branding of Finnexia. This was the case for several projects during the course of the research. During the creation of Finnexia and its multimedia campaign, I felt as though there was a sense of anticipation generated – even to the point at which I myself, was growing to believe that this medication could exist. There was a palpable sense of playfulness and excitement in the months ahead, thinking of the possibility that I was creating a medicine that could help people learn Finnish.

For the purpose of creating Finnexia as a branded entity, it was important to incorporate various formats into its commercial package. The aim was to generate credibility and strength in the brand through a full-on presentation of a multimedia campaign, with the potential to reach audience members on various levels. The advertising campaign itself consisted of the Finnexia logo, a website, a brochure, a pill package, the medical animation, and a Facebook page. I also began production of a website for Huxor Pharmaceuticals, which would serve as the parent company of Finnexia. The purpose of creating such a website was primarily to work towards generating a sense of credibility in the medication.

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15 Sarun Pinyarat has granted permission to include his real name.

On another level, the online presence of Finnexia was meant to act as another means of generating dialogue about Finnish language acquisition and the experience of the foreigner in Finland. In addition, in preparation for the public performance of Finnexia, corporate T-shirts and a trade show booth display were created. Originally, for accessibility purposes, I had planned to include multilingual versions of the brochure and website, in at least Finnish, Russian, Swedish, Somali, and Arabic. However, due to logistics of time and budget, I chose English as the advertising language of Finnexia. While this decision may have excluded many people in the public audience from engaging with Finnexia, this decision was necessary under the circumstances.

Figure 25. Finnexia website, homepage. (2012). http://finnexia. Branding design by Lisa Erdman. Web design layout by Sarun Pinyarat.

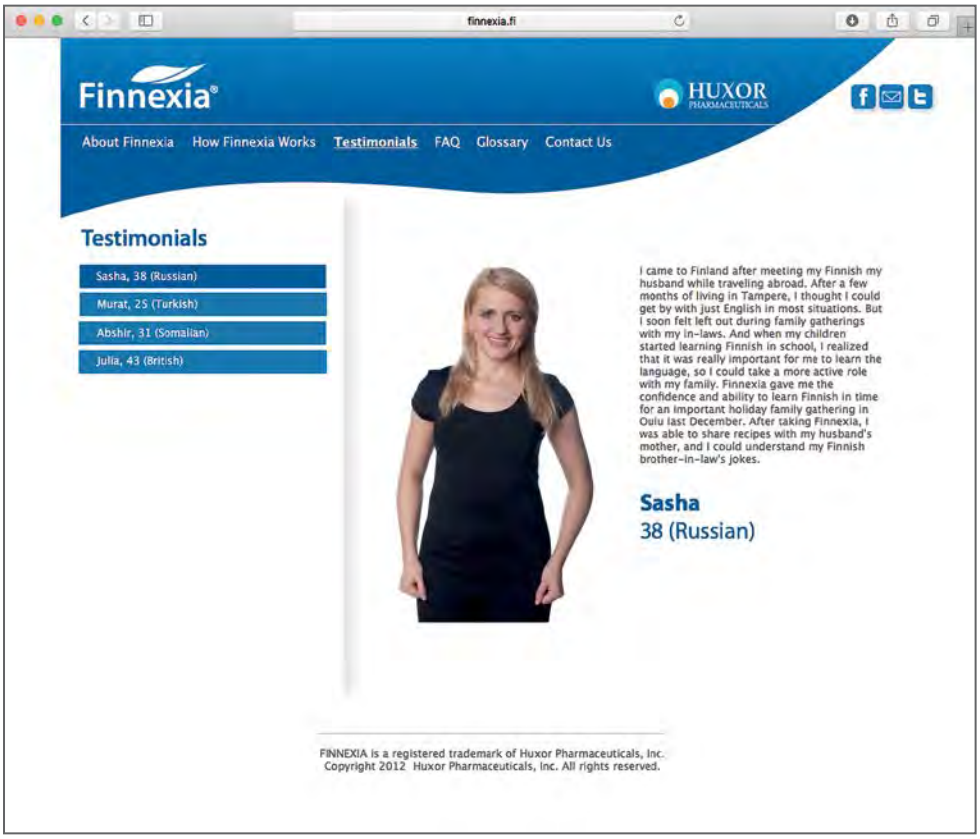


Figure 26. Finnexia website. Testimonials page. (2012). http://finnexia.fi
Branding design by Lisa Erdman. Web layout design by Sarun Pinyarat.

Figure 27. Finnexia pill package, brochures, and tradeshow booth display (2012). Branding design by Lisa Erdman. Print layout design by Sarun Pinyarat. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 28. Finnexia brochure: front cover design. (2012).
Branding design by Lisa Erdman. Layout design by Sarun Pinyarat.

Figure 29. Finnexia brochure. Interior page design. (2012).
Branding design by Lisa Erdman. Brochure layout design by Sarun Pinyarat.

The Finnexia website and brochure provide an overview of the medicine – showing how it can benefit foreigners in Finland, how it works within the brain, and how to safely take the medicine (Figures 25 to 29). The visual design combines stylistic approaches from Finnish medical advertising and from American direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising. Ultimately, the visual Finnexia design borrowed more elements from the Finnish medical industry style, incorporating a simplified layout and color scheme. As a visual reference for this approach, I studied the Finnish websites of medical over-the-counter products for Nogasin® (gas relief), Priorin® (stimulation of hair growth), and Berocca® (vitamin supplement). The American approach of pushing consumer testimonials was integrated into the Finnexia website: http://www.finnexia.fi/testimonials.html

The Finnexia medicine package contains placebo (inactive) pills that I obtained by prescription from a doctor's office in Finland (Figure 30). Each placebo pill contained an inert formula of microcrystalline cellulose and magnesium stearate. Through the doctor's visit in Helsinki, I was able to obtain a 12-month prescription of placebo pills (white tablets). Permission for this

Figure 30. Finnexia pill package. (2012). Branding design by Lisa Erdman. Package layout design by Sarun Pinyarat.

prescription required that I submit two letters of recommendation from my university, stating the purpose of my research, and the purpose of the placebos.[16]

The original plan for the Finnexia project timeline was to first generate and track dialogue about Finnexia online, via the Finnexia website and the Finnexia Facebook page. This product promotion period would last about three months, after which the live commercial performance would take place in a public space. The idea was to compare the type of conversations created online with those generated from the Finnexia performance. As it turned out, due to limitations in timeframe and extensions in production time of the Finnexia digital media, all elements of the project (website, print media, and performance) were launched simultaneously, in September 2012. In hindsight, I feel that this outcome in timing served to protect the project's fictitious facade even better, as it allowed for a 'surprise attack' approach to the ad campaign, leaving little room for any suspicion to build around Finnexia before its unveiling in a public space as a performance.

In the Finnexia campaign, the desire to convey the medical information as credibly as possible took precedence over the need to overtly express satire. In the previous fictitious advertisements I created prior to the doctoral research (Patriotec, Ethnivox, Jesurex, etc.), the satirical intent was made

16 Initially, I sought out placebo pills from a variety of other sources, including two pharmaceutical companies in Finland, and one clinical trials laboratory in the U.K. These options proved to be more costly, or logistically too complex. Finally, a research associate at a university pharmaceutical research lab in Helsinki suggested that I try obtaining a prescription for placebos from a private doctor in Finland.

more evident in the listing of absurd side effects, and in their outrageous claims. In order to build credibility around Finnexia, much thought was taken in portraying the testimonial stories of people who have used Finnexia. As mentioned earlier, significant time and effort was spent in crafting the drug's mechanism of action, and developing an animated visualization of it. All of this took place in an effort to build a fictional reality based on scientific knowledge and medical authority. Foucault (1977a), in his discussion of power/knowledge relationships, describes how the link between knowledge and power can generate an aura of truth:

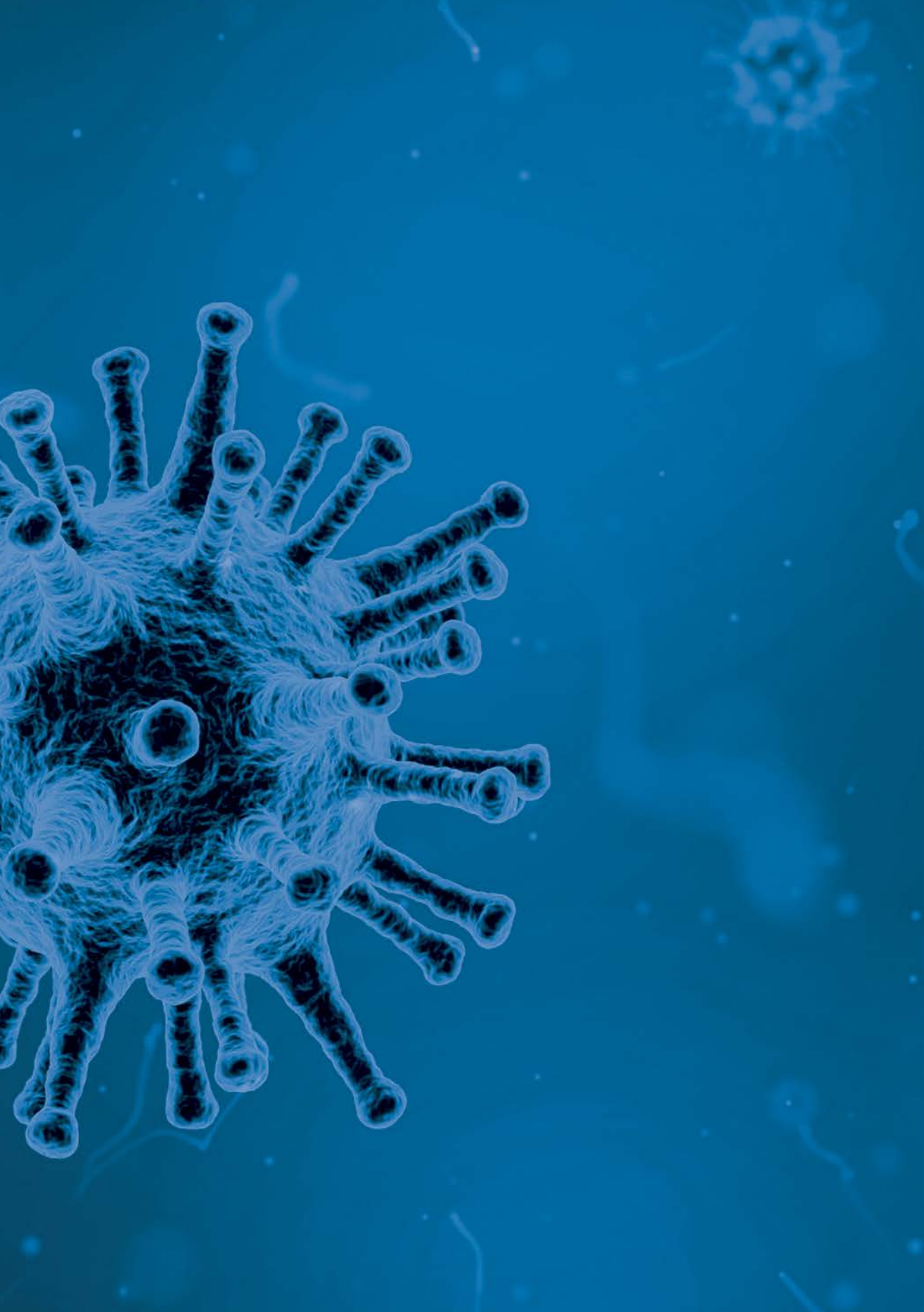
> *Knowledge linked to power, not only assumes the authority of 'the truth', but has the power to make itself true. All knowledge, once applied in the real world, has effects, and in that sense at least, 'becomes true'.* (Foucault, 1977a, p. 27)

The reality of Finnexia, although structured on manufactured information, carefully borrowed from the language of pharmaceutical advertising and medicine, which we so often trust. It is the tightness of Finnexia's technical detail, scientific knowledge, and visual form (as described earlier in this chapter) that served as the foundation of believability in the advertisement campaign. In 2012, at that point in the production process, it was my impression that once this medical authority of 'truth' was constructed, the Finnexia performance could then offer a framework of a 'safe space' in public from which to discuss underlying themes pursued within the artwork: language learning and the experience of living in Finland as foreigner.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, I described the conceptualization of and artistic decisions informing the Finnexia advertisement campaign. Through this process, I addressed the negotiations between the needs of Finnish culture, and those of my own – as an artist and as a foreign resident of Finland. In constructing this fictitious campaign, I considered the challenges of generating a believable product that serves as both a modest satire of overmedicalization, and as a vehicle for public dialogue about language learning. In the next chapter, I discuss the planning process of the Finnexia performance, including the choice of location, the formation of a team of Finnexia 'sales people,' and the strategies towards inviting the public audience to engage in dialogue on a personal level, within public space.

5 PLANNING THE FINNEXIA PERFORMANCE



5 Planning the Finnexia Performance

This chapter traces the logistical planning of Finnexia as a public performance intervention. Included is a description of the selection of location, approach in production management, casting and preparation of performers, and designing of the dialogical 'stage' within the public space. Throughout the remainder of the thesis, I will refer to Finnexia primarily as a 'performance.' While the project may be also described using other related terminology (intervention, socially engaged art, culture jam), I feel that the term 'performance' most accurately conveys the essence of the artwork, while at the same time encompassing elements of the aforementioned performative art terminologies. There were several goals for Finnexia as a performance. On a basic level, I was hoping to encounter someone whom I could relate to – someone in a similar situation to my own, as a native English-speaking foreigner in Finland, living with a limited grasp of the Finnish language. In the context of artistic research, I held these aims for Finnexia: 1) To open up a 'safe' space for people to share stories about learning Finnish and navigating Finnish culture with or without the language, and 2) to present the Finnexia medicine as realistically as possible, as part of a satirical commentary on overmedicalization. The theoretical background informing the strategies of audience interaction were derived from the notion of dialogical aesthetics, which emphasizes process and social relations as the core aesthetic experience of art (Kester, 2013). A peripheral aim along this line was to engage the local media in dialogue, such the Finnish newspapers, and the YLE Finnish Broadcasting organization i.e. in the dialogue at the railway station, or at least to have the media cover the event as a story in their publication. On a certain level, this realism of Finnexia strove to generate simulacra of pharmaceutical advertising, in which the representation of advertising precedes and determines the real (Baudrillard, 1984). Here, the intent was in part to fool the public audience. This 'deceptive' method was meant as a way to more readily engage with the public. I felt that an authentic campaign would encourage people to take the performance seriously, as opposed to openly portraying this as an art project. This nudging of boundaries between fact and fiction represented a new direction for my art practice with fictitious medical advertising, which, until that point, had presented itself as more blatantly satirical in nature. However, this realistic simulation would also represent a parody of pharmaceutical advertising discourse – and its underlying message of quick relief through pill treatments.

Figure 31. Helsinki Central Railway Station, Finland. West Wing entrance.
Photo credit: Lisa Erdman.

5.1 Situating the Performance in Public Space

The question of how and where to present a performance intervention involving fake medicine should be easy – in the middle of a pharmaceutical trade show. However, other format possibilities for Finnexia were considered, including a pharmacy store front staged as a real pharmacy, stocked with various fictitious medications to cure social and political problems in Finland. Another option involved presenting a fake medical commercial within a pharmaceutical trade show in Helsinki. In this case, I would not be presenting with the purpose of 'identity correction,' as is the goal of the Yes Men's corporate interventions. Rather, the commercial would be a completely fictitious company, plugging itself into the existing pharma trade show, as a means of creating intimate discussions. Ultimately, the logical choice of where to present Finnexia pointed to a location somewhere in midst of pedestrian traffic – namely, the Helsinki Central Railway Station. The space itself serves as a crossroads of cultural, commercial, and social activity in the center of Helsinki (Figure 31). The space serves as a door to interaction with a general public of ethnic diversity – those who may be in the process of learning Finnish. Although perhaps not as visually exciting as my first choice of

Kamppi (a major shopping center in Helsinki), I saw much potential in the Railway Station, also from the spatial configuration of the West Wing area – which provides a pathway for those on their way to the trains, and those newly arrived visitors emerging into the Finnish fresh air, ready for new linguistic experiences, with potential help from Finnexia. The West Wing of the railway station is often used as an exhibition space for photography exhibitions and art installations.

5.2 Managing the Production

In summer 2012, I envisioned a core management team to assist in coordinating the production and in shaping the dialogical strategies of the Finnexia performance. By the end of July 2012, I had hired Anneli, a Finnish-Australian freelance artist and health practitioner, to take the role of production manager for the Finnexia performance. Anneli proved invaluable as a driving force in the production process of the Finnexia performance. Immediately, Anneli and I worked quickly to pull together the building blocks of the Finnexia public performance – placing a public call for performers, hiring camera operators for documentation, arranging a van driver for transporting equipment, and communicating with a staff official from the Helsinki Railway Station, to coordinate the logistics of securing the space of the West Wing Hall in the station. Anneli and I also reserved the use of a room in the Kirjasto 10 (Helsinki Central public library), in which we would conduct postperformance interviews/debriefings with Finnexia performers and selected audience members. In July and August 2012, I focused my energies on the planning and production of the Finnexia performance. From my end, this involved coordinating with local and international trade show and printing companies to produce the physical staging elements and props for the performance. To help stay within budget limits, the Finnexia brochures were printed remotely, by a company located in China. The Finnexia T-shirt designs were printed and shipped from Estonia. The main trade show booth and the Finnexia pill package, however, were produced by local printers in Helsinki and Turku, Finland.

The fast and furious pace of the planning and production at that stage speaks to a phase of indecision and a stage of impasse which preceded it. I needed to give up autonomous control of the planning process in order for Finnexia to efficiently unfold as a public event. The process became a matter of making quick decisions based on my intuition, while trusting the input from multiple external sources – performers, technical crew, and the production manager. Part of this release of control over Finnexia also emerged out

of physical and psychological necessity on my part – a need to relax in anticipation of the birth of my son. At the time of the production planning, I was entering the seventh month of pregnancy.

5.3 Setting the Stage for Dialogue

The Finnexia performance structure was influenced by the outcomes of the performative experiments I conducted with Consumerin (2009-10), specifically on how to engage the public in dialogue about their personal experiences with social and political issues in Finland. In two iterations of Consumerin, I incorporated some sort of survey for people to fill out, in exchange for a lottery drawing. In the Consumerin performance in Lancaster, U.K., I added chairs to the physical set-up of the performance, to allow space for people to talk to each other. But what ended up happening was that people used the chairs to sit down and fill out a survey. The challenge remained of how to use the survey activity to invite people into the space, while leading them into conversation about their own personal stories.

The plan for Finnexia included various stations and sales people in the space, opening up the possibility for multiple conversations to occur simultaneously throughout the days of the performance. At the core of this envisioned scenario was an aesthetic of social engagement, of listening and sharing – without the necessity for conclusions or finite resolutions. In this sense, the approach reflects the influence of Bakhtin's notion of dialogue as open-ended, and the notion of a person's identity as *unfinalizable*, or something that is infinitely in the process of becoming. Although Bakhtin directs this term primarily to analysis of characters in literary narrative, he applies the concept of unfinalizability to all utterances, including those within the dialogical realm. In Bakhtin's view of verbal utterance, each utterance (word or phrase) is loaded with various kinds of responsive reactions to other words or meanings, within the given sphere of communication (Bakhtin, 1986).

At the end of August 2012, I met with Saana, a Finnish artist and coordinator of socially engaged works. She helped to strategize the dialogical aspects of the performance, in terms of how to engage the public audience in discussion about the Finnish language). Saana and I also discussed the overall set-up of the 'staging' in relation to the pedestrian traffic in the West Wing of the railway station. We discussed the time-based structure of the performance, and what timeframe duration (days or hours) would be best in which to have the Finnexia performance unfold. The various possibilities for the durational structure of the Finnexia event took on many forms in its conceptualization stage – anywhere from one day to one week. Finally, I decided that

a three-day performance would strike a balance, allowing several days to engage a diverse range of people from the public, and a short enough time as to not drain the energy of the performers, budget, and logistical resources.

Saana and I discussed strategies for engaging the public audience during the Finnexia performance. She helped me to pinpoint the goal of the performance, and what it was that I was looking for in the dialogical aspects of the project. I recall that Saana and Anneli had different suggestions in terms of how to set up a space for dialogue. Saana suggested inviting representatives from the Caisa multicultural center in Helsinki to create a panel discussion arrangement at the railway station. Anneli advised that it would be best to keep the discussion format intimate and inviting. If you create a panel discussion with experts, she warned, it might drive people away or intimidate them. This creative process of designing the discussion area was the core of dialogical aspect of the performance. I decided that a round table was key to creating an inviting atmosphere for open, discursive dialogue. This decision echoes the performative approach taken by new-genre artist Suzanne Lacy, whose works often take on the format of a large-scale tableau in public space, in which participants engage in layers of ongoing dialogue about social issues, while sitting at round tables (Lacy, 1995). In the case of the Finnexia performance, the offering of the pill became the bridge between the themes of medicalization and learning the Finnish language. This conceptual offering was intended to lead audience members to sit at the round table, and to share their personal stories about the Finnish language and living in Finland as a foreigner.

The stage set-up of Finnexia was based on the standard trade show set-up: pop-up display, lectern, etc. that you might see in other promotional set-ups in Helsinki for Omega-3 supplements, or Dannon® yogurt. The stage of the West Wing area was envisioned to consist of several areas in the space of the West Wing, including: 1) the main tradeshow display containing the Finnexia logo, sales slogan, and a small monitor, where one could view the Finnexia medical animation, 2) a smaller Finnexia lectern stand, where a Finnexia performer would present a live sales pitch, 3) a round dialogue table (as described earlier), where audience members would be encouraged to share their personal stories in relation to learning (or not learning) the Finnish language. And finally, 4) a survey table, where performers would offer candy and the chance to win a lottery prize of a coupon for a free coffee, in exchange for filling out a survey with questions concerning their motivations for learning the Finnish language.

The diagram in Figure 32 illustrates the floor plan submitted to the administrative office of the VR Group (Finnish railway administration) at the Helsinki Railway Station.

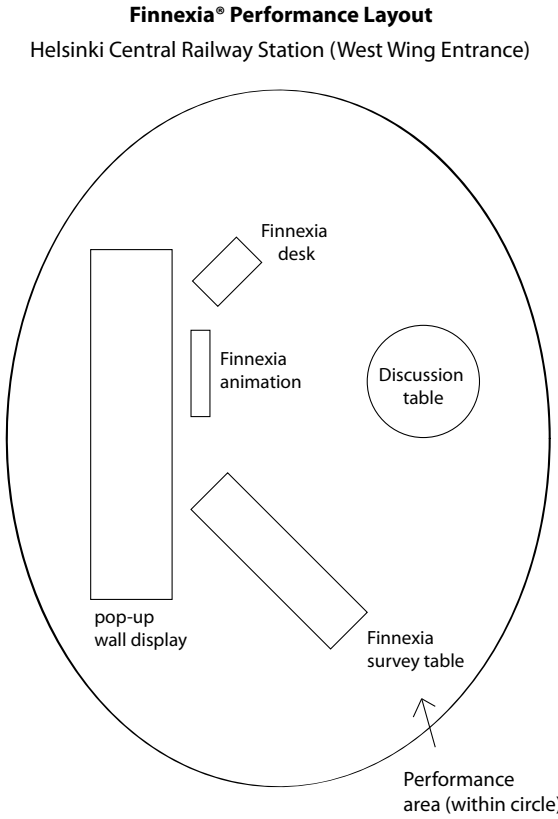


Figure 32. Diagram of planned performance layout of Finnexia. (2012). Lisa Erdman.

In the process of planning the location, other technical considerations were taken into account, including access to electricity, equipment storage, and toilets for the Finnexia performers. To construct and choreograph the audience interaction with Finnexia within this commercial framework of the stage area, I sought out guidance from performers Saana and Nick. I met with each individually – Saana and I discussing ways to set the stage for the performance physically – how to arrange tables, etc. in order to maximize the potential for audience interaction and engagement. One question that came up in discussion with Saana was, "What is the reason for *invitation*?" (*sisäänheittäjä*, in Finnish). She said that it was important to have this reason clear to the audience, in some way, as though some sort of 'joker' figure was needed in the performance, as a way to invite people to discussion.

Performance artist and Finnexia sales person Nick offered input towards creating exercises to facilitate discussion with audience members who sat at the round dialogue table. These included offering the audience members photos and illustrations from random magazine clippings, as a conversation piece with which to express their feelings towards the Finnish language: "Which image here would you say represents your *relationship* to the Finnish language,

and why?" Saana also devised a method of her own that involved sheets of colored paper. On one side of the paper, audience members were asked to write a sentence describing their fear towards the Finnish language, and on the other side their hopes and dreams surrounding the Finnish language.[17]

5.4. Casting the Performers

The casting of the Finnexia sales people involved an open call sent out via social media (Facebook) and emails to the public at large. Anneli, the production manager assisted with the hiring process. By default – and perhaps ironically – most of the people available and willing to perform as Finnexia performers turned out to be foreigners who did not speak Finnish fluently, if at all. As a result, in order for their presence to support the alternate reality of the commercial facade, I needed to consider carefully a performative explanation as to why these Finnexia 'representatives' had not yet mastered the Finnish language. If these people were going to sell Finnexia to the public, then there would have to be a convincing reason as to why they had not yet used Finnexia themselves.

Each performer, would, in some way, support one aspect of the performance 'stage.' To prepare the Finnexia performers for the event, whenever possible, I met with each person individually, to discuss their own role in relation to the overall goals of the performance. One week before the performance, performers were sent via email a series of 'performance guidelines' describing the framework of the performance, their role as performers, scientific background about Finnexia as a medication, and an outline of strategies they could follow in order to promote Finnexia, while encouraging people to participate in discussion about their experience living in Finland as a foreigner and learning Finnish. Essentially, these scripting guidelines offered a 'crash course' on being an expert sales person for Finnexia. In hindsight, in this aspect of Finnexia, I would have allowed more time for preparation with the performers. This realization came later, during interviews with performers after the Finnexia event. The following pages provide an overview of the guidelines submitted to the performers. As this content helps to convey the scope of the preparation process of the performance, here I have included the entirety of the performance guidelines.

17 During the early planning phase of the Finnexia performance, I considered the option of planting actors within the public audience to dramatize the performance (similar to Invisible Theater). In the end, I decided against this. I wanted to see how the audience responses would unfold without this type of influence.

5.4.1 Performer's Overview and Guidelines

Guidelines for Finnexia Performers
Welcome to the Finnexia team!
You are about to participate in an exciting revolution in language enhancement! We look forward to working with you during your shift at the Finnexia commercial presentation at the West Wing of the Helsinki Railway Station, 20-22.9.

Background
The Finnexia performance installation is designed to encourage dialogue about cultural integration in Finland, and the role that language plays in this process. The project also serves as a satirical critique towards the overmedicalization of human conditions, and the pervasiveness of pill-popping health treatments in society.

Finnexia consists of a new (fictitious) medication that helps people learn the Finnish language faster. The project is part of Lisa Erdman's doctoral research in the Art Department at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in Helsinki.

Objectives
The main goal is to create a unique dialogical space in which people can share their own thoughts and experiences regarding the Finnish language as a foreigner living in Finland.

Performer's main task is to engage the public and encourage them to contribute to this dialogue.
View the *entire* performance space as an active space in which to engage the public. Though you will be assigned a role and general station area, move around periodically within the space to help engage people's attention.

During all three days of the performance, we will present Finnexia as though it were an actual product. Through this commercial framework of Finnexia, the intent is to create an alternative reality in which people can playfully explore the themes of language, cultural integration, and immigration.

Performance style
As you interact with the audience and people passing through, the goal

is to **maintain a convincing commercial facade**. If confronted with questions about the project, you will need to be ready to respond with confidence, in the role of a **Finnexia sales representative**. To maintain consistency and product believability, it is important that all performers respond to the public questions in a similar way.

Keywords describing your role as a Finnexia sales representative:

- Enthusiastic
- Knowledgeable
- Welcoming
- Perky
- Engaging
- Motivated

In your role as a sales representative, the greatest challenge you may face is the questioning and skepticism from the audience. It is important to stay in character, even when questioned in uncomfortable ways by the public. Later in this document, there are guidelines for how to handle those situations.

Finnexia daily performance schedule:

14:00 – 16:00
The exact timing and frequency of the events listed below will vary within the two-hour span, depending on the atmosphere of the performance.

- Live sales pitch and welcome greeting
- Finnexia surveys and brochures handed to audience members
- Prize drawing
- Dialogue activity in center round table (conducted by Saana)
- Camera interviews with audience members

16:00 – 16:30 Interviews with Finnexia performers (interviewed by Lisa Erdman)

16:30 – 17:00 Meal break

17:00 – 19:00
The exact timing and frequency of the events listed below will vary within the two-hour span, depending on the atmosphere of the performance.

- Live sales pitch and welcome greeting
- Finnexia surveys and brochures handed to audience members
- Prize drawing
- Dialogue activity in center round table (conducted by Saana)
- In-camera interviews with audience members

19:00 – 19:30 Interviews with Finnexia performers (interviewed by Lisa Erdman)

Where and when to meet:

Meet at the entrance of the Railway Station West Wing at least 20 minutes before your shift. Call Anneli (Production Manager) when you arrive and she or a Finnexia assistant will give you your Finnexia T-shirt. You can then go to the restroom to make final dress preparation, and meet with Anneli and/or Lisa Erdman for final prep.

Dress code: Wear the Finnexia T-shirt (given to you at the Railway station when you arrive to your shift) and dark colored, semi-formal, office-style clothing. Wear black, dark brown, or dark gray colors. You can wear the T-shirt over a turtleneck if you wish. The Finnexia T-shirt must be completely visible when you are wearing it.

How to respond to audience questions:

People in the audience will respond in various ways to the Finnexia presentation. Some may appear confused, some may see humor in it and play along, while others may become annoyed or downright angry. Regardless of the type of response you encounter, remain calm and professional. If you are asked how the medication works, and its side effects, etc., be ready to answer according to the information on the Finnexia website (from the sections "About" and "How it Works"). It's important that all Finnexia performers respond in the same manner to these types of questions, to maintain product believability. Here are some common questions that may arise, and how you should answer:

Q: Is the Finnexia product real?
A: Yes, it's a product that recently came out on the market.

Q: Where can I get Finnexia?
A: It's available at pharmacies in Finland. You can also send an email inquiry to Huxor Pharma, to order directly from them.

Q: I just went to the pharmacy and they said they don't carry Finnexia. What should I do?
A: As Finnexia is a relatively new product, many pharmacies may not yet have it in stock. You can simply wait, or contact Huxor Pharma for more information, via email (see brochure or website for email address).

Q: So why don't you speak Finnish, if you're such an expert about Finnexia?
A: Well, actually, I just started taking the medication last week, as part of my job requirement, so I should see some results very soon. I've also started taking a Finnish course.

If you encounter extremely difficult questions from audience members, do not make up an answer, though it may be tempting to do so. Direct them to Lisa or Anneli. This should only be done as a last resort.

Another option, if you're confronted with a question you don't know how to answer, is to hand the person a brochure, and explain that they can find out more information in the brochure, or on the website. Also, encourage them to fill out a Finnexia survey, or participate in the discussion table activity. In other words, you can redirect them to engage in another aspect of the performance.

How to prepare:

1) *Familiarize yourself with the technical details of Finnexia product.* As a Finnexia sales representative, you will need to feel comfortable talking about the product.
View the Finnexia medical animation on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB2D8NJE-88
Study the Finnexia website, particularly the sections, "About Finnexia" and "How it Works" http://www.finnexia.fi

2) *View the video documentation from the Consumerin® performance.* This public performance, presented by Lisa Erdman in 2009, is similar in structure to Finnexia, and gives a sense of the type of actions and possible audience interactions that will happen during the show. I will provide you with the link to this video file.

3) *Take a look at the presentation style of sales representatives at trade shows.* I've included one example here, below. If your role involves that of someone presenting a sales pitch, examples such as these provide some

guidelines on speaking style:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ktvGevzxYo

4) *Set up a phone meeting with Lisa Erdman.* There will not be a group preparatory meeting held before the Finnexia performance. Instead, each performer will have a phone meeting with Lisa Erdman to discuss details of his/her assigned role, and to answer any questions regarding the performance. Please send an email to Lisa Erdman listing the best times that she can call you.

Looking forward to working with you at the show!

Lisa

5.5 The Finnexia Commercial Facade

One of the reasons I attempted to build up a convincing 'real' commercial facade, (surface appearance) for Finnexia, was that I thought people would not take the piece as seriously from within an artistic context, and thus would not be as likely to share their personal stories. From my direct experience with (U.S.) public consumer culture, an image presented as a commercial product receives more respect than an image presented as art. Even so, the final decision to present Finnexia as a real product and maintain that facade over the course of three days was not an easy one. For one week during the preparation of the performance, I considered different approaches to the framing of the Finnexia commercial framework: 1) revealing the artistic nature of the Finnexia project to the audience gradually over the three days of the performance, 2) providing obvious outlets of information explaining the artistic intention of Finnexia (via information pamphlets, verbal explanations, etc.); and finally, 3) the option of presenting Finnexia as though it were a real product over the full three days of performance. I consulted with performers and professors about the various options and their possible outcomes. The process resulted in several worrisome sleepless nights, thinking about how each of the three approaches might affect both the audience and dialogical outcomes of Finnexia. This thought process reveals the initial stages of concern I had about the ethics of performer-audience interaction within the performance.

Three days before the premiere of the performance, I felt that Finnexia had failed even before it had begun. This feeling arose from the fact that I

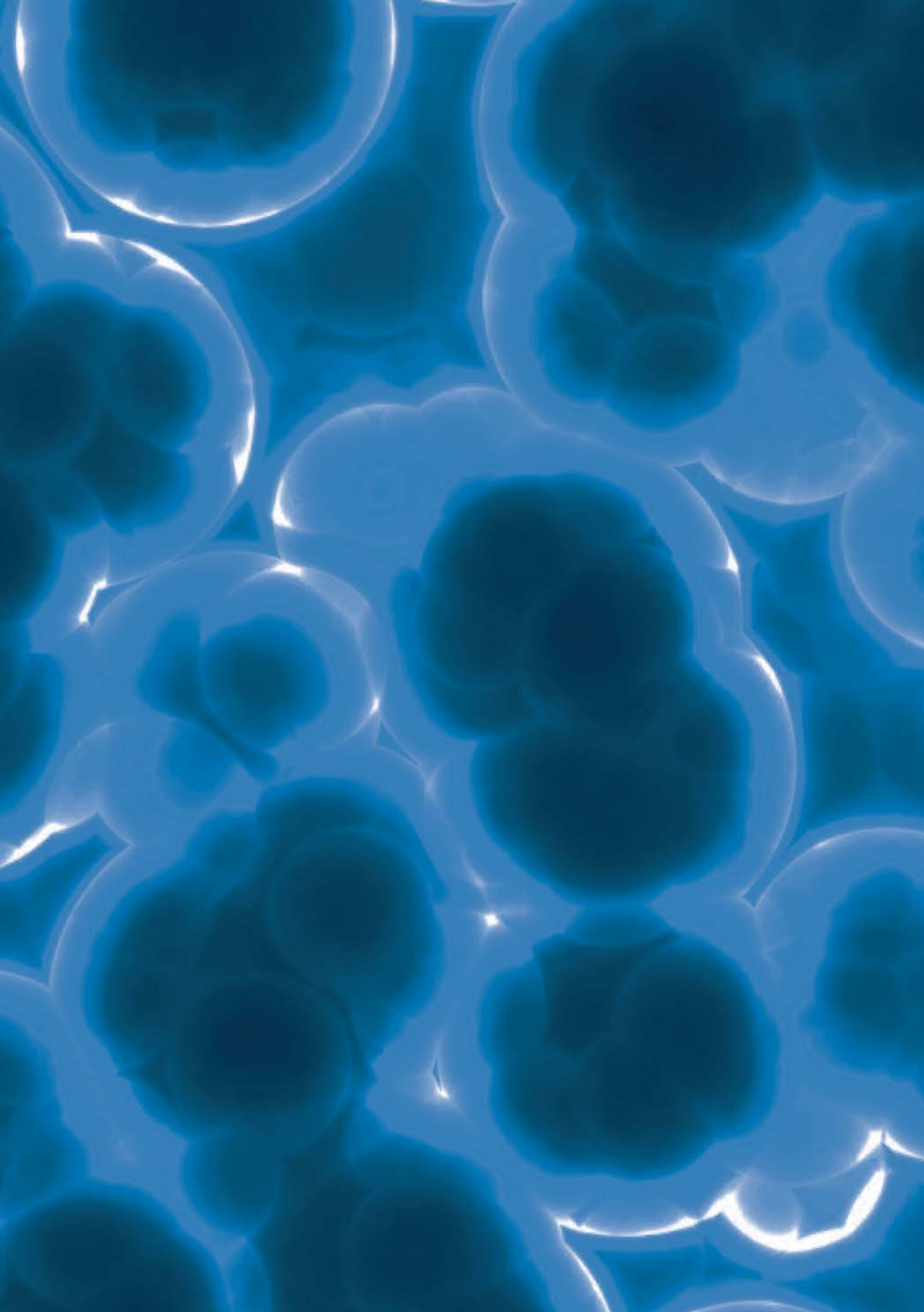
had not completed the production of the Huxor Pharma website (the parent company of Finnexia). I had toiled over completing the site in order to finalize the corporate facade of Finnexia – a need to seal the convincing nature of the hoax. I had become obsessed with creating this fictitious wrapping of the product, perhaps as a desired distraction from the monolithic demands of planning the Finnexia performance. Exhausted from such a detailed production process, I gave in to sleep. In the 48 hours preceding the performance, I shifted focus towards the performers and their needs as Finnexia sales people.

The idea of pushing the boundaries of the Finnexia facade – both in the branding and the performative event – reflects a shift in my aesthetic approach towards the medical (in relation to my earlier work), and a move towards pushing the boundaries of my own comfort zone. Before the performance itself, I was aware that such an approach presented a level of risk – one which it was necessary to take.

5.6 Summary

This chapter explored the preparation of the Finnexia performance, highlighting artistic decisions concerning location, conceptual framing, preparation of the performers, and strategies for engaging the public audience. The following chapter provides an account of the live Finnexia performance as it occurred over three days, in the Helsinki Railway Station. The chapter describes the physical framework of the performance, the quality of the public dialogues that transpired, feedback from the Finnexia performers, and excerpts from my own personal observations during the performance.

6 PERFORMING FINNEXIA



6 Performing Finnexia

This chapter presents an account of Finnexia as a performance intervention event, as it transpired over the course of three days in the West Wing of the Helsinki Railway Station during September of 2012. Through journal entries of my own observations, and a general description of the event based on video documentation, the chapter outlines the basic structure and unfolding of the Finnexia performance. Included are excerpts from interviews with Finnexia performers, and audience members. Alongside the interview excerpts, I offer my own interpretations of these dialogues.

The performative aspect of Finnexia introduced a corporeal dimension to the artwork that aimed at generating a more authentic and believable presence around the Finnexia product (Auslander, 1998). The three-day event aimed to establish a sense of trust and validation in the public eye towards the presence of Finnexia as an authoritative entity within the space. This sense of trust was meant to move the audience beyond the commercial facade, creating an undercurrent of interest that might bring people to engage in dialogue about their personal stories. On a commercial level, the elements building and supporting Finnexia's image consisted of the visual set-up: a trade show pop-up booth, the survey table, product brochures, a looping medical animation, a round dialogue table located at the center of the space, along with the hired camera crew and microphones stationed at various points in space in order to document the event.

From Thursday, September 20 through Saturday, September 22, for a period of eight hours per day, Finnexia occupied the West Wing of the Helsinki Railway Station. On each day, the morning was designated for setting up the space. In the afternoon, there were two, two-hour long performance cycles consisting of activities at each of the stations. Performers took on their designated roles throughout the day: as a sales person, Finnexia survey administrator, and dialogue facilitator. A total of ten performers contributed to the three-day event, along with two video camera operators and one photographer. The various peripheral stations of the commercial performance (survey table, sales lectern, animation display) served as a live spectacle from which interested audience members were encouraged to move into the central area and sit down at the round dialogue table, where they could share their personal stories related to living in Finland and learning the Finnish language. In terms of timing, the activities within the performance were designed to

Figure 33. Finnexia performance (2012). Helsinki Railway Station, West Wing. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

overlap at some points in the day.[18] The images on the following pages (Figures 33 to 40) illustrate the physical set-up of the stations positioned within the Finnexia performance space. The photo documentation of Finnexia was abundant, and captured many dimensions of audience/performer interactions, including interviews at the dialogue table, interactions at the Finnexia survey/lottery prize table, and discussions between Finnexia sales people and passersby. However, for the purpose of protecting the identity of numerous audience members, only those photos showing broad longshot views of the Finnexia performance are included in this dissertation.

18 The resulting visual dynamic was one of a festive commercial spectacle. The intent of this approach was to simultaneously produce a tableau and performance in public space. This was part of the aesthetic intent behind the visual design of Finnexia.

Figure 34. Finnexia performance. (2012). View from the Finnexia survey and lottery prize table. Helsinki Railway Station. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 35. Finnexia performance. (2012). Dialogue table. Helsinki Railway Station. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 36. Finnexia performance. (2012). Trade show pop-up display.
Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 37. Finnexia performance. (2012). Helsinki Railway Station.
Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 38. Finnexia performance. (2012). Audience members filling out the Finnexia survey. Helsinki Railway Station. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 39. Finnexia performance. (2012). Helsinki Railway Station. Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

Figure 40. Finnexia performance. (2012). Helsinki Railway Station.
Photo credit: Maurice Fitzpatrick.

6.1 Finnexia Daily Performance Schedule

Each day of the Finnexia event followed a performance schedule, as outlined below. This structure allowed for more efficiency in scheduling performers. It also provided the public with an element of predictability for each day of the performance, should audience members wish to return to the space to participate on multiple days.

Finnexia Daily Performance Schedule:

14:00 – 16:00

- Live sales pitch and welcome greeting
- Finnexia surveys and brochures handed to audience members
- Prize 'lottery' drawing
- Dialogue activity in center round table (conducted by Saana)
- Camera interviews with audience members

Note: The exact timing and frequency of the events listed below will vary within the two-hour span, depending on the atmosphere of the performance.

16:00 – 16:30 Interviews with Finnexia performers (interviewed by Lisa Erdman)

16:30 – 17:00 Meal break

17:00 – 19:00

- Live sales pitch and welcome greeting
- Finnexia surveys and brochures handed to audience members
- Prize 'lottery' drawing
- Dialogue activity in center round table (conducted by Nick)
- Camera interviews with audience members

19:00 – 19:30 Interviews with Finnexia performers (interviewed by Lisa Erdman)

6.2 Expectations and Outcomes

I entered the first day of the Finnexia performance with relatively low expectations as to the volume and ethnic diversity of people who might participate from the public audience. At most, I estimated that about 15-20 people per day, from the public audience would participate in discussion in the performance space. As it turned out, approximately 100 people per day entered the space and contributed to discussions of varying lengths, with the most active day the second day of the performance (Friday, September 21, 2012), with approximately 200 people engaging in dialogue within the space. I held a modest expectation in terms of how Finnexia might succeed in 'fooling' people as a medical commercial, especially in the wake of the incomplete Huxor Pharma website (Finnexia's parent company) that was meant to be part of the corporate facade. Gauging from interviews with Finnexia performers, as discussed in this chapter, and from my own personal interactions with the public, it seemed that a small percentage of participants (approximately 15%) considered the possibility that Finnexia could exist as a real medication.

At the end of each performance day, I looked forward to having time for quiet reflection and writing about my observations. In reality, I found myself too physically and emotionally taxed to write for more than an hour, beyond the first day of the performance. Inevitably, there was a flurry of logistical

details to sort out at the end of each day – assessing the next performance shift, responding to performers' questions, emails, etc. After taking care of these details, I opted to reserve the remainder of time for sleep in the evenings, in order to better meet the demands of the next day's performance.

6.3 Performance Structure

Here, I describe a general overview of the events that took place during the Finnexia performance in the Helsinki Railway Station on September 20-22, 2012. The descriptions are drawn from my own first-hand experience, observations from video documentation,[19] and interviews with audience members and performers. The daily cycle of the Finnexia performance opened with a live sales pitch in which a sales person, using a microphone, would introduce the product, inviting people to 'learn Finnish faster!' while framing the medication as a leader in the revolution in language learning enhancement. During the sales pitch, passersby were encouraged to take a Finnexia brochure, fill out a Finnexia survey, and sit at the dialogue table to discuss their personal experience with the Finnish language. At the survey table, in exchange for answering questions pertaining to their experience and motivations for learning the Finnish language, members of the public were offered free candy and the chance to participate in a 'lottery' prize drawing. The possible prizes in the lottery drawing included a package of Finnexia pills, or a coupon for a free coffee and pastry. Brief exchanges occurred between sales people and passersby, during which brochures were offered, providing an overview of the Finnexia medication. People of diverse ages and ethnic backgrounds came to converse at the central dialogue table. At the table, participants were presented with the question: "What is your relationship to the Finnish language?" Dialogues at this table were facilitated by professional performers who designed interaction exercises in order to more easily engage people in discussion. For example, audience members who sat down were shown various images from magazine clippings, and asked to choose an image that represented their own relationship to the Finnish language (Figure 41).

In another dialogical exercise, participants at the table were given colored paper and markers, and were asked to write or draw their hopes and fears

19 From the 35 hours of video documentation of the Finnexia performance and interviews, a ten-minute video was created. In early 2017, this edited video was prohibited from general viewing access by request of the Aalto legal counsel, due to some complexities surrounding the framing of the interview consent forms signed by the participants. I elaborate on this in Chapter 9.

towards the Finnish language. One participant responded by drawing a self-portrait on paper, and writing in Finnish, "Mä haluaisin puhua suomea tarpeeksi hyvin, että minusta tuntuu, että kuullun Suomeenmaalle" (English translation: I'd like to speak Finnish well enough that I feel I belong in Finland). Another respondent wrote his Finland dream on one side of his paper: "Good job earning good money in Finland and pay good taxes." On the other side of the paper, he wrote: "Without Finnish, I am nothing in Finland." One participant described her anxiety about learning Finnish at the beginning, and how she felt after some time had passed: "For the first time, it sounds funny, but after learning and in the process, I'm feeling good learning it." Finally, another audience member wrote down her dream in Finland: "My dream is to understand enough to manage in this society, especially in the workplace."

As the whole scene unfolded, a camera operator and a photographer roamed the Finnexia performance landscape, capturing interactions and documenting interviews taking place at the round dialogue table. On each day of the performance, after each sales performance cycle, I conducted a

Figure 41. Finnexia performance. (2012). Video Still. At the dialogue table, a Finnexia sales person asks an audience member, "Which image represents your relationship to the Finnish language?" Helsinki Railway Station.

group interview 'debriefing' with all the Finnexia performers around the dialogue table, posing questions about their experience and as sales representatives at the event.

6.4 Personal Observations

My own personal experience of the Finnexia performance was formed primarily from a distanced standpoint. I approached the performance, initially, from the perspective of an observer and director – with the intent of overseeing all the components of the events over the three days. This choice was also made in part out of a desire to prevent myself from influencing the outcomes of the dialogues with my own presence. This decision presented pros and cons. On one hand, it allowed free-flow movement of actors and opened up the possibility for more improvisational interactions among performers and audience. On the other hand, my distanced view of the performance removed me from the details of most dialogues. As a result, my knowledge of the dialogical outcomes of Finnexia comes primarily from viewing the video documentation footage, along with postperformance interviews with Finnexia performers. What follows is a daily account of personal observations, highlights of dialogical encounters, and interviews with performers.

On the first day of the performance, (Friday, September 20), I recall at some point in the afternoon feeling a strong urge to hear all the conversations going on at once. I walked over to one of the static documentation cameras positioned on a tripod a distance from the Finnexia area. The camera operator smiled, I asked how it was going. He placed the headphones on my head. Immediately, a soundscape of multiple voices entered my ears, revealing a tapestry of dialogues occurring simultaneously around the microphones positioned at the various performance stations (survey table, dialogue table, and Finnexia sales point). The audio collage was at once unintelligible and full of aesthetic insight, revealing the multitude of voices gathered through the performance. This experience brought me an understanding of the layered complexity of the dialogical activity taking place.

On Saturday, September 21, the second day of the performance, a Finnexia performer chose to withdraw from the event, based on his ethical perceptions and discomfort towards his role as a sales person (as I will address in Chapter 8). As a result, I stepped in, eventually taking part in direct audience interactions, including several emotionally intense encounters with a Finnish teacher, a group of Belgian college students, and an Estonian graduate student. These encounters, along with the incident of the exiting performer, prompted my own ethical questions that now inform the main dissertation questions.

Generally, I was pleasantly surprised with the outcome of dialogues in the space, in terms of people sharing their own stories about learning the language and how their language knowledge affects their experience living in Finland. It seemed there was a sense of community (albeit transient in nature), created through this performance. The following is an entry from my performance diary, from the first day of the Finnexia event. No detailed writing entries were made on the other two days of the performance. Here, the diary offers a glimpse of the general complexity of the Finnexia event, including logistics of physical set-up, social dynamics, and performative coordination. The notes also illustrate the ongoing process of observation and self-reflection inherent to the process of artistic research. I have chosen to include the entirety of the journal entry here, due to its relevance towards understanding logistical issues arising through the set-up process, and the emotional unfolding that accompanied my own observations.

Notes from performance diary (Lisa Erdman) – 20.9.2012

10:00 (Preparations):
I didn't sleep much last night, but fairly good quality sleep. So much to still do, this morning, with details. Tracking down a package that was late from the printing company, getting the placebo pills, etc. I was upset that I didn't get the Huxor website up in time. I was exhausted by noon. Then there were still leftover materials in the West Wing, from the previous exhibition. We had to contact the railway station officials about this, and there was miscommunication about when we were to meet the station representatives.

When I went to the pharmacy earlier in the day to pick up the placebos for the performance, the woman at the counter came back from the stockroom with all the pills and told me in English, "You must be really sick!" I didn't respond. Then she said, "Do you mind telling me what these are for?" I said, "Well it's for a research project at Aalto University, concerning language and cultural experience in Finland. I can send you more info, if you like." She said, " Well, I'm sure there will be some info about this on your website." Then she added, "I think doctors should use more of these placebos, for their effect." I wonder if she implied that placebos can be more effective than real medication. I only paid 7 euros for all the pills. I found it amazing that the KELA Finnish health insurance card covered most of the cost.

Anneli, the project manager, was invaluable in helping to resolve emergencies all through this project, especially this morning. I really couldn't have carried this out without someone with her disposition overseeing the details. She has endless amounts of energy, and is very direct in addressing things.

11:00 – 14:00 (Set-up in the railway station):
Set-up in the railway station was intensive, and it felt like a performance in itself. Interesting how people tend to come to the table out of curiosity, to see what is happening. No speaking, just staring, especially at the candy. We had to guard the candy later on, because people would just come up and take some without asking, like little squirrels on the prowl for nuts. Hit and run. Stressful process to set up the pop-up commercial display. I had forgotten how to go about setting it up. I felt so helpless, as though I had failed to take charge and check these things beforehand. A performance like this takes more foresight and detailed planning on many levels, months ahead. Would have been good to have Anneli on board earlier for this reason. Miraculously, a representative from the company where I purchased the pop-up commercial display appeared right then and there in the railway station, and he said he could help us set up the display! How uncanny.

During this time I was approached by some researchers from University of Helsinki about the product, and they had very specific questions about the chemical makeup of the drug. I kept in character the whole time, discussing the chemical intricacies of the medication. One of them was Jiao, a doctoral student. Another person, who won a prize was Arda, a researcher in molecular physics. A very intense man. He and Jiao will attend an interview next week Tuesday. Very surreal to speak with them both. I felt badly faking the information about the drug. But somehow found solace in the notion that I could tell them the truth later on Tuesday at the interview. I hope they come. I need to email them the location of Kirjasto 10 (Helsinki Central Library).

14:00 – 16:00 First performance shift:
Very active period. Many people engaged in conversation on multiple levels. Nick pointed out that there seemed to be two forces happening in the dialogue. One very sales oriented, and one more intimate and personable, happening at the dialogue table. Alan was a very engaging sales person. And Andrew was good with personal dialogue with the audience, but did not pay much attention to managing the survey table.

He had great insights about the mechanism of the performance, and the dynamics of the fictional element, and how different audience members relate to the Finnexia concept of various levels. I need to talk with him more about this. He asked me earlier the following:

-- What is the outcome I would like to see from this performance?
-- At what point do people find out the truth? What are the points of resolution?

I felt exhausted after the first shift. I can't imagine doing this for two more days.
Must be because I'm pregnant. My legs are heavy. Need to take more frequent rests during the day, in the chair.

There seem to be different levels of discussion going on. Some people playing along with the idea, some not sure if this is real, and questioning the validity of this, and others going along with it, just to fill out the survey and get a prize. I was pleased with the variety of discussion going on, on several levels – topical, more in depth, and then those at the survey table.

16:00 – 16:30 (First interview with performers)
The interview with performers [after each performance session] was great, as a group dynamic. I just posed one question to all at the table – "Was the experience of interacting with the audience as you expected? Or was it different than you anticipated?"

17:00 – 21:00 Second performance shift
This portion drew fewer audience members, but captured some good conversations with people. Georgia and Vanessa possessed less knowledge about the scientific background of the product, and they explained that they felt less confident about interacting with the audience. Georgia suggested having a medical expert present at the performance – someone who could field questions about the pharmacological component. She felt compelled to make up responses to questions she couldn't answer. I think she was intimidated by the structure. She could have moved around the space more, to engage those people standing further away, but curious about the activity.

I spent most of the time at a distance from the performance, and more of a directive role. I'd like to sit in on some of the dialogue table

discussions, to see how those evolve. But I feel pulled in so many directions at once while directing. It's quite taxing.

21:00 – 21:30 (Second interview with performers)
During the interview, Saana mentioned that she noticed the audience interacting with Finnexia for different reasons. Some were interested in the concept on an intellectual level, figuring out how it works. Others seemed entertained by the notion of the medication, and others felt an emotional need to engage, mostly to share their own stories and experiences.

6.5 Dialogical Outcomes

The Finnexia performance generated dialogue on multiple levels, in multiple spaces within the territory of the Finnexia 'stage' area. Those conversations with passersby who stopped momentarily were fleeting and touched on the commercial promotion of Finnexia. In this performative commercial structure, conversations surfaced on multiple levels. Members of the public audience seemed to engage with the live commercial for various reasons: 1) out of intellectual interest – for the purpose of inquiring about the Finnexia product itself and how it works on a biochemical level, 2) interest in the candy and prizes being offered at the survey table, and 3) a desire to share their own personal story about living in Finland and learning (or not learning) Finnish. Out of this third category emerged a diverse range of stories related to job-seeking encounters, descriptions of fears and desires towards learning Finnish, and humorous cultural misunderstandings.

6.5.1 Conversations with the Public Audience

The following pages include excerpts from dialogues that emerged from the round discussion table in the Finnexia performance. Along with each excerpt, I offer my own interpretation of the dialogical exchanges. The collection of dialogues below each touch on a different aspect of the Finnexia project: the notion of creating a safe space for public dialogue, the experience of the foreigner living in Finland, perceptions towards learning the Finnish language, and the relationship between consumers and the pharmaceutical industry. As a result, they may seem diverse in the themes that they address. However, I feel it is necessary to include all of these, as a way to represent a sampling of the diversity of audience members that participated in the dialogues. The

dialogues in this section involved audience members from a diverse range of nationalities and ethnic backgrounds: Somali, Cameroonian, North American (U.S.), Finnish, Turkish, and Brazilian. There were also other conversations not mention here, that involved more intense, emotional encounters of discomfort between performers and audience members. These incidents speak to the core ethical themes of the dissertation, and are addressed in detail in Chapter 8.

Samatar and Mohammad from Somalia, conversing with a Finnexia salesperson.Thursday, September 20, 2012.

Sales person: Are you interested, gentlemen, in learning Finnish, or do you speak Finnish?

Samatar: I speak it, but we're interested to know how it [Finnexia] works.

Sales person: Right, it doesn't make you learn it. It helps you learn it … faster.

Mohammed: So it's going to change your language library, like … understand to speak, to memorize things more than now.

Sales person: It helps facilitate the language-learning process, so it makes it faster, makes it easier, it lowers the anxiety. But if you're interested in sitting down and telling us a little about your own experience.

In my view, this interview reveals the interest and curiosity that many audience members had in learning about the workings of Finnexia. Here, it remains unclear as to whether the two men observing the animation believed Finnexia to be a real medication. What was evident to me, judging from their facial expressions in the video documentation, was their curiosity and interest.

Statement by Jamar, from Cameroon. Interviewed by a Finnexia sales person.

Jamar: Ok but I'm gonna tell you something funny. When I arrived here in Finland actually I went to buy something in the supermarket. Like a

lady was standing beside me, a very beautiful lady. I heard, "Anteeksi" [English translation: 'excuse me']. So wow. You know, actually I heard like, "you're sexy". So wooaah … I thought that's gonna be a nice day for me.

This exchange reflects the theme of creating a safe space for public dialogue. The scenario demonstrates the ease with which some people felt they could share personal memories of humor and misunderstandings, within that space.

Statement by Arda from Turkey, who I interviewed at the dialogue table during the performance.

Arda: I never thought it's a real medicine. And I'm really surprised because cognitive learning kind of research – they're really now popular nowadays. They're an outcome as a product, as a medicine.
And that made me more curious about the details … which active molecule you use, what is the mechanism in the brain. And in our discussion I went a little further. And where it is, at the end … where it is accumulating – which kind of molecule it turns, and comes out of the body. These are really important facts in the pharmacology.

This man's statement informs the theme of the medical, in which the ambiguity created by the Finnexia campaign results in what appears to be uncertainty on the part some audience members. It also shows how Finnexia drew people from various points of interest – in this case, on an intellectual level through its scientific workings. The encounter points to how the product may entice certain audience members on a scientific level, regardless whether they perceive it to be real or not.

Interview between Djavan (from Brazil) Iida, a Finnish woman, and a Finnexia sales person. Friday September 21, 2012.

Note: The original interview took place in Finnish, and has been translated to English.

Sales person: What kind of experience have you had?

Djavan: Why … aren't I at work? But I've asked on the street but no one wants to give me work because I can't speak Finnish. Then I thought that I need to have more experience at school. In our country, it's such a different culture, I'm a Brazilian, and we love to talk a lot! And play a lot

sometimes. And then I started to play and to speak Finnish. And then, I started to learn pretty quickly.

Sales person: How important is it to you that you've learned to speak Finnish this well to think you are now participating in the Finnish culture?

Djavan: First, I'll say that one year and a couple of months I was at school, until it finished and then I did a lot of work placement at supermarkets. And then, during that time, I had spoken to customers so much, that it's normal that an old customer has enjoyed speaking to you so much, for example. I've said the same, so that I understand a lot and well.

Iida: Yes, this is a good example of what I'm talking about.

Djavan: You have to want [to learn] in order to learn. If you don't want to, you won't learn.

Iida: …No, but at some point, you go there to the course, full of enthusiasm, and then you realize after a month or two that you're not learning anything. It's just a litany, a litany, a litany. And nothing is explained to you. If you understand what's on the paper. To be frank, but it's not clear what your actually doing with that paper. When you're told to put your ideas on paper, so you don't actually know what it means. They don't tell you what it is in English…

For me, this exchanges illustrates a point in time during the Finnexia performance that offered a 'safe space' for dialogue, where participants felt welcome to contribute their stories. Saana, the performer who facilitated this dialogue, described the atmosphere of that particular discussion session. For Saana, this conversation marked a pinnacle point of the Finnexia performance, in which people engaged in sustained conversation at the table in an open way, in the company of a diverse group of people. According to Saana, there seemed to be a sense of 'purpose' and a 'need' for this type of conversation to surface in this space. As she explained to me, during an interview that day:

> *I got inspired during the last dialogue session [on Friday]. I came to understand that we need more of these round tables in public space where people can be invited to discuss something that they can easily get connected to, that they have some emotions towards, to spend a little or a lot of time. But*

I really fell in love with this idea of a round table in public space for people from different cultures to just connect. (Saana, personal communication, September 21, 2012)

Keith, from the United States, interviewed by sales person.

Sales person: Well, on the other side [of the paper], could you write the kind of meaning it would be for you. Like what would be your dream for you, considering this Finnish language. What is your goal, your aim, or …

Keith: To be fluent.

Sales person: Yes, fluency.

Keith: Yeah. And understand idioms.

Sales person: Tell me more about your frustration concerning learning the Finnish language.

Keith: Well, from what I just said – umm, it's hard to feel like you're part of society. Y'know, I can always speak English. Like I said, Finns are very receptive to that. But if they resort back to speaking Finnish, say at parties or whatever, then you kind of feel left out.

Sales person: So, do you think you could get something like this from the market, with the kind of promises that it's 800% easier to learn the Finnish language.

Keith: Of course, if it's something that made it easier, I'd be interested in reading the data and the studies before I would just start taking it.

Here, the interviewee was a former nurse from the United States who had moved to Finland with his Finnish wife. He explained that he had lived in Finland for nearly seven years, but had not learned enough Finnish to have a complex conversation. This dialogue is one that most resonated with me on a personal level. The man's experience in Finland, in some ways, mirrored my own – as an American native English-speaker having lived in Finland for more than five years, trying to find a way into Finnish culture through the language, yet not finding enough opportunity to practice. As a result, there is a feeling of being distanced from the culture, as though watching from the outside.

Derek, from the United States, interviewed by a Finnexia sales person.

Sales person: If you look at these images, which image would describe or show your experience with the Finnish language?

Derek: This one.

Sales person: So you choose [the image of] the girl with the sneezing allergies. So why do you choose this one to describe your experience with the Finnish language?

Derek: Well, I guess what's it's sort of like when you first try to speak Finnish. It's like, ahhhhh … what am I gonna do? Am I saying it properly? You know, they have the double vowels that you have to pronounce. The pronunciation is such an important part. You have 'sika' which is pig and you have 'siika,' which is a kind of fish. So if you don't use the long vowel then people won't understand what you're talking about. So it's kind of this like 'arrggg.'

This dialogue represents one of the conversations that took place as a result of the dialogue facilitation exercises at the Finnexia performance. In this case, the performer asked the audience member to describe his experience to the Finnish language by choosing a photo that represented his own feelings towards the language. This exercise introduced visual and tactile dimensions to the interviews.

The performative trajectory of Finnexia resulted in an ebb and flow of conversational activity over the course of the three-day structure – with the possibility open for both long and short discussions to occur among the various stations within the performance space. The eight-hour daily performance schedule opened up the possibility of capturing audience interest at various times of day (during rush hours, lunch time, and in between). There was an uneven rhythm on each day, with Friday (the second day) generating the most intensive group discussion at the dialogue table, in the early evening. As mentioned earlier, my own overall understanding of what transpired in Finnexia was constructed out of a mosaic of online discussions, in-person dialogues, interviews with performers, and bits of documentation footage generated by the event. In particular, the interview with Finnexia performer Saana was insightful, as it informed many questions and themes surrounding the performance itself, including need, desire, public interaction, and medicalization.

6.5.2 Interviews with Finnexia Performers

Through interviews with other Finnexia performers, there was a sense that some performers were surprised by their interactions with the public audience, in terms of the emotional responses by members of the audience members, the dynamics of public interaction, and the descriptions of the audience's experiences with Finnish language learning. The interview excerpts below address these observations by a number of the performers (Alan, Nick, Mikko, Anneli, and Andrew).

Questions to performers: Was the Finnexia experience what you expected? What kind of responses did you receive from the public audience?

Alan: It was a little bit different than I expected. I thought it would be easier to get people to stop. Not much more easily, though. I didn't think it was going to be a big crew. It was good to have a big sales team to draw attention.

Nick: It was interesting to hear the stories about why it's important to learn Finnish to be part of the culture, for jobs. It was surprising how people talked about how positive their attitude towards learning Finnish and towards Finns was. I expected them to be crying here, pleading for the medication. But some said, they feel they don't think they need a pill after all, since they feel they are in a supportive environment to learn Finnish.

Andrew: I had a different experience. Some people were really skeptical, to the point where they were angry – like, they would say, "are you kidding me?" and just walk away. I didn't expect this.

Mikko: I was surprised that most of the conversations that took place at this table, were not about the medicine, it was about personal stories. I didn't expect this. I mean … would you share your own personal story with a pharmaceutical representative?

Anneli: I kept a distance, generally, because I wanted to get an overview of the performance. One man talked about he was kicked out of a Finnish course because he asked a question. And a Turkish man said he was kicked out of a class for laughing too much. These are, I think issues of

racism that need to be touched on further. I encouraged these people to join our more in-depth interviews after the performance.

Lisa (myself): Someone asked me about the molecular structure of Finnexia, and I ended up improvising something about the chemical aspect, because I couldn't remember the details from the website. What I didn't expect was that people like the researcher from University Helsinki, etc. and woman from University of Turku, to express such interest in the scientific implications and workings of the drug: how it will be developed, how it interacts with the body chemistry, etc., how it accumulates in the body. My interactions have been on this pseudoscientific level. It makes me feel like we need to develop the product more.

Anneli: One guy said he wanted to know the price. These are things we need to decide on today.

Lisa (myself): So maybe the regular pack is 20 and the family pack 25 or … 19.95 euros and 39.95 euros? It seems so expensive for medicine…

Anneli: I know … I don't even use medicine, and it seems expensive.

Nick: How about 19.95? I mean, does KELA [Finnish National Health Insurance] cover this?

Andrew: The argumentation of science was convincing. It was morally difficult to face people who were hopeful about the drug … seeing joy in their eyes.

Mikko: One woman told me, "Finnish [language] is like gymnastics. Whose fault is it if you don't learn it? Is it society's or a person's own fault?"

Alan: I found myself racially profiling people who I thought might use Finnexia.

Nick: One guy didn't think that discrimination has anything to do with racism. He said, "Once you know the language, you overcome those issues."

6.5.3 Finnexia Surveys

During the Finnexia performance, the Finnexia survey table was a very active station, particularly since those members of the public who filled out a survey form qualified to win a prize (a coupon for a coffee and pastry, or a Finnexia pill package).

Much energy was spent by people eagerly taking a pen or pencil and answering questions about their experience learning Finnish and living in Finland. Of the 116 surveys collected over the three days at the performance, approximately 40% were filled out by students, 35% by employees residing in Finland, 15% by a spouse or former spouse of a Finnish citizen, and 10% by visitors or tourists. According to the survey results, no survey forms were filled out by asylum seekers. Approximately 60% of the survey responders had lived in Finland for less than 5 years, 25% had lived in Finland for 5 to10 years, and 15% for more than 10 years. When asked what their primary reason for learning Finnish was, 50% wanted to learn Finnish for employment reasons in Finland, 35% wanted to learn Finnish in order to establish friendships in Finland, 10% wanted to learn Finnish for family-related reasons, and 5% mentioned other reasons for wanting to learn the Finnish language.

People were also asked the following questions: "How important is knowledge of the Finnish language to the quality of your life in Finland?" and "Do you think the Finnexia medication can make a difference in the lives of foreigners in Finland? Why or why not?" Responses to these two questions varied greatly in content and depth. To the question regarding knowledge of the Finnish language and quality of life, most responded by saying that they felt learning Finnish would help them find employment in Finland, and establish relationships there. To the question asking if they thought Finnexia could make a different in the lives of foreigners in Finland, again, the responses varied, in this case, even more so. Some responded with a short satirical statement; others questioned the validity of the medication. Some responded with a statement of hope that Finnexia could work, and a few enthusiastically endorsed Finnexia. Others wrote that they felt it was important to learn the language in order to feel comfortable in Finnish culture. The original survey form is shown in Figure 42.

Three survey responses are provided after this paragraph. The responses here were taken from three different audience members. I chose to include these responses because I felt they represented the perspectives of people having experienced living in Finland for varying periods of time. These responses also represented slightly varying cultural/social situations. I also found the written responses of these three survey entries comparably easy and clear to read, as they were among the few written in the format of com-

plete sentences. Of course, as a result, I realize that I may have excluded the representation of others with varying levels of English language abilities – or those who happened to be in a hurry while writing their survey responses.

Finnexia survey response #1:

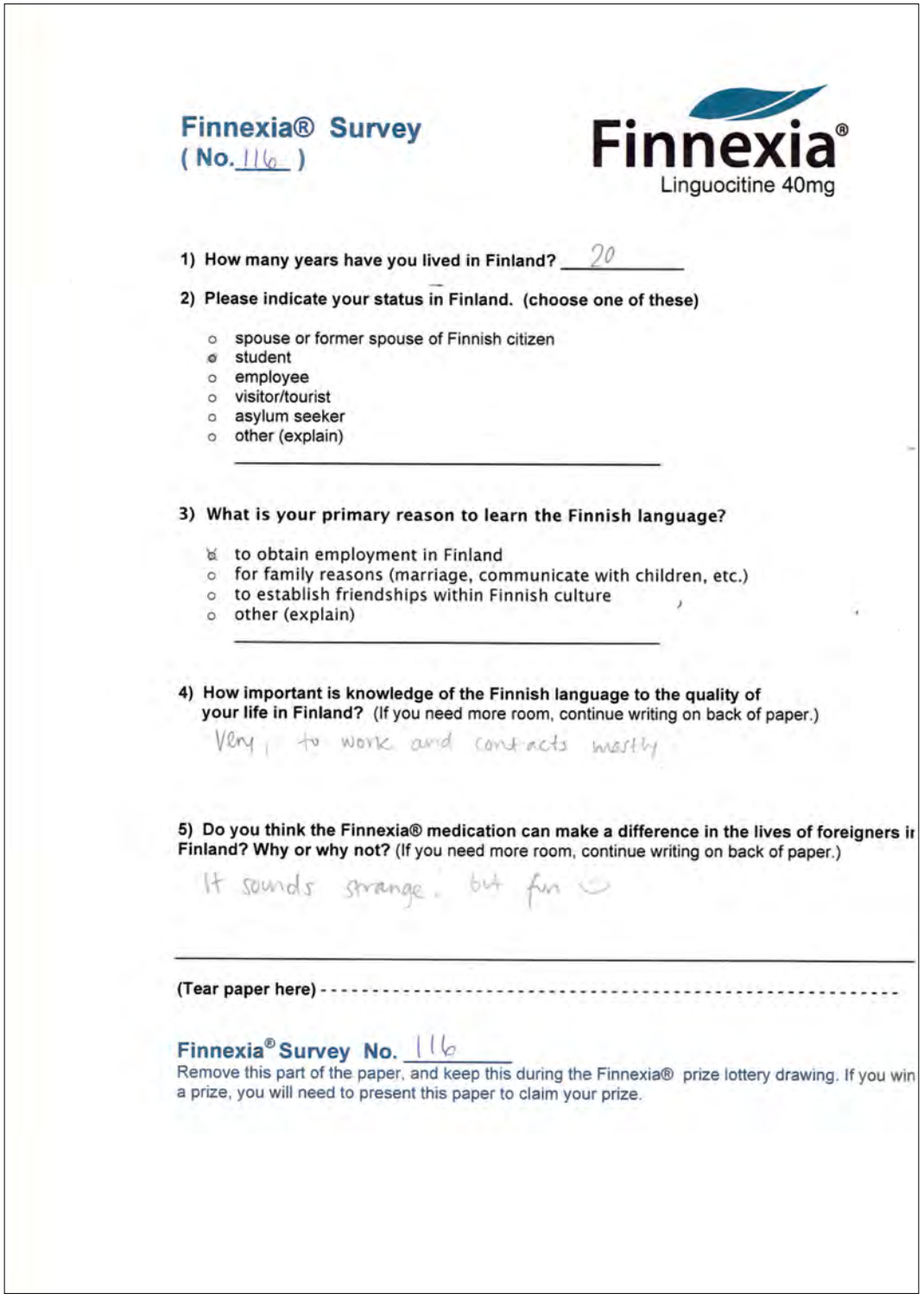
1. How many years have you lived in Finland?: *4 years.*
2. Current status in Finland: *Student and employee.*
3. Primary reason to learn the Finnish language: *To establish friendships within Finnish culture and to change profession and place of work.*
4. How important is knowledge of the Finnish language to the quality of your life in Finland?: *It is important to feel like at home, to feel life flow. It is also freedom in many aspects. Like freedom to change place of work.*
5. Do you think the Finnexia medication can make a difference in the lives of foreigners in Finland? Why or why not?: *It would be magic! Definitely totally voting for Finnexia! Without prescription.*

Finnexia survey response #2:

1. How many years have you lived in Finland?: *7 years.*
2. Current status in Finland: *Spouse or former spouse of Finnish citizen.*
3. Primary reason to learn the Finnish language: *To obtain employment.*
4. How important is knowledge of the Finnish language to the quality of your life in Finland?: *Learning Finnish will greatly increase my opportunity for finding better job opportunities.*
5. Do you think the Finnexia medication can make a difference in the lives of foreigners in Finland? Why or why not?: *If it really works, then I think that it would be a great benefit to foreigners. Finnish is a difficult language to learn and it is hard to acclimate into society without the language. For these reasons, this medication could be of much help to foreigners.*

Finnexia survey response #3:

1. How many years have you lived in Finland? *2 years.*
2. Current status in Finland: *Employee.*
3. Primary reason to learn the Finnish language: *To establish friendships within Finnish culture.*
4. How important is knowledge of the Finnish language to the quality of your life in Finland?: *Pretty important. It's a social barrier, and it keeps you as an outsider until you can be a part of the culture. In Finland, Finnish is not ignored, and it is the first preference of the local people.*
5. Do you think the Finnexia medication can make a difference in the lives of foreigners in Finland? Why or why not?: *I don't think any medication can help. All you can do is practice and keep on talking and interacting.*



Finnexia® Survey
(No. 116)

Finnexia®
Linguocitine 40mg

1) How many years have you lived in Finland? 20

2) Please indicate your status in Finland. (choose one of these)

- ○ spouse or former spouse of Finnish citizen
- ⊘ student
- ○ employee
- ○ visitor/tourist
- ○ asylum seeker
- ○ other (explain)

3) What is your primary reason to learn the Finnish language?

- ☒ to obtain employment in Finland
- ○ for family reasons (marriage, communicate with children, etc.)
- ○ to establish friendships within Finnish culture
- ○ other (explain)

4) How important is knowledge of the Finnish language to the quality of your life in Finland? (If you need more room, continue writing on back of paper.)

Very, to work and contacts mostly

5) Do you think the Finnexia® medication can make a difference in the lives of foreigners in Finland? Why or why not? (If you need more room, continue writing on back of paper.)

It sounds strange, but fun ☺

(Tear paper here) ----------

Finnexia® Survey No. 116

Remove this part of the paper, and keep this during the Finnexia® prize lottery drawing. If you win a prize, you will need to present this paper to claim your prize.

Figure 42. Finnexia survey (2012).

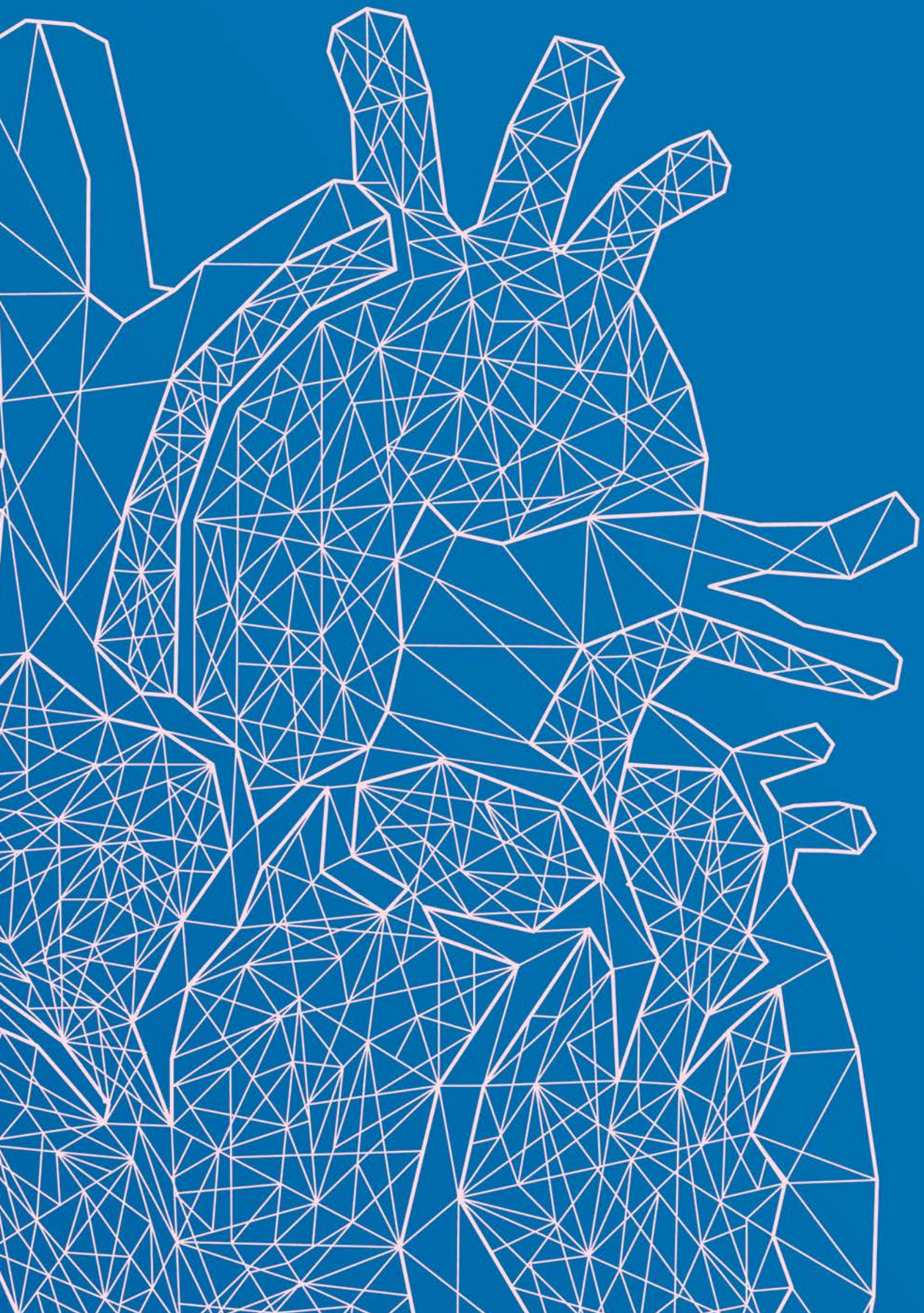
6.5.4 Online Dialogues and Inquiries

In the few months following the Finnexia event, dialogue and speculation around the fictitious medication spread within online communities among Finnish, Russian, Spanish, and Chinese discussion groups. I did not devote significant time to the translation of such data. However, through the general readings provided to me by native speakers of the languages of these online groups, I found the online conversations full of humorous commentary, disbelief, hopeful speculation, and skepticism towards Finnexia. Immediately following the performance, I also received five email messages through the Huxor Pharmaceuticals email address. Three of the emails were from residents of China, asking if they could order Finnexia, with one person requesting a family pack of the medication. Two of the emails I received were from Finnish residents, inquiring about the true nature of the advertisement. I responded to each of the emails with a full explanation of the Finnexia project and its intent as artistic research. After this exchange, I received no further response from these email inquiries.

6.6 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the Finnexia performance event, as it played out within the space of the Helsinki Railway Station in September 2012. I described the physical framework of the performance, selected interviews with audience members, strategies for engaging the public, conversations with performers, and my own personal observations. While this chapter touched on the initial emotional response of the audience, the next chapter explores in greater depth the range of emotional responses of the public audience in the railway station, the responses of performers, and those of some Finnish media publications.

7 BELIEVING IS FEELING



7 Believing is Feeling

In this chapter, I examine the emotive dynamics that emerged from the Finnexia project, and how this emotional dimension might have generated a sense of hope in the Finnexia product. The chapter offers observations, responses, and deep interpretations around the concept of *false hope*,[20] and the emotional outcomes of the Finnexia performance. The chapter opens with a theoretical discussion of affect in terms of potentialities and intensities (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010; Shouse, 2005; Massumi, 2002). Here I also mention the significance of affect in relation to social, psychic, historical, and political forces (Massumi, 2002; Clough, 2007; Rice, 2008; Zembylas, 2014). Focusing on a discussion of affect as potentiality, hope is contextualized as a force operating through a behavior of stickiness and contagion (Ahmed, 2010; Marenko, 2010). The second half of the chapter includes discussion surrounding general patterns of emotions displayed among Finnexia audience members in the Helsinki Railway Station. This is followed by testimonies presented by two different audience members – Jiao, doctoral researcher, and Therese Bogan,[21] an American psychotherapist based in Helsinki. Among the discussion of the various audience emotional reactions, I include my own observations and responses. Within the chapter, I suggest that a contagious quality of affect manifested itself in Finnexia through a spreading of excitement and hope surrounding the possibility of learning Finnish faster.

7.1 Interrelations Between Affect and Emotion

In this discussion, affect and emotion are related, as they form a link between the Finnexia project itself and the reactions among the Finnexia audience members. Affect as phenomenon has entered the discourse of humanities and literature in recent decades as a way to discuss and understand the intersections between social phenomenon and daily experience (Clough, 2007). In addition, this turn to affect moves towards a way of understanding how "psychic elements of relationality are entangled with historical, cultural, social and political norms and conventions" (Zembylas, 2014, p. 8). Furthermore, it

20 *False hope* was the term used by Finnish medical industry representatives in the legal complaint aimed towards Finnexia. This case is discussed further in Chapter 8.

21 Therese Bogan has granted permission to include her real name.

resists an oversimplification of the mechanisms of emotion and affect. According to Rice (2008), the affective turn suggests a "theorization of affect and emotion as intersections of language, desire, power, bodies, social structures, subjectivities, materiality and trauma" (as cited in Zembylas, 2014, p. 8). Historically, as Illouz suggests, the affective components of sociopolitical discussion have often been excluded:

> *Sociologists who asked themselves why people do what they do could talk about competition, when you consume something, or they could talk about class stratification but never about the envy or the humiliation or the shame that can accompany class stratification.* (Illouz, 2010)

Some theorists differentiate clearly between affect and emotion, while some present the two concepts within close proximity. For the purposes of this discussion, I differentiate between affect and emotion in terms of the state in which each exists. Affect is the 'not yet' of being, whereas emotion is a bodily expression of affective energy. Affect emerges as the shimmering possibility of something (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010). In this sense, affect can be understood as the lightning before the thunder, a way in which we sense what is to come, a foreshadowing of expression. Affect can be thought of as the intensity prior to the expression of emotion (Shouse, 2005).

The affective is called upon by some configuration of possibility set forth by the verbal/visual/auditory – for example, in a visual encounter with an advertisement. This, in turn generates some level of intensity from which a feeling is put forth in the body, creating an emotion, which generates a thought or feeling (i.e. doubt, surprise, skepticism, hope) leading to action. Such action might include more closely examining the advertisement, visiting the product website, or simply walking away. The cognitive understanding of the encounter may be led by the affective surge and the accompanying emotional manifestation, and vice versa. Massumi (2002) explains that such an experience is about "opening the body to indeterminacy and focusing on the excess of affect which operates 'beneath' consciousness. This means that we can distinguish the intensity of an image, its affective potential, from its content" (as cited in Featherston, 2010, p. 209). This complex mix of the emotional/cognitive leads to further actions: talking with others about the advert, seeking out the product at the store. I believe that this movement among affect, emotion, and thought was present as a part of the experiential process of Finnexia as a public advertisement. From Massumi's perspective, Finnexia's visual media catered to the public's general predisposition towards trust in the authority of medical advertising and the transformative potential of new scientific technologies.

7.2 Commodity as Emotional Experience

Here, I refer to what Illouz describes as an emotional link between the experience of a commodity and an emotion: "Commodities not only help people express their feelings, but they actually create feelings" (Illouz, interview, 2010). In my view, Illouz's analysis of the connections between emotions and capitalism inform the development and outcomes of Finnexia, in that they address the ways in which the ads themselves call upon our existing core beliefs and desires, while at the same time aiming to generate new desires and beliefs based on an illusion of need. From the perspective of Illouz, commodities in the capitalist system generate desires not only for a particular object (product), but for the image, emotions and identity associated with the product (Illouz, 1997). This relationship between capitalism, commodity, value, and emotion was explored by Marx, to which he applied the term, "the fetishism of commodities." The term refers to the collective belief that it is 'natural' to determine the value of a useful object in monetary terms (Marx, Engels, Mandel, Fowkes, & Fernbach, 1990; Beautiful Trouble, 2018).[22]

What Illouz alludes to in her discussion on commodity and emotion is an undercurrent of emotional and affective movement and power that rides through us and the media we experience daily (Shouse, 2005, p. 2); it undergirds the actions that we carry out at work and play, the political policies that that we read about in the news. It comprises the forces that are not talked about, the silent forces that ultimately drive us to make decisions and to act on them. In the case of Finnexia, this affective and emotional movement might have emerged as a disruption in the consciousness of passers-by with hopes of learning Finnish faster. On a dialogical level, Finnexia may have served as a vehicle through which to seek out, incite, and experience the emotional underpinnings of the foreigner's world in Finland.

To what extent, when creating an advertisement, is such power of affect and subsequent experience of emotions taken into account? When I created the Finnexia advertisement, the conscious decisions during the branding process were made with the intent to recreate the pharmaceutical style of medical ads in Finland. The design choices also stemmed from personal desires of my own – to speak Finnish better and faster, to achieve Finnish citizenship, to make more Finnish friends, to find long-term, stable employ-

22 According to Marx, an object that has been produced through labor generates desirability (or fetishism) as soon as the object enters the marketplace to be exchanged for money. Through this process, the object becomes commodity, and acquires value and a sense of social status (Marx, Engels, Mandel, Fowkes, & Fernbach, 1990).

ment in Finland – and to make this all happen in a seemingly effortless way. The affective potential behind these design choices, in my view, coupled with my own familiarity with the audience's desires, generated the ingredients for the flow of an emotional chain reaction, as I will discuss later in the chapter. Interestingly, this affective flow, and the intensity that arises from it – from the visual-verbal of the advert, to the consciousness of the audience – was something that I did not anticipate as a significant outcome of Finnexia. I underestimated the emotive potential of the pharmaceutical advertisement.

Marenko (2009) discusses the transformation of narratives of the self, based on the intersection between consumers, pharmaceuticals, and the concept of *neuropolitics* as defined by Rose (2007). Neuropolitics, which grew out of developments in neuroscience and psychotropic medications between the 1960s and 1990s, places emphasis on a 'neuromolecular vision' of the brain and nervous system.[23] According to Rose and Abi-Rached (2014), this framework of neuromolecular understanding has influenced areas of life on an individual level, as well as societal discourse on economics, law, marketing, and the treatment of illness. In neuropolitics, then, the following issues become paramount: truth, authority, and subjectivity related to values that govern an individual in daily life.

Marenko examines the potential for 'affect capture' that she claims becomes possible through the triangulation between consumers, pharmaceuticals, and neuropolitics. Framing this discussion, Marenko traces the shift from psychoanalytical to biochemical definitions of illness. In doing so, she leans on Rose's notion of the neuropolitical self (Rose, 2003). The readings from Marenko (2009) and Illouz (2007) address intersections between capitalism, psycho-pharmaceutical discourse, affect, hope, and new narratives constructed out of these relationships. As pointed out by Marenko, the experience of the commodity is no longer in the actuality of itself as an object, but as a feeling, an experience, an identity constructed from the sum of its experiential parts. We view something and choose to act on it even before our conscious awareness of the action. It is in this space that the affect might reside, even before we become cognizant of its presence. According to Leys (2011), our awareness of action, of affect, is manifested only after it (affect) has entered our body, our consciousness. How might this notion of the hope of self-realization as an outcome of affect be relevant in the case of Finnexia?

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23 The concept of 'neuromolecular vision' involves an understanding of the brain in terms of material (synaptic) and mechanical processes based on cellular function (Rose & Abi-Rached, 2014). This new conceptualization also contributed to the trajectory of a 'neuromolecular gaze' intersecting with psychopharmacology and an increased rate of medical drug prescription for the treatment of people diagnosed with mental illness (p.7).

In the Finnexia experience, we may expect immediate improvements in language learning, leading to transformation of our life circumstances. Perhaps, on a more basic level, upon seeing the ad, we can achieve a visualization of a transformed self through which our ideal Finnish cultural experience can be realized. It is Finnexia, in this case, that serves as a conceptual link between the actual and the possible.

7.3 Going Through the (E)motions: A Pattern of Audience Reactions

It was my assumption, before and immediately after the Finnexia show in late September, 2012, that any emotionally laden reactions on the part of the public, would surface suddenly and initially with surprise or confusion, or amusement, and then dissipate as quickly as they had arisen. Although one intent of the project was, indeed, to fool people, I did not expect many people to hold steadfastly to Finnexia's revolutionary claim. Thus, it came as a real surprise to me, to hear detailed accounts of the emotional spectrum experienced by the Finnexia audience. I learned of these audience reactions mainly through the testimonials of the performers and a few audience members, whose stories I explore in this chapter. Before the public presentation of Finnexia, I held very little expectation that a pharmaceutical advert could incite such intense feelings from its audience.

My understanding of audience reactions to Finnexia relies both on my personal interaction with audience members (as described in Chapter 6), a viewing of selected video clips from the performance documentation (discussed in Chapter 4), and interview data gathered from performers and audience members, as explored in this chapter. I should also point out here that logistically, during the Finnexia performance, I purposefully avoided excessive public interaction – partly out of my own hesitancy at that moment, and partly with the aim of preventing what I thought was 'contamination' of the performance with my presence as researcher/observer. In order to gain insight into the overall emotional experience of Finnexia audience members, I interviewed Nadeem, a Finnexia performer who facilitated the survey table in the public performance. In a postperformance interview in September 2012, Nadeem described his observation of a general pattern of reactions from the public audience:

> *There was a pattern of reactions, it seems. An order to the sequence of emotions, generally: First step, the element of surprise … "how can it be?" Second was the element of skepticism: "hmmm…is it really possible?" Third*

> *was this curiosity, and then desire to know more about the product. There was all this technical info, video cameras that led people to believe that it could not just be a 'candid camera' show. In some cases, people just started with skepticism. There was one Finnish teacher who started off with skepticism right away, saying, "How can it happen? No, it cannot happen." There was a guy who came and said to me, "Hmmm, let me check first on the Internet more about this, then we will talk." And walked away. But the majority – 70-80% of people, reacted with the three emotional steps described earlier.* (Nadeem, personal communication, September 24, 2012)

As mentioned earlier, my initial expectations prior to the Finnexia performance anchored around the expectation that a) most people would not believe this to be true, b) if they did find themselves fooled by this, the experience would merely play out as a momentary, fleeting shift of perception, after which all would return to 'normal.' My primary concern continued to be the act of inviting people to this central table of dialogue. In learning of a pattern of emotional reactions, as described by Nadeem, as well as other Finnexia performers, I was surprised at the appearance of such a regular pattern in the emotional display of audience members. My own personal experience with the audience resulted in a broad range of what I witnessed as intense emotional responses ranging from anger to strong desire (as I will describe later in Chapter 8). It seemed that this emotionally oriented aspect of the performance outcomes even overshadowed discussion about the content of the dialogues that occurred during the Finnexia event. I recall only a handful of instances when someone asked me, "So what kind of dialogues emerged from the Finnexia performance?"

7.4 Audience Testimonies

In this section, I discuss and examine the emotional responses of two audience members of the Finnexia performance – Therese Bogan[24] and Jiao. I chose to examine the responses of these two audience members, since these two people offered detailed descriptions of their personal thoughts and emotional responses around the Finnexia advertisement, including a contextualization of their own observations in relation to those people around them within the space of the Finnexia performance (in the case of Jiao), or in their home environment (in the case of Therese). I begin first by examining an

24 Therese Bogan has granted permission to include her real name in the thesis.

article written by Therese about her own experience with the Finnexia performance. She is an American (U.S.-born) psychotherapist who practices in Helsinki. In her description of her response to Finnexia, Therese describes a similar trajectory of emotions as previously articulated in Nadeem's account of his perception of audience reactions.

7.4.1 Therese Bogan's Article "Finnexia®: The Experiment"

On September, 22, 2012, Therese's article appeared online on NewsHub.fi, an English language, Helsinki-based news blog. In this chapter, the article serves as a centerpiece from which the discussion of affect extends. As her personal account implicates, the excitement surrounding Finnexia may speak of people's desire for an easier way to learn Finnish. It speaks to the tinge of desperation often felt by some who find themselves isolated due to a lack of Finnish language skills. What follows is the full text of Therese's article. I include the article in its entirety here, due to its relevance in illustrating a detailed example of an audience member's thought process and emotional response towards the Finnexia advertisement.

Finnexia®: The experiment. Article by Therese Bogan
Published online, September 22, 2012, NewsHub.fi (accessed October 12, 2012).

Finnexia® was released publicly, as an experience, yesterday in Helsinki's West Wing of the main train station. For English speakers or really anyone attempting to integrate into Finnish Culture and learn the Finnish language, Finnexia® was an attraction – or a curiosity, at the very least. I heard about Finnexia® on Facebook through an expat group. When I read about the event, I was immediately fascinated by the science. How could a pill or molecule change the experience of acquiring language in a new country? Of course, that is one of my main concerns, being in Finland for only two short weeks and planning to eventually call this country both my home and the main location for my business.

Anxiety
Then I noticed that this chemical might actually help me with the anxiety associated with acquiring the Finnish language. Really? My rational mind said, "That's impossible and/or simply a sedative." But my greedy-little-corner-cutting-hopeful-heart said, "Oh, maybe I can learn Finnish as an adult without feeling awkward or outcast." Great, click, I committed to the event publicly on Facebook. I had zero care or concern about the validity of the science and I

was open to listening to this company about how they are planning to distribute or share this wonder with the public. In a word, I was enthusiastic! Not that I was sure, and not that I believed that it worked, but I was excited and willing. Which, in my experience, is a really delightful way to feel anxious and it usually gets me to try new things. On top of that, there were really enticing keywords in the science like nicotine, synapse and other scientific words that make me feel hopeful that someone cared enough to take a negative experience (nicotine addiction) and make it work for me.

Event

So, I work with my intelligence for a living by supporting others to find their way in the world, so I just hate admitting that I've been taken in. But, this was a sophisticated event that I was definitely drawn into and I was, as they explained in the event text on Facebook, a part of the language enhancement experience. There is no pill and Finnexia® is an interactive installation art piece. I found this out through my loving, Finnish partner who was stunned into silence when I told him what I did with my day. Me, I was satisfied with my experience of hope and a blooming willingness to take such a pill. My partner, who learnt Finnish the hard way (by starting a school year, in middle school no less), was horrified, and willing only to search the Internet until he found the flaw. He woke me up this morning with the news that it was an installation art piece intended to illicit thought and conversation around the immigrant experience. And I, sadly and reluctantly, turned my disappointment into thoughtful awe.

Science?

What I know from working with people of all ages is that cognition and emotional experience dance an interesting tango in the brain and neurologists are all hot to find the magic bullet that will ease the way. Medication after medication, one modality after another are introduced yearly to all ages of humans attempting to hit a higher mark on their usual scale of thinking, feeling and doing. When I worked with very small children, who were often having a struggle with talking or expressing themselves, their lives would shatter dramatically due to anxiety and social exclusion.

Much of the first year in working with any child who is struggling with language is in getting the other adults and children who love them to CALM down and then organised into a support network for the child who needs to, frankly, work it through the hard way neurologically. That means they need to change both their environment and the internal experience of their environment in order to change their brain function and the direction of their neurological growth.

What? You don't understand what I just said? Oh yes you do, you just don't want to think about it because it is hard and it hurts – and that, my friends, is the rub for any hot young new pharmaceutical drug maker or neurological innovator or immigrant. Our brains are wired to help us forget or numb out to how hard those experiences of change and integration truly are; and we are wired to resist going head-long into that kind of re-programming. But, if we can trick our brains into thinking it is easy, or fun, or accessible through a painless delivery device such as a pill…well, okay, I will try that!

Hope

My experience of the public exhibit of Finnexia® was a mixed bag. I had the plummeting low of realizing that I could not believe that it worked, given my professional and life experience. Then the terrible blow of reality that this dream drug was not real. And, the wondrous high of being in a small hopeful and supportive group of humans, right there in the middle of the train station in Helsinki, all ready to do this 'learn Finnish' and integrate into Finnish society thing together and painlessly. There were people from all over the world, stopping by to pick up a brochure. Many looked hurried or concerned, and it was in the train station, so they were probably unable to stop due to their travels. But, those who did stop and try to get more information were chatting about their shared experience and in my opinion were hopeful or reluctant and battling their hope.

What I'm left with is a real excitement to hear more about how this event unfolds. Finnexia® was at the train station today, 2:00 pm, West Wing. And, they will be in Helsinki's main train station again tomorrow. What are people thinking and feeling about Finnexia®? I can't wait to hear more and welcome your comments here.

Therese Bogan,
Helsinki, September 22, 2012.

My first reaction, after learning of Bogan's article about her experience with Finnexia was one of surprise – even doubt. Upon reading Bogan's article, I immediately interpreted it as slightly satirical. Was this a joke? How could such a highly educated, professional trained in psychotherapy be emotionally swayed by a fictitious advertisement such as Finnexia? As Bogan points out in her article, she found her hope and excitement grounded, in part, through the scientific workings of Finnexia. Bogan states, "On top of that, there were really enticing keywords in the science like nicotine, synapse and other scientific words that make me feel hopeful …" (Bogan, 2012). In the end, I felt as

though I was the one being fooled by the audience's reaction. To me, it was too good to be true – an audience member who actually felt hopeful about the existence of Finnexia. For a short time, I thought that Bogan was somehow inherently playing with performance itself, taking on the role of the expectant audience member – with the intent of turning the tables on the artist

In her article, Bogan touches on many aspects of the Finnexia project, including its scientific authority in the use of medical language, the sense of hope created through viewing the temporary community that had formed in the West Wing of the railway station, where the commercial was situated. I found it interesting that Bogan writes about the initial reaction of skepticism, then excitement, and then a "plummeting low" in realizing that she could not bring herself to believe in Finnexia, given her professional knowledge of the possibilities of psychotherapy/psychotropic medication. However, there still seemed to remain a glimmer of hope in the back of her mind – a hope partly based on her observation of the small community formed in the railway station. Here, I believe, it is the power of affect circulating that creates a temporary community that may instill and carry hope through, however short-lived it may be.

For me, affect here in the work of Finnexia exists in the moving forth, the suggestion of possibility that gives rise to a space for the experience of emotion. It moves in and around the communities created at the performance site, and in the discussion online, resulting from the artwork itself. In this sense, affect acts to a certain degree as a contagion (Marenko, 2010). This occurs in the sense that those who witnessed Finnexia and expressed some reaction (in the public space, online or verbal testimony), then affected *others* who witnessed these reactions. Thus, a chain reaction was created among who experienced Finnexia first-hand, and those who experienced it second-hand, and so forth. As such, hope generates hope for something that has not yet become. Excitement begets excitement. My initial observations of audience reactions to Finnexia were based mostly on the video footage review of interviews with audience members at the dialogue table, as well as a few of my own personal encounters with passersby in the railways station at the performance, during my brief role as a Finnexia salesperson (as I will describe later in Chapter 8). From these sources – the video documentation and direct encounters – it was challenging to know exactly what was going on in people's minds, cognitively and emotionally. To me, the reading of emotions varied from individual to individual, and it was only after I spoke with Nadeem that I learned of the pattern of emotions expressed among audience members in reaction to Finnexia. Then again, all of this is speculative, since we cannot really know what is going through another's mind. The most salient accounts I received were from Jiao and Therese.

Perhaps my own *disbelief* towards the audience's profound emotional reactions (particularly that of Therese) reveals my own prejudices about who can experience emotion in certain situations. The depth of the audience's emotional experience may also verify the realness created by Finnexia – the 'truth-value' of it (Lambert-Beatty, 2009). It becomes part of the dialogue of the art. The art comes full circle. The scope of impact of an intervention can extend beyond the local. This is something revealed to me through the art practice of this research.

In spring 2016, I spoke with Therese Bogan in a follow-up interview about her experience with Finnexia, and asked her about the motivations behind the article she wrote for NewsHub in 2012. At the start of the interview, Bogan confessed that she had mentally blocked out the Finnexia experience from her mind, up until the point at which I contacted her about an interview (Bogan, personal communication, March 7, 2016). She said that this is what happens with our negative experiences – we tend to block them out, if they are extremely disturbing. So it was interesting to her that she did not remember the Finnexia encounter, until my invitation opened up the memory again, and she was able to revisit this experience. In the interview, Bogan mentioned that in 2012, after finding out about the fictitious nature of Finnexia, her Finnish-American husband remarked that "you just don't fool with people's hope that way." Interestingly, Bogan's husband, after learning of the fake nature of Finnexia, did not reveal this to his wife until the morning after the discovery, because he wanted to see if her hope and belief in Finnexia would fuel her enthusiasm towards her study of the Finnish language. Bogan explains that cognitive security and language acquisition go hand in hand. If work, friendship, and home environment form a strong emotional support network for language learning, then there is a strong force for coupling belief and hope with learning. Of the non-Finnish people that Bogan counsels, only 1% or 2% become fluent in the Finnish language.

According to Bogan, we need places of freedom (in public space) to play freely with our core beliefs. Play occurs between a place of consciousness and unconsciousness. Humility, belief, compassion, and empathy are valued places within the core of our psyche where we can go back and forth in a conscious manner. We need art, activism, and performance as a space where people can play with these states of consciousness, with their core beliefs, and with suspension of disbelief. Whether people choose to enter that space of play, is another issue (Bogan, personal communication, March 7, 2016).

7.4.2 Interview with Jiao

In September-October 2012, I interviewed Jiao, an audience member and doctoral researcher. Jiao's account of her internal emotional response traces, in some ways, the affective paths described earlier in this chapter by Therese Bogan and Nadeem. For Jiao, it was skepticism and curiosity that preceded a sense of *hope* in Finnexia. Jiao also noted that before learning of the fictitious nature of Finnexia, she even had all the chapters of her doctoral thesis outlined in her mind, based on the clinical trial results of Finnexia. Jiao, though, in my view, in this case represents an elite group of the Finnexia audience (as does Bogan), as one who comes from an academically well-educated background.

I approached the interview with Jiao, holding to the assumption (as with the case of Therese) that she would describe her emotional response to Finnexia as one of sustained, unshakeable disbelief and hard skepticism, given her intellectual background. I expected no confession of having experienced some sort of dramatically emotional internal eruption. Here, I made the assumption (based on stereotypical images in my own mind) that highly educated people cannot be easily emotionally swayed, or that they might not be 'prone' to systems of socially constructed belief. In an interview after the Finnexia performance, Jiao shared some of her thoughts on the notion of hope created by the Finnexia performance, as well as parallels between her response compared with that of Therese:

Jiao: And there was one thing brought up in my writing – there is a sense of hope created when you see a bunch of strangers there, so willing to learn. Not just being suspicious, not just having doubts about the medication. They tend to open up. And for whatever reason, they came to a point where they were willing to share their experiences, not only to the organizers, but also to the strangers, to the people to happened to drop by. Or observed. So there is this sense of community. But maybe not. To me, a community requires more timespan, a more shared practice. I guess what that brings for me, is a critical look at language and the discourse and practice of that, and aspects of what kind of hope it brings, what kind of access it brings to people. What kind of community can be derived from such practices. I guess it helped me to understand what you meant by the idea that we are both actors and audience.

Jiao: I guess I'm thinking about agency, power and how we understand that – once we begin to understand that we are both subject and object

of our own doings. This is something I'm still trying to figure out. But I think the hope is something I tend to overlook all the time. I don't want it to be exclusively overly critical of language-learning practices because we do need it. I guess I'm just trying to explore neutralness behind it the kind of invisibilities that are underlying the concept of language learning and in terms of discourse, I tend to also forget that in terms of living in a society where the mother tongue is not your mother tongue, not even your second or third language – then the practicalities play a huge part in terms of everyday living. This is something I wanted to tell you today.

Jiao: Because she [Therese Bogan] really points this out in a nice way. She describes this in her blog article about Finnexia, cameras, etc.). I don't know if you read this.

Lisa (myself): Yes, she really experienced a rollercoaster of emotions in reaction to the commercial. And I'm wondering how much of what she wrote (about the emotional rollercoaster) reflects the greater scope of reaction from the audience.

Jiao: For me, I kind of felt her when I was reading her [Bogan's] article. Yeah. I told you I came with a really suspicious, critical attitude. But then, I became really happy, excited about the whole thing – when I was talking with Nick at the dialogue table. One guy there was asked if he would take Finnexia, and he said that he wouldn't take the medicine, but that he would share his thoughts about the language – willingly. He said he just needed to overcome his anxieties in learning the language. "If I can learn English and other languages, then why not Finnish?" So he was not willing to take Finnexia, but he was willing to talk. And also I saw this other guy, he seemed really concerned. And when you see everyone around – for me it was somehow a surprisingly pleasant experience – for the first time, actually talking aloud with a lot of people. It was not like I would go and interview someone about "how do you feel about language learning," but it came so spontaneously, with everyone (Jiao, personal communication, October 7, 2012).

Jiao: I almost felt like part of a community. It was a really strange feeling. When I was reading your paper, I think I also wrote here, that it opened up kind of a 'sphere for public dialogue' which was something I enjoyed very much.

(Jiao, personal communication, October 7, 2012).

In listening to this audio interview with Jiao, I was, frankly, glad to hear of her perception of such a sphere for public dialogue. This is what I had hoped for. I was not sure to what degree the dialogues would occur in the performance.

In the postperformance evaluation of Finnexia (with my academic supervisors) there was discussion about the community created around the dialogue table. Most of the time was spent, however, on the perception (from the professors) that there was not much revelation during the Finnexia performance regarding the medicalization aspect and the satire. In the discussion with Jiao, it seems that a sense of hope for her is constructed through her experience not only of encountering the concept of Finnexia as a transformative medication but also through her participation in and momentary contribution to the small community formed in the timeframe of the public performance.

7.5 The Anatomy of Hope

In my view, there appeared to be two general kinds of hope that emerged from the Finnexia experience. In the first model, hope is generated from a defining of potentialities and possibilities, while at the same time, being "something that does not, in spite of it all, make peace with the existing world" (Bloch, 1998, p. 341). This type of hope I saw forming in those audience members who saw Finnexia as a product to divert them from some sort of imminent hardship for foreigners in Finnish culture, based on language knowledge or lack thereof. For those experiencing this form of hope, Finnexia appears as a type of savior, in a sense, a force offering a new and wonderful solution – diverting them from a potentially disastrous experience involving employment difficulties and emotional alienation. The second manifestation of hope writes itself as a certain type of "mutuality based on a trust for life" (Anderson, 2006, p. 749). In this scenario, the sense of hope that emerges is, in part generated out of an encounter with Finnexia, but its expectation is not entirely dependent on the Finnexia product for a positive outcome. Rather, the person feels a (re)newed sense of hope in their own capabilities in language learning. These feelings of confidence form independently, but also in part from knowledge of the product. An example of this *becoming into hope* can be seen in the interview with Jiao (as described earlier in this chapter) in which she recounts her experience observing a young man's reaction at the Finnexia discussion table:

> *One guy there was asked if he would take Finnexia, and he said that he wouldn't take the medicine, but that he would share his thoughts about the*

> *language – willingly. He said he just needed to overcome his anxieties in learning the language. "If I can learn English and other languages, then why not Finnish?" So he was not willing to take Finnexia, but he was willing to talk.* (Jiao, personal communication, October 7, 2012)

Here, it seems that hope emerges from emotions of surprise, skepticism, excitement. The hope, in some cases, sustains itself, as it may have in the case of people who allegedly went to local pharmacies to inquire about Finnexia. On the other hand, hope may have suddenly ignited and then quickly been extinguished by overarching doubts in the observer's mind. Hope may have been squashed through the revelation (via Google search) of the artistic intent of Finnexia. I am curious to know if any audience members maintained a sense of hope, even after learning of its fictitious nature.

I return now to my initial observation at the start of this chapter – my surprise at the emotional response of the audience, and equal surprise when I learned of the article written by the therapist/audience member Therese Bogan – who, as she explained in her article, seemed to be affected in such a profound, internal way. It is this *deep, internal* nature of the emotional response to Finnexia that I found quite unexpected. I was also intrigued by Jiao's personal response – the heartfelt description of her thoughts, and how she felt towards Finnexia. In observing the audience's response to Finnexia, I see an emerging relationship between bodies, affect, and the visual, neuro-psycho-geography of people's interaction with medical advertisements. In this lies the concept of emotional capitalism (Illouz, 2007), in that the product itself offers us an emotional state that we desire, a drawing and activation of the beliefs and desires within our life narrative.

False hope, it seems, may be predicated on the belief that we can achieve a level of happiness through obtaining the product. When we realize that the intended feeling is not achieved with the object, then we are disappointed. In this case, is there any room for hope to develop into something solid, congealing into a knowledge that the anticipated joy will never come? The desire for happiness is based on the belief that by the having *of* that object, I will be happy. If I continually strive to obtain that object, I can look forward to the idea of achieving that happiness. This notion of having something and being happy *because* of it, is at the core of our capitalistic striving. According to Eva Illouz, commodities may create feelings and a desire for the states of emotion conveyed in the advertisement (Illouz, 2007).

In this sense, we are buying a *feeling*, experience, and everything promised by the object. We become attached to the feelings, the state of mind promised by the object and associated with it, such that the object (commodity) itself becomes irrelevant to the equation. For most of the audience of

Finnexia, their experience may not have led them to a sense of belief, but to false hope – a sense of *wanting* to believe. At the same, the audience may have known deep down, that Finnexia did not exist. I speculate that for some audience members, this false hope may have taken the form of a strong *desire* to believe – and a feeling that somehow through their growing belief, this revolutionary new medicine could become a reality.

Here I turn to the cultural implications of false hope and emotional experience within the context of Nordic culture. If hope is seen here as an object of skepticism, might anger appear as a side effect? During the Finnexia performance, for example, the angry response from a Finnish schoolteacher (which I describe in detail in Chapter 8), may indicate a desire within Finnish culture to protect others from misinformation, of maintaining honesty in the public realm (Koski, personal communication, May 11 , 2016). This response of anger as an expression towards 'protecting the public' may come into play in several other cases of audience responses to Finnexia, as discussed further in Chapter 8. Might hope, in the case of the Finnish public, be an element that emerges from the tensions between knowing and not knowing, from the border between emotions and the intellect? According to Varto, the advertising of Finnexia may have acted as an agent of hope, intervening into the "bourgeois coldness of Finnish culture" (Varto, personal communications, April 4, 2016).

7.6 Summary

In this chapter, I explored the dynamic of emotional reactions to Finnexia, focusing on one interview with a performer and two personal testimonies by audience members of the live performance in the Helsinki Railway Station. Through this discussion, I interpreted how the emergence of hope in the efficacy of Finnexia manifested in various ways within the audience members, depending on their emotional starting points (fear versus general self-confidence). The movement of hope among audience members was seen to travel in a 'sticky' manner, akin to that of a contagion. The emergence of such (false) hope in the context of a fictitious advertisement raises questions about the cultural perception of the audience members, their desires towards self-realization, and communal desires to protect the public good. The following chapter examines in more detail the emotional responses and ethical implications of select performers, including my own emotional response to becoming a performer within Finnexia. The chapter addresses the legal and ethical issues raised by a complaint filed by the Finnish Medicines Agency in response to the Finnexia website, and outcomes of the performance.

8 ETHICAL AND LEGAL OUTCOMES OF FINNEXIA

8 Ethical and Legal Outcomes of Finnexia

This chapter examines the ethical and legal implications surrounding Finnexia, which I became more acutely aware of at certain points during and after its public performance in the Helsinki Railway Station in September and October 2012. The discussion begins by looking at the experiences of the Finnexia performers (mine included), and the range of perspectives these offered relating to their interactions with the audience – from discomfort, skepticism, concern, and joy. I present these here as a way of understanding the ethical undercurrents of the relational aspects of Finnexia, between performers and audience. Following this overview of the performers' ethical considerations and emotional experiences, I give a brief description of a series of responses from with Finnish media entities, in the form of what I perceived as ethical warnings surrounding Finnexia.

The chapter culminates with a discussion of an event that, for me, represented the emotional and ethical epicenter of Finnexia – a legal complaint filed by the Finnish Medicines Agency (Fimea), towards Aalto University in October of 2012. The complaint concerned issues of medical representation surrounding the Finnexia website advertisement. Here, I examine the issues raised by Fimea's complaint, particularly in terms of what a Fimea representative described as 'false hope' generated through Finnexia's alleged misrepresentation of medicine and violation of consumer protection laws. In this chapter, I articulate my own position in response to Fimea's concerns, through the lens of Bakhtin's notion of *answerability* (responsibility). In this discussion, I refer to Caliskan's concept of how a merging of Bakhtin's approach to ethics and aesthetics may offer a way to understand the concept of dialogism. In an attempt to better understand the relationship between the artistic desires and considerations of the public audience, I extend Caliskan's proposal to Bakhtin's notion of answerability. Through this exploration, I posit that, as an artist, one must consider all of the ethical aspects of the art during production – through the process of making aesthetic decisions. At the same time, one must work to preserve the original intent of the artwork. Ultimately, then, how do we find a balance between pragmatism and radicality in art? What is the responsibility of the artist-researcher to this end?

Questions will be posed in this chapter, and then addressed at the end of the chapter and revisited at the end of the dissertation. The intent here is not to propose a definitive template for ethical strategy in performative, socially engaged art. Rather, this discussion aims to draw out a line of inquiry based on the concerns raised by interactions with local media sources, and within

the legal dialogue of the Fimea case. I then consider my own position as artist in this process, in part through Bakhtin's notions of dialogue, aesthetics, and ethics. Later in the chapter I discuss the implications of the outcomes of the Fimea case in terms of what 'false hope' might mean in the context of artistic research.

8.1 The Discomfort of 'Selling' Finnexia

In September, 2012, during the three days of the Finnexia performance in Helsinki Railway Station, my main concern was to maintain the corporate facade of the Finnexia medical advertisement, as a way to invite people into the public space and share their personal stories about residing in Finland as a foreigner and dealing with the Finnish language. In these moments of the performance, I did not deeply consider how the performers might feel about telling people about Finnexia and keeping up the commercial facade. At that time, my mind was focused on the aim of drawing in people to the event. Before staging the event, I had considered the performative logistics of 'selling' Finnexia, although primarily from the standpoint of ethical considerations towards the audience – not so much in terms of the perspective of the performers, and how they might feel in their role as a sales person addressing the public. This point was made quite clear to me, when one of the performers, out of his feelings of discomfort in 'selling' Finnexia to the public audience, made the decision to leave his role as sales person in the performance. The performer here is referred to as 'Andrew.' In the late afternoon of Friday, September 21, 2012, on the second day of the Finnexia show, I received an email from Andrew, stating his thoughts and feelings about his experience and the Finnexia project.

Subject: Finnexia performance tomorrow: Puzzled.
Sender: Andrew – Finnexia performer
Sent: Friday, September 21, 2012 5:50 PM
To: Erdman Lisa
Cc: Anneli

Hey Lisa

I've been thinking about this whole Finnexia performance, and I'm a bit puzzled. As we discussed yesterday the sales role was quite challenging at times. 50% of the time it was a matter of short interesting anecdotes and sending people on to dicussion table and surveys etc., 25% was

straight rejections / pure disbelief and the last 25% was real nice people that was excited and would grab flyers for their friends etc.

What is puzzling me is mainly the last 25% – I found it really hard to uphold the illusion, as I'm having difficulties seeing how they are gonna have any kind sort of resolution / interesting experience with Finnexia. For this particular group I feel it's a bit like making a set-up that is justified by a payoff, that is unlikely to come.

To me this kind of project is basically a big calculation. It will be a success if the vast majority of audience involved will have an interesting/reflective/positive experience with the intervention. Every time someone has a bad experience (such as an enthusiastic audience member getting a flyer for his/her best friend, and eventually letting the person down with no understanding why it's not possible to get hold of this wonderful Finnexia) I feel like it's failing. At least it needs to be justified by other people getting it / having a positive experience with sharing their thoughts on integration / reflecting on pill-popping etc.

I do believe the project has its value – to me it's in the discussions in the unique "Finnexia space" created. The "push" selling is basically justified by the "pull" discussions at the table (and elsewhere).

I'm very much in doubt about my performative involvement with the project. In one sense, it's very interesting to have these kind of reflections sparked. In another sense, I'm not sure if I feel good about it. It would really be great if you had someone else on standby that would like to do an extra shift tomorrow.

I hope you understand my motivation and thoughts. While I'm very unsure of my own desire to do any further performance, I am sure that something interesting will come out of the project. I would still very much like to do my interview on Tuesday, but like I explained, after thinking this over, I can't really see myself selling more.

It's been surprising for me that I feel this way, I would have thought that it wouldn't have bothered me at all. I guess these precious realisations come with trying new stuff out. Hope it's not gonna be a problem to find someone to fill in.

Best, Andrew

After reading Andrew's email, I experienced a variety of emotions – disappointment, concern, guilt, and worry. At the same time, I appreciated Andrew's candid, thoughtful message that openly and respectfully expressed his concerns. In particular, I found the last part of Andrew's message interesting, where he describes his feeling of surprise towards the discomfort he experienced a Finnexia performer. I responded to Andrew's email with an acknowledgement of his concerns, and a reiteration of the project's fundamental goal:

RE: Finnexia performance tomorrow: Puzzled.
Sender: Erdman Lisa
Sent: Saturday, September 22, 2012 3:40 AM
To: Andrew

Hi, Andrew.

Thanks for being part of this performance. The questions you've posed and your observations have been quite valuable to me in this process, and I hope we can continue a dialogue about this.

I understand your feelings towards certain aspects of interacting with the audience in the project. And yes, the commercial "push" ultimately serves as a means to bring people into the Finnexia discussion in the center table, hopefully leading to a more reflective and meaningful experience. As I mentioned earlier on the phone, part of the experience of the audience will inevitably be marginal and confusing, especially to those who only encounter the commercial pitch/flyer. Though even on that level, the value to me is in the thought process that may take place after this fleeting moment of commercial encounter – the wonder, the inquiry, is in itself the value there, even if it resolves into disappointment.

I understand the reasoning behind your decision to withdraw as a performer in the show, and respect your feelings in relation to this. However, I'm disappointed to not have you continue, since your participation is an important component to this project. Your absence will also pose some difficulty tomorrow, and require some reorganization.

I look forward to continuing our discussion during the scheduled interview time early in the week. See you then.

Best, Lisa

Following this email exchange, I had little time to reflect on the many potential implications of Andrew's message. What I chose to focus on at that moment was finding a performer to replace him in the next day's performance. After making a round of phone calls and a sending a flurry of Facebook messages that evening, with no success of finding someone to commit to Andrew's Finnexia sales shift, I realized that I would need to take the role myself. This proved to be a pivotal moment for me as artist/researcher in this project, since it meant shifting from my role of observer/director to one of actor/participant in the Finnexia performance. At this prospect, I felt anticipation, excitement, and fear. To me, the idea of moving from my safe, objective space on the margins of interaction towards the epicenter of the Finnexia sales arena appeared daunting – particularly after hearing Andrew's account of this interactions with the "25%" of audience members who appeared hopeful about Finnexia. I was soon to experience the sense of discomfort that Andrew had alluded to in his email message.

8.2 My Personal Experience as a Finnexia Salesperson

On the morning of Saturday, September 22, the third and final day of the Finnexia performance, wearing a Finnexia T-shirt, I entered the Helsinki Railway Station with nervous excitement. After presenting a five-minute sales pitch for Finnexia over a microphone, I began handing out sales brochures to passerby, all the while smiling and nodding. This part of the performance came naturally to me, as it was similar in structure to other public performances I had carried out in previous years. Later in the morning, however, I began to experience more personal and emotively powerful face-to-face encounters with audience members.

That morning, I greeted a small group of Belgian exchange students. They initially inquired about the chemical components of Finnexia. The group of young men came back at different points during the day, stating with a smile, that we (the Finnexia sales people) were doing a good job of presenting this 'joke.' At one point, I called upon Saana, a Finnexia performer, to help me uphold the pharmaceutical image in this situation. I felt uneasy talking with the group of students – and slightly intimidated by their sharply skeptical and sarcastic attitude. Saana then walked into the conversation. Calmly, enthusiastically, and with a smile, she described to the group of students the clinical trial results of Finnexia, without a pause in her delivery, and asked them if they had questions. They responded with a silent, though clearly nervous smile. The next day, the Belgian students returned to ask me if I would ac-

company them to the local pharmacy to ask for the Finnexia medication. I could see what they were getting at. In this case, I explained that as a Finnexia sales representative, I was required to stay here at the commercial site. I mentioned that if they could not find it at the pharmacy, they could try asking for the medication at Yliopiston Apteekki (a large Finnish pharmacy chain). This statement left my mouth as form of improvisation around the Finnexia script. At that point during the performance, I did not believe that anyone would actually physically go to visit a pharmacy to seek out Finnexia.

Another encounter that remains clear in my memory involved a Finnish school teacher who came and asked about the chemical makeup of the pills. In response to her inquiry, I showed her the package insert of the pill box, a small piece of paper which displayed dosage instructions and a diagram showing the molecular structure of the pill's substrate – magnesium stearate and cellulose (inert chemical substances that typically constitute placebo pills). The woman looked closely at the paper, then exclaimed, "this can't be – this pill is *nothing*!" As calmly and respectfully as I could, I answered the her by saying, "Well, this is what's in the pills. If you'd like to learn more, just visit our website." During my explanation, I did not verbally reveal that the pills were specifically placebos, nor did I mention that this project was being done in an artistic context. The woman furiously scribbled some notes down on a pad of paper, and stormed off. This situation rendered me shocked and laced with feelings of guilt.

I felt as though I was about to get into some real trouble as a result of this. My only recourse at the time, it seemed, was to go through the motions of the performance script, thinking that somehow, the boundaries of the script would keep me safe and maintain the purpose of the research goal. When recounting the story to an Aalto professor in the post-Finnexia performance evaluation seminar, she mentioned that the woman probably thought I was trying to sell placebos to the public.

My third emotionally and ethically critical encounter as a sales person occurred during one of the Finnexia lottery prize drawings. On each day of the Finnexia performance, a box of the Finnexia pills was offered as a free giveaway, through a prize drawing lottery. Audience members were eligible for the prize drawing if they filled out a Finnexia survey form asking questions about their experience in Finland and learning the Finnish language. During one of the prize drawing events, I happened to be in the role of a Finnexia sales person announcing that day's winner of the prize As I announced the winning number through a microphone, a young man of about twenty years of age tentatively emerged from the audience members standing around the performance area. I congratulated the young man, while enthusiastically handing him the Finnexia bottle of pills. I asked the young man

where he was from and what brought him to Finland. He explained that he was a student in Finland, originally from Estonia. The man carefully accepted the box of Finnexia pills, his gaze shifting intently to the package. Observing his face, I sensed a feeling of urgency and eagerness accompanied by subtle sense of excitement spreading across his forehead, in the form of a thin film of perspiration. At that moment, I explained to the student that, before taking the pills, it was very important to read the package insert (see figure below) – for dosage instructions. I mentioned this to him, not only as part of the standard Finnexia sales performance, but also as my sincere attempt at connecting with this young man regarding the artistic intent of the project – as a way to reveal the fictive nature of it.

If the young man did read the package insert, he might see that the pills are really placebos (fake pills), constituted of inert substrates of magnesium stearate and cellulose. I also asked the young man to contact Huxor Pharma before taking the pills, at info@huxor.fi. Email messages sent to this address would be forwarded to my personal email address. If he did contact Huxor, I would then respond to his email message with an explanation of the Finnexia project as artistic research. Both of these requests – to read the Finnexia pill bottle insert and to establish email contact – were, in my mind, urgent calls to this young man to connect with me so that I could reveal Finnexia for what it was. On another level, I wanted the man to contact me so that I could be relieved of the guilt and concern I felt surrounding the likelihood that he would eagerly to run off to try the pills – only to be disappointed. To my knowledge, the student from Estonia who left with his prize of the Finnexia pills never contacted Huxor Pharma, nor do I know if he ever read the Finnexia patient pamphlet insert, or if he ever tried taking the pills. It is not known whether or not he eventually discovered the real context of the project.

During the day that I experienced as a Finnexia salesperson, I also witnessed the phenomenon of the tendency for a fabrication to grow, and thus to require the production of further fabrication. This occurred, from what I noticed on several accounts, especially when people asked about the pricing (which I had not considered previously, since I did not expect anyone to really want to buy it). A few Finnexia sales people asked me during the show what to say. This tendency for the lie to 'grow' also occurred when people asked where to find the Finnexia product. At that point I encouraged the Finnexia sales people to direct audience members to local pharmacy, or *apteekki*, (in Finnish). At a certain point it become unclear as to where the motivating force for the expansion of the lie was originating – from the audience or the performers.

Perhaps my own belief in Finnexia, though thoroughly embedded in the materiality of the art production, was not strong enough to carry me through

a professionally convincing sales interaction with audience members. At one point does one's belief in a product, or in anything, for that matter, become challenged? In the case of Finnexia, my threshold point was met in situations in which I was confronted by audience members with sarcastic skepticism or sincere eagerness to use the product. In an interview with Finnexia performer Saana (October, 2012), I speak of my own role in the Finnexia performance, and the close encounters with audience members. Here I reflect on how this experience helped me to understand Andrew's position concerns:

Lisa (myself): And then at that point I started to get that sense of what it's like to see people hopeful about this product. I could understand how Andrew was feeling, lying to people. I mean, it was fun to a certain extent, but then there were these people that were so adamant about getting this medication. I felt the need to tell them to send an email to Huxor Pharmaceuticals – so I could explain the truth. But those people didn't. They didn't contact us. Then I felt worse because I thought I was so specific about the importance of sending that email message to the Huxor Pharma company – and they didn't respond. I felt that I failed to offer them the truth through this possible entry point.

But then I wonder – whatever happened to them? Did they eventually find out it wasn't real? Did they actually try taking the pills, or not? Did they tell friends or family about it? There are these unresolved threads in a way that worry me, but that's part of the whole process. I think that these unresolved threads of discussion and the internal inquiry in the audience's mind was the point of his [Andrew's] concern. And he talked about this on Monday. He mentioned that felt like he failed, that the project failed because of the 25% of people he felt really expressed a need for the medication, and that those people maybe never found out it wasn't real. So for him, this unresolved quality was quite a problematic thing. (Erdman, October 2, 2012)

In a postperformance interview, Andrew, the Finnexia salesperson who chose to step down from his position, elaborated on his concern and discomfort with the uncertainty surrounding the encounters with those audience members at the Finnexia performance who seemed to be on the verge of believing Finnexia to be real, particularly those in the audience who took home a box of the Finnexia pills. The following is an excerpt from the interview involving Andy, Sini (a Finnexia sales performer), and myself, in September 2012:

Lisa (myself): The paper in the Finnexia pill box describes the molecular structure of the medication. It states that the pill is a placebo with no active ingredients (Figure 43). But of course, some people may not be familiar with the placebo concept. I told him [the Estonian student] to contact me via the Huxor email address before starting the medication. He hasn't contacted me yet, but if he does, then I will respond by explaining the artistic research behind Finnexia.

Andrew: … but what if he doesn't contact you? I mean what if he doesn't read the paper – just looks at it and says, "this looks great." I mean, this is exactly the kind of reservation I have with [Finnexia]. I mean, this could also definitely work, I'm not saying it can't. But …

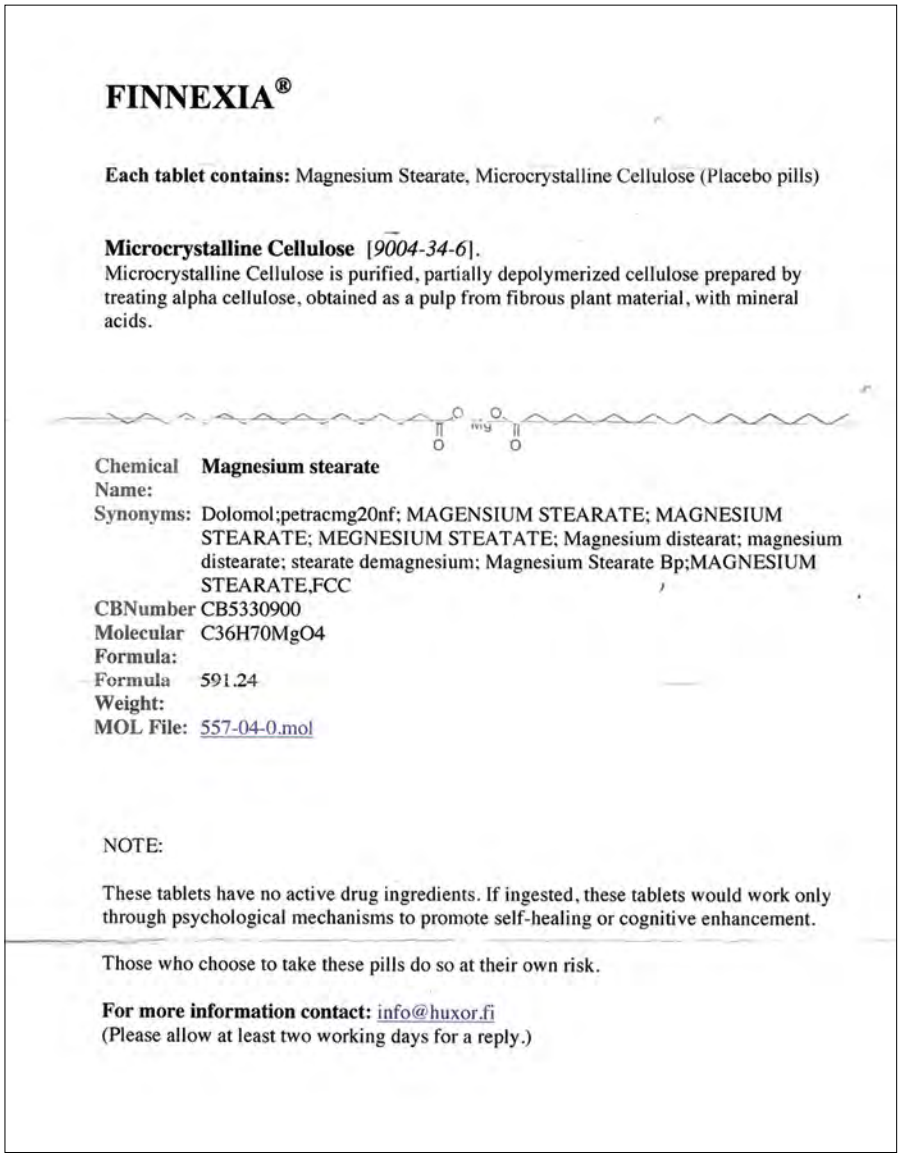
Sini: I have read in a medical magazine about the placebo effect, explaining that studies indicate that placebos have an effect. It discusses the ethics involved in giving out placebos in medical trials. The article is all in Finnish, however. I can translate it for you [laughter].

Lisa: I've read articles about placebos having an effect even when people KNOW that they are placebos … working on some sort of unconscious level to heal.

Andrew: I mean, that's interesting, but still, that's a very scientific context. What if that guy (from Estonia) still takes the pill and does learn Finnish better? That would be crazy! And what if he doesn't learn after taking the pill? Happy to buy more pills? Will he be frustrated? But then would he have any refection about the medical industry? Maybe about language learning? But about medicalization? What's the outcome?

Lisa: Well, maybe that is the outcome. I think with any kind of research, but especially artistic research, there is not going to be an expected resolution for every avenue that occurs. I think it's unrealistic to say this. With the pills, I could have told them it was fake after I gave the pill bottles out at the prize drawings. I did offer options, to let people know about the research – through the chance to contact Huxor via email, to read the paper inside the Finnexia box, and for some – inviting them to postperformance interview, etc. But as you said, there's no guarantee that people will act on that or have a reflective, thoughtful resolution from the event.

Andrew: Of course you can't guarantee these things. But, I think you should at least try to optimize it. Like you said there is lack of control in artistic research, but at the same time you should look at what you want, and how to optimize that.
(Andrew and Sini, personal communication, September 24, 2012)



FINNEXIA®

Each tablet contains: Magnesium Stearate, Microcrystalline Cellulose (Placebo pills)

Microcrystalline Cellulose [*9004-34-6*].
Microcrystalline Cellulose is purified, partially depolymerized cellulose prepared by treating alpha cellulose, obtained as a pulp from fibrous plant material, with mineral acids.

Chemical Name: **Magnesium stearate**
Synonyms: Dolomol;petracmg20nf; MAGENSIUM STEARATE; MAGNESIUM STEARATE; MEGNESIUM STEATATE; Magnesium distearat; magnesium distearate; stearate demagnesium; Magnesium Stearate Bp;MAGNESIUM STEARATE,FCC
CBNumber CB5330900
Molecular Formula: C36H70MgO4
Formula Weight: 591.24
MOL File: 557-04-0.mol

NOTE:

These tablets have no active drug ingredients. If ingested, these tablets would work only through psychological mechanisms to promote self-healing or cognitive enhancement.

Those who choose to take these pills do so at their own risk.

For more information contact: info@huxor.fi
(Please allow at least two working days for a reply.)

Figure 43. Finnexia package insert. (2012). This information insert was included in the boxes of Finnexia pills that were given away as a prize to three audience members.

8.3 The Joy of Lying

After the Finnexia performance I interviewed Saana, one of the Finnexia performers who facilitated the dialogue table. She mentioned that personally she did not experience any ethical dilemma in the playing out of 'false hope' in Finnexia. For Saana, it seemed, the performative framework of taking on the role of a pharmaceutical salesperson *as an actor* was key in allowing her to become (joyfully) submersed in the role and to come to believe in the product herself.

Saana: Yeah … I didn't feel any 'moral pain' in my heart. Of course, it was so surprising in how much people wanted this to exist. And I felt like I was excited. about that … [laughter] … about introducing this hoax. Because I felt, in my heart, like it connected us to important issues. Important issues about integration, about support, and … community … and language in it. And of course, yeah I'm sad that there is no such thing. But I really sort of stood behind the attempt to raise discussion. And I thought it was so interesting, this illusionary world which could be – but is not. And could it be … [laughter]. So I always defend those kind of illusions also. I feel they are important.

Lisa: I think you did a very nice job of being a sales person, and really owning the medical information behind the product.

Saana: Yeah I really enjoyed that. I'm surprised how much I enjoyed that sales representative role. I could really stand behind the product. And felt that because I was in it as an actor, I could take that role. So it was just purely fun. And I thought, it always must be very hard … to be a sales representative – for anything.

Lisa: Yes, I agree. Because the way, I see it, [as a sales person] you have to believe in the product – in the thing you are explaining to people, in way.

Saana: … Yeah, you have to be a part of that system. But I don't believe in that system. So it was fun, to do it without having those system beliefs. I felt I could believe in this illusionary product.

Lisa: … I don't know how clear that [medical satire] became, but for me, maybe it wasn't so necessary that people understand that statement, I

think it was there as a kind of undercurrent. For me, that part was the self-expressive aspect of the art – as conceptual art.

Saana: Yeah, yeah … and I so felt connected to that [medical satire], and was sort of, very aware of this during this performance … and of how much I enjoyed lying to people. Because I really stood behind this. It was never in my mind that I might reveal the truth … and I told people that this medicine was in the pharmacies, and that you need to ask for it. And I felt that this 'undercurrent' is something I connect to … this satirical world of medicalization and selling medicines. (Saana, personal communication, October 2, 2012)

In my view, the opinions and feedback of Andrew and Saana demonstrate two ends of an experiential spectrum, with strong discomfort on one end (represented by Andrew's story) and on the other end enjoyment (represented by Saana's story). My own experience as a performer in Finnexia seemed to fall somewhere between these two points.

8.4 Warning Signs

I found myself surprised by the dynamically emotive response to Finnexia. In my view, the nature of this reaction is linked with the ethical implications of false hope, as discussed later in this chapter. Based on feedback from performers and some audience members, there was more possibility to fool the audience than I originally thought. In my mind, the experience of being fooled seemed such an intellectually based experience, something momentary and fleeting, that people would most likely see and leave lightly. However, as the project unfolded, I could see more clearly how a variety and depth of reaction was possible in people – and not just during the public performance, but afterwards as well – online, offline, etc. What follows in this section is a brief description of interactions with two different Helsinki media organizations that occurred between September 21 and October 25, 2012, concerning the issue of liability and ethics in the presentation of Finnexia.

8.4.1 Response from a Facebook Group

In September 2012, I posted an invitation to the Finnexia performance on the Facebook group, 'Lost in Translation.' The online group is meant to join Finns and non-Finns together. Soon after, I received a message from the group's administrator that the Finnexia post would be removed. Subsequently, the group's admin posted a warning to the group, stating that they should be wary of spammers and ads for fake products. I also received a (publicly posted) message from the admin, apologizing for the removal of the Finnexia post, but also stating why she was removing it, explaining that from an ethical perspective she saw it as a harmful product, and did not believe in this 'miracle drug.' Furthermore, the admin stated that, in her view, pharmaceutical companies were using the public at large as an open laboratory to conduct its experiments:

> *Big pharma business is trying to get poor vulnerable people for free in their research laboratory. Instead of using rats, they decide to try it on people! We administrators are ethically and legally responsible in the content of what is put on this [Facebook] page, so please be careful next time!* (Facebook posting, September 21, 2012).

At the time that I read the posting, I simply observed the members' comments and did not respond to the discussion thread. I felt a bit shocked by the administrator's reaction towards the idea that someone might consider Finnexia as a 'performance' to be unethical. This statement was made even after members of the Lost in Translation Facebook group pointed out to the administrator that they had seen Finnexia described earlier online as a performative research project. Another group member echoed the administrator's concerns, stating that, in his opinion, "…the research project, even though it might be a 'joke' project, can anyway violate the Finnish company laws" (Facebook posting, September 21, 2012). Part of me was afraid to enter that discussion, mostly out of a desire for emotional self-preservation, since at that time I was immersed in momentum of the Finnexia performance itself. For me, this incident with the Lost in Translation group represented an initial sign that someone in the public at large might view Finnexia as a problem. In that moment, I simply observed the Facebook postings, acknowledged my own emotional response to them, and carried on with the performance.

8.4.2 Beth Morton's Article: "The Finnexia® Mystery"

In October of 2012, I received a request from Beth Morton,[25] a writer at 6 Degrees Magazine, an English language publication providing content on arts and culture in Helsinki. Beth wished to publish an article on the Finnexia project. Her initial aim was to publish the article in a playful context, describing Finnexia as an actual medication. She thought that this approach to the article would mimic that of the artistic performance, leaving a sense of mystery to its readers. This approach to the article would also protect the image of Finnexia as being 'real,' in case I still wanted to collect data for my research, under the guise of Finnexia being an actual medication. I agreed with Beth's assessment, and was excited about the prospect of having the project discussed in a formal media context. I sent her the requested information about the project. On October 9, 2012, Beth sent me a rough draft of the article to be published, which left open the question of the drug's claim, and framed Finnexia as a real medical drug. Here, the full article is included on the following page.

The Finnexia Mystery:
Have you had your Finnish tablet today?
Article by BETH MORTON – October 9, 2012 – Helsinki, Finland

SURROUNDED by hoards of diverse and varied advertising campaigns vying for public attention it can be hard to make your brand or product stand out in the consumerism black hole of today. There is no escape for the public; ads are every which way we turn and, even when we try not to look, we are being handed flyers on street corners that try to convince us we need the latest gadget or what–not. But, avoid as we might to become sucked into ad campaigns, every once in a while there comes a product that hooks us in and makes us beg for more.

If you're lucky enough to have been handed a flyer, seen the website, or been witness to the marketing stunt in the west wing of the train station in September, you will know all about *Finnexia* – the super drug that will help you learn Finnish. The first of its kind, this 40mg linguocitine tablet lowers anxiety, enhances cognitive activity in the brain, and acts as a speech therapy that will have you speaking Finnish in no time.

25 Beth Morton has granted permission to include her real name in this dissertation.

Available without prescription and specific to a Finno-Ugric language deficiency, it will appeal to anyone wanting or needing to learn Finnish fast. As *Finnexia* medication operates on only a 30 day treatment course, with many seeing effects after just 7 days, the speedy language aid will contribute to the more long-term quality of life for foreigners living here, helping them secure work and integrate into Finnish society quicker. A Finnish language study course is recommended in conjunction with taking *Finnexia* but finally there is a solution to the difficulty of mastering this notoriously tricky language.

Finnexia's mysterious marketing campaign has been steeped in much speculation around Helsinki lately, even being a popular social networking topic. Causing a riot of confusion and doubt, one has to ask if this is just a clever marketing stunt or is this product for real? Can *Finnexia really* give you the power to speak Finnish……what do you think?

Learn more about Finnexia – www.finnexia.fi
Interested in trying a treatment course?–Contact info@huxor.fi

On October 24, 2012, I received a follow-up email from Beth, explaining that the article had to be pulled from publication. The editor of the magazine decided it would be best to rewrite the article, revealing the fictitious nature of the Finnexia project to the readers. Beth expressed her regrets. She explained that I could request that the article still be published as is, that she could take up the issue again with the magazine editor. I responded to Beth by saying that I would appreciate her asking the editor to publish the article. On October 25, Beth contacted me again, explaining that originally, the Finnexia article was prevented from publication on the grounds of the advertisement appearing as a hoax (Beth Morton, personal communication, October 25, 2012). Below is the email correspondence with Beth related to this issue.

Re: Six Degrees article images
From: Beth Morton
Sent: Thursday, October 25, 2012 9:44 AM
To: Erdman Lisa

Hi Lisa,
I raised the issue again and it has been cleared up that the reason for the article not going in is that, without the revelation, it reads like a teaser for the product that doesn't exist. It won't go to press as it is I'm afraid. If you wish to seek more information on the reasoning behind this please contact [the magazine editor] Apologies again,
Beth

On Wed, Oct 24, 2012 at 9:36 AM, Erdman Lisa <lisa.erdman@aalto.fi> wrote:

Hi, Beth. Sorry to hear that the article was pulled.
I understand the concern behind this decision. However, I believe the article as you wrote it, stands quite well as it is, and does nothing to jeopardize the research project objectives. The main part of the research data collection is completed in any case. And yes, publishing the article would potentially help to generate more discussion about the themes behind the research.
I would like to request the article be reinstated in Six Degrees, as you have written it. Please raise the issue with the editor once again.
Best, Lisa

Following this email exchange, Beth responded with a message explaining that the editor of 6 Magazine would agree to publish the article on Finnexia only if in the article, the Finnexia medication was referred to in the context of artistic research, and not as a real medication. The revised article was published in the December 2012 issue of 6 Degrees magazine. This version of the article is included here.[26]

The Finnexia mystery
05 DECEMBER 2012 – HELSINKI, FINLAND
Article by BETH MORTON

Have you had your Finnish tablet today?
SURROUNDED by hoards of diverse and varied advertising campaigns vying for public attention, we can easily find ourselves falling into the consumerist black hole of today. There is no escape; ads are every which way we turn and, avoid as we might to being sucked into ad campaigns, every once in a while there comes a product that hooks us in and makes us beg for more. Finnexia's mysterious marketing campaign has been steeped in much speculation around Helsinki lately, even being a popular social networking topic, causing a riot of confusion and doubt.

So, if you've been handed a flyer, seen the website, or been witness to the marketing stunt in the west wing of the train station in September, you will know all about Finnexia – the so-called super drug that will help you learn Finnish. Advertised as the first of its kind, this 40 mg linguocitine tablet low-

26 The article can also be found online: http://6d.fi/index.php/starters/518-the-finnexia-mystery

ers anxiety, enhances cognitive activity in the brain, and acts as speech therapy that will have you speaking Finnish in no time. Also apparently available without prescription, and specific to a Finno-Ugric language deficiency, it will appeal to anyone wanting or needing to learn Finnish fast.

A tablet that gives you the power to speak Finnish – surely this can't be for real, right?.....Right! This clever marketing strategy has succeeded in drawing the attention it needs to aid the doctoral research of Lisa Erdman in the art department at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture. Leading up to the marketing installations back in September, which were actually 'performances' run by actors, the hook of Finnexia was fabricated to encourage dialogue for members of the passing immigrant public about cultural integration in Finland and the role that language has to play in this process.

Also sparking more intrigue and speculation about Finnexia, the performances contributed to another arm of this research: the artistic context supporting the phantom drug is also concerned with exploring the overmedicated society in which we live and the obsessive reliability of this pill-popping culture. Satirising the seeming need to medicate every human condition under the sun, Finnexia aims to brings together the medical, language and cultural integration strands of this research project, while also challenging people's perception and blurring the lines between truth and fiction.

So, sorry – I'm afraid the wait for the Finnish-language wonder drug continues. **Visit the shrewdly staged website:** www.finnexia.fi

Might the response of 6 Degrees magazine reflect a sense of trepidation towards taking responsibility for publicly representing this information about Finnexia? In my view, despite fears of liability surrounding 'truthiness' of content, there still existed the relatively accessible escape route offered by Finnexia, via the Internet: If one was curious about the true nature of the presentation, a relatively quick Google search (even in October 2012) would reveal, within the first pages of the search results, that Finnexia is part of an artistic research project from Aalto University. This observation puts into question the agency of the public audience, and its ability to take action in researching something that it views with skepticism. In my view, within the context of socially engaged art, it is important to leave open the possibility for the audience to exercise its own sense of agency – its own initiative to investigate media or other information it encounters in public. I believe this is critical to creating conditions for transformative experiences within the framework of public socially engaged art, and within pedagogical frameworks.

Giddens (1991) argues that in contemporary society, investigation towards the self has become self-reflexive, encouraging individuals to take control of their lives (Evans, 2002). For Giddens, the contemporary phase

of modernization operates within an "intensification of uncertainty," due to the intervening of scientific knowledge into the reflexive project of the self (as cited in Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 134). Paradoxically, it may be that agency is becoming even more crucial – yet also increasingly difficult to achieve. For the artist-researcher dealing with socially engaged art (particularly that which addresses medical/scientific themes), the challenge arises in the balancing of allowance for public agency, communication of the artistic intent, and ethical responsibility.

8.5 Finnexia vs. The Finnish Medicines Agency

8.5.1 Initial Contact

In mid-October 2012, approximately three weeks after the public performance of Finnexia in the Helsinki Railway Station, The Finnish Medicines Agency (Fimea) contacted the Finnexia production manager (Anneli) and myself via phone, regarding their concern about the Finnexia website. Fimea is the governmental agency that supervises and regulates the pharmaceutical industry of Finland. During the initial phone conversation, Fimea stated that Finnexia "violates laws of medical marketing on many levels," and in doing so, constitutes "criminal activity" and "must be shut down immediately" (Finnish Medicines Agency, personal communication, October 12, 2012).

On the phone, in conversation with a Fimea representative, I explained the artistic context of the project. In response, the Fimea representative stated that, "there should be limits on the artistic license for this. Because you're creating *false hope* for people, and what you're doing is wrong. We need to protect those who are not smart enough to understand the satire of the art … this is how criminal activity begins, in the pharmaceutical industry. We need to shut this website [Finnexia] down immediately." (personal communication, Oct, 2012). In my view, the statements made by the Fimea representative over the phone contained punitive undertones. Even so, I attempted to remain calm, direct, and business-like in my responses. Internally, however, a range of emotions ran through me – shock, fear, and excitement. At the end of the conversation, I calmly explained to the representative that I was about to go on maternity leave, and if Fimea wanted to take this up further, they were welcome to contact my supervisor. Both Anneli and I advised Fimea to take up the matter further, if they wished to, with Aalto University – which the

organization did. Shortly after the initial phone call with Fimea, I received an email message from the agency, to which I responded (below).

Sender: Erdman Lisa [mailto:lisa.erdman@aalto.fi]
Sent: October 12, 2012 10:52 AM
To: [Fimea representative, Finnish Medicines Agency]
Subject: Finnexia

Hi, Fimea Representative.
Thank you for your earlier phone call, regarding the Finnexia project. At the moment, I am approaching nine months in my pregnancy and will be starting maternity leave.
Please contact Aino, my research supervisor, regarding further matters related to Finnexia. You may also reach Matti, from the Aalto University Art Department.

Best, Lisa Erdman (Aalto University)

RE: Finnexia
Sender: [Fimea representative]
Sent: Friday, October 12, 2012 11:11 AM
To: Erdman Lisa

Lisa Erdman,
We hope these web-pages are shut soon because the content of the project is misleading, improper and dishonest. (According to Medicines Act and Medicines Degree.) We will contact the responsible persons in Aalto University of this campaign today.

Regards, Fimea (Finnish Medicines Agency)
Lääkealan turvallisuus- ja kehittämiskeskus Fimea
www.fimea.fi

What followed was a period of approximately two weeks of email and phone correspondence between a representative of Fimea, Ritva, a legal advisor at Aalto University, Matti, a professor from the university art department, and myself.

8.5.2 Legal Statement from the Finnish Medicines Agency

Fimea's formal legal complaint, filed towards Aalto University via email, was aimed primarily towards the implications of the Finnexia website (http://finnexia.fi). According to Fimea, the website misled people into thinking people that the Finnexia drug really existed. As the Fimea representative pointed out in an email, "There is no indication [on the Finnexia site] that it's an art project, nor is there is a responsible publisher of the site, aside from Huxor Pharma – a fictitious parent company" (Finnish Medicines Agency, personal communication, October 12, 2012). I responded to this statement by indicating that if someone did happen to contact Huxor via the email address, I would then explain the artistic/research context of the Finnexia project. In the following descriptions of correspondences between myself, Aalto University staff, and the Finnish Medicines Agency, much of the text has been translated into English from its original Finnish. Language translation was provided by a legal consultant from Aalto University.

According to the Fimea representative, the Finnexia website, in this respect, violates laws of medical marketing and of consumer protection in Finland. This constitutes, according to Fimea, "misleading marketing" or "harhaanjohtava markkinointi" (in Finnish) since according to FIMEA, "it is not clear from the Internet page of the real nature of advertising, namely the fact that it is part of scientific research" (Finnish Medicines Agency, personal communication, October 22, 2012). Furthermore, according to Fimea, "the researcher needs to inform legal authorities of their plan to post such misleading information" (Finnish Medicines Agency, personal communication, October 22, 2012). Fimea's claim of Finnexia producing *false hope* in the public eye was brought up as a result of alleged visits to pharmacies in Helsinki, made by 'immigrant grandmothers' in search of the medication for their sons (see email below). According to Fimea, the resulting exchanges between pharmacists and potential customers demanding the medication were said to be uncomfortable and problematic. Based on this argument, the Fimea representative requested that the Finnexia website be removed immediately from the Internet.

RE: Future of the online publication Finnexia
Sender: Ritva, Aalto University Legal advisor
Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2012 4:14 PM
To: Matti; Lisa

Is the publisher of the online publication going to be Lisa Erdman as a natural person in the future, or will the online publication be part of an Aalto publication in the future when it will be published as a PhD thesis? How will this online publication be featured in the PhD thesis? Fimea has contacted me by phone. Their representative told me they feel this online publication is a problem because pharmacists have cases, for example immigrant grandmothers who came to pharmacy to find help for their son who is not finding work or grandchild who is not doing well in school because they lack knowledge of Finnish. These pharmacists have then contacted Fimea because they feel the situations are not pleasant when the reality is revealed to immigrant customers. I do not know if there have been many cases.

Fimea finds that this online publication is against the law concerning marketing of pharmaceuticals and that the damage is the extra work. The law on pharmaceuticals has very clear proceedings and Fimea can start these actions to stop marketing pharmaceuticals. On the other hand, an Aalto University PhD thesis has to be public.

But it is only necessary to keep the material public in a PhD thesis form as a book in the library. The necessity to have an editor and publisher named does not concern natural persons but if Aalto University is publisher we should add this information.

Ritva,
Legal Counsel, Aalto University

8.5.3 The Response from Aalto University

The first order of business for Ritva, the Aalto University lawyer, was to investigate the validity of the Finnexia website's administrator. Technically, an official website (particularly one affiliated with the medical) is required to have a designated responsible publishing entity, whose name is displayed, at least on the homepage. Ritva explained that, if Aalto University had been listed as the publisher or host on the website, then this would have constituted a legally acceptable framework for the public display of the Finnexia work – within that of an academic institution. In this case, the publisher for the Finnexia site is listed as Huxor, a fictitious pharmaceutical company. Thus, the concern of Fimea, towards the dubious nature of Finnexia's outwardly defined origin.

In response to Fimea's claim of misrepresentation and legal concerns, Aalto University Art Department professor Matti suggested that in this case, "we are not selling anything here, first of all" (Personal communication, Oct 12, 2012). Secondly, in this case, Matti describes the status of Finnexia site, in its artistic context, as comparable to the artist having held a public exhibition in a gallery – an exhibition that is counted as part of the requirements towards the doctoral degree. Matti explains further that:

> *In such exhibitions it is customary that the candidate arranges the gallery independently – Aalto is usually not involved in that in any way. The present guidelines of the [Aalto] doctoral program specify that these separate productions (of whatever form) are evaluated separately, before the completed doctoral work is evaluated, as has been the case here too.* (Matti, personal communication, October 16, 2012)

In response to Matti's assessment of the situation, Ritva stated that, in her view, the Finnexia site is "not against legislation," as there were no [real] pharmaceutical products involved. See email correspondence below. (Personal communication, October 17, 2012.) Ritva's statement was presented to Fimea, after which Fimea presented a listing of the medical and consumer protection laws that, in their view, were being breached, as mentioned earlier in the article.

RE: Future of the online publication Finnexia
Sender: Ritva, Aalto University Legal advisor
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2012 10:58 AM
To: Lisa; Matti

I do not think that the site is against legislation, because there are no medicines / pharmaceutical products involved and the legislation is only for pharmaceutical products. There is also a point in 25 § of Lääkeasetus [medicines law] that says that discussion about health and medicines is not to be considered as marketing use. I will convey also this opinion to Fimea.

Ritva
Aalto University Legal Counsel

8.5.4 "Last note!" on Finnexia

On November 22, 2012, approximately one month after the legal correspondence between Fimea and Aalto University, I received an email message (with the subject heading, "Last note!") from Marketta, an Art Department professor at Aalto University. In the email, Marketta described a renewed concern over the presence of the Finnexia website. She was speaking on behalf of Ritva, the university lawyer. According to Marketta, the university lawyer now saw Fimea's case as being quite strong in the sense that the Finnexia [website] was still active and "it appears that you [Lisa Erdman] are selling placebos" on the site" (Marketta, personal communication, November 22, 2012). Ritva and Marketta proposed that, in recognition of Fimea's concern, I remove the website if it was no longer needed for my research. However, if it was the case that I still needed the website to be live, then the lawyer (Ritva) would defend my position and convey my statement to Fimea (Personal communication, November 22, 2012). Here in the dissertation, I include the original email exchange:

From: Marketta
Sent: Thursday, November 22, 2012 6:46 PM
To: Erdman Lisa
Subject: Last note!

Hi Lisa,

You may or may not be at the receiving end.... anyways, we had a chat with the ARTS lawyer, and she expressed her feeling, that a strong claim of the complaining official is that your web-page for Finnexia is still active = as they see it, you're selling placebos. So, the lawyer suggests that a simple thing could be, that if you do not need the web-page to be active - public that is - you could take it down? So, if you can and it is ok for your work, can you do that? But, she said - if it is relevant for your work to keep the web-page active, then that's it and she will defend your point of view.

Good luck and god speed for the birthing of your baby! (s/he almost got born on my birthday... I mean, if s/he is not yet out in the world...)

Marketta
Aalto University

RE: Last note!
Sender: Lisa Erdman
Sent: Friday, November 23, 2012, 2:46 PM
To: Marketta

Hi, Marketta.

Baby's due date is tomorrow! :) And happy birthday to you, as well!

I understand the concern of the FIMEA agency, as to the idea that something appears to be sold on the Finnexia site. However, one of the intentions of the project is to observe public online responses to the Finnexia website – to document the online discussions generated by the site itself, particularly in the context of collecting narratives related to people's experience with learning Finnish and living as a foreigner in Finland. As outlined in my research proposal, this process may take several months at least, in order to unfold on multiple levels. To meet these objectives of the artistic research, I would like to keep the Finnexia website active for at least another 6-9 months. I would appreciate it if you could forward my thoughts on this to the ARTS Lawyer.

Best,
Lisa

As stated in my email response, I intended to keep the Finnexia website live, in order to observe and monitor online conversations about Finnexia on blogs and discussion groups. In my view, this online presence constituted a dialogical aspect of the doctoral art production. This was the last email exchange concerning the legal implications of Finnexia. The Finnexia website remains online at http://finnexia.fi.

8.5.5 The Artist's Response

I begin my discussion here from the point of the "Last note!," which, for me represents the voice of the artist in the cloak of researcher in this case – a voice that combines the impassioned will of the artist to uphold the life of their work with the scholarly justification of the researcher. My decision to defend Finnexia in the end did not come automatically. Before sending out my statement, I briefly considered giving in to the request of the Aalto law-

yer to dismantle the Finnexia site. This thought originated from fear of the possible consequences of leaving it up: how it might affect my status as a researcher-artist, student, and resident immigrant living in Finland, for example. There was a part of me that wondered if I would be blacklisted by Finnish pharmacies, banned forever more from purchasing any medication in Finland.

On another level, I felt tired of dealing with the tension and sense of uncertainty hovering over the legal proceedings, and I just wished for it to end. My decision to uphold Finnexia's online presence was an act that reflected my curiosity and strong desire to keep the project alive, on all levels. If I did remove the site, would it prevent Finnexia from having space for future iterations of the project? In the end, in my mind, taking down the site would constitute a dishonoring of the basic concepts behind the project – openness, risk, dialogue, experimentality.

Removing the Finnexia website would be an act of disrespect towards the integrity of the artwork itself. In my view, artistic research that holds artistic production in its arms as an object/subject of inquiry has a responsibility to uphold dialogue with the artwork, and to maintain dialogue between the art and the outside world. In a Bakhtinian sense, to remove the artwork from dialogue with (everyday) life, would remove the life from the artwork. Caliskan (2006) explains that from Bakhtin's view, art and life form different domains. From an ethical imperative, however, they must be brought together, since it is unethical to distinguish questions of art from questions of life (Caliskan, 2006). As Bakhtin (1990) states:

> *I have to answer with my own life for what I have experienced and understood in art, so that everything I have experienced and understood would not remain ineffectual in my life… Art and life are not one, but they must become united in myself – in the unity of my answerability.* (pp. 2-3)

According to Bakhtin, then, art and life form a dialogue with each other through the artist's response to the Other. This answerability (responsibility) manifests in the artist's relation to themselves, to the artwork, to the outside world, and to other physical human beings (Haynes, 1995, 2013). In Bakhtin's approach to aesthetics, ethics becomes intertwined with the creative act, and they operate in symbiotic relationship with one another. To make an aesthetic decision is to make an ethical one (Caliskan, 2006). Viewed through Bakhtin's interrelatedness between art and life, then, Finnexia – and socially engaged art in general – hold multiple levels of responsibilities. Haynes points out, that while Bakhtin proposed an interconnectedness of responsibility, he did not seem to adequately factor in other politically related variables that may come into play concerning ethical decisions:

> *Bakhtin did not offer any way of understanding how structures of power influence and inflict suffering on scores of others. Such suffering is not so easily mitigated as Bakhtin would like us to think. Not surprisingly, given his cultural context in Stalinist Russia, his analysis of the phenomenology of self– other interactions failed to acknowledge how power dynamics inevitably influence those interactions or the ways in which they are ideological.*
> (Haynes 2013, p. 62)

How might the statement above apply to the Finnexia case? Regarding the statement above, the ethical considerations of Fimea, the artist, and the research institutions may all differ, then. Might ethical definitions, when examined from this outsideness from the whole scenario, become relative and subjective? In my view, these layers of responsibility within Bakhtin's concept of answerability are important to the dialogues formed between the artist, artwork, and outside world – and they need to be considered carefully. However, in practice, there will never be a single moment when all levels of responsibility will be met simultaneously. Rather, the artist considers each case independently as it arises – in the decision-making process while conceptualizing the artwork, producing it, in presenting it or performing it, and in witnessing the dialogue that takes place between the art and outside world. Furthermore, there will most likely be definitive moments during the creative process of production or in the midst of live performative art in which the artist is suddenly led to act on a strong intuitive force – one whose rationale may be unclear at the moment, but whose ethical imperative seems too overwhelming to ignore.

Hutchingson (2015) addresses the notion of 'truth in art.' He defines artistic truth as something that potentially liberates and offers new possibility – and that by necessity, needs to be encountered, not only created. In this sense, truth in art is about "being true to the internal goods of art: the process of keeping going rather the production of finished things" (Hutchingson, 2015, p. 57). According to Hutchingson, during the act of creation, artistic decisions may arise more from the process of the situation that the artist finds themselves in, rather than solely a subjective decision on the part of the artist. In this context, "to do anything else [other than what is dictated by the situation] would not simply [be] wrong, but a betrayal of the project they had started" (Hutchingson, 2015, p. 58). Following this, aesthetic and ethical decisions in art are made simultaneously at different points in time during the life of the artwork, and during its various points of contact with the artist and the outside world. In this sense, I see the relation between aesthetics, ethics and answerability as one that is ev-

er-shifting, and never standing still.[27]

In creating the branding image for Finnexia (April-May 2012), I made an intuitive aesthetic decision to forgo an overtly satirical approach to the advert – an approach that characterized my earlier artworks consisting of fake medications. Instead, I refined and tweaked the advertisement to appear as convincing as possible, with the knowledge that its presentation might fool some people in the public audience. This invitation to slip between fact and fiction became part of the artistic intent – or an 'insistence of the art' as Hutchingson might describe – with the goal to draw people into the performance space and share their thoughts about learning the Finnish language. The realistic portrayal of the medication with potential to generate 'false hope' also served as a device through which other themes of the research might be articulated: the relation between desire and belief in medical advertising, and power/knowledge relationships between consumer and the pharmaceutical industry, between doctor and patient.

From a Bakhtinian standpoint, the ethical imperative of this artistic decision was twofold: 1) following the intuitive artistic direction, and 2) acknowledging the possible consequences of this fictitious ad in terms of confusing or causing discomfort in the audience. In this case, the first ethical imperative was acted upon immediately. The second ethical imperative (towards the audience) was considered, but temporarily set aside to be addressed later, when planning the details of audience interaction for the live commercial performance of Finnexia in the Helsinki Railway Station. At that point (August-September 2012), I consulted and worked with Anneli (Finnexia production manager), Saana (professional performer), and Nick (professional performer), to address the issue of how to deal with the range of the audience's reaction towards Finnexia. Given that the ad itself appeared to promote a real medication, would it be best to openly reveal the artistic intent of the project to the public audience? After consulting with Anneli, Saana, and Nick, I decided to commit Finnexia to an authentic advertising facade during its three-day public performance presentation – with the exception of three entry points that allowed audience members a view of the artistic intent of

27 In dialogical aesthetics, the choices are made to serve the purpose of dialogue in the art. In this case, the choice of presenting a medication in the context of Finnish pharmaceuticals served as a catalyst for public dialogue about the cultural experience of foreigners in Finland. In this case, the answerability of the art is, partly, in service to the dialogical intent of the work. How might this ethical imperative related to or different than the 'necessity-in-itself' that Hutchingson explains?

the project.[28] Regarding Fimea's concern with medical marketing and consumer protection, I acknowledge here that playing with medicine on the border of fact/fiction presents a substantiated social risk, as it may stir up public fears of encountering counterfeit medications sold illegally. As the Finnish news agency YLE has reported, there has been a significant rise in the import of counterfeit pharmaceutical drugs in Finland, which are most often accessed online (YLE, 2011, 2014). Finnexia, perhaps too naively, extended its pharmaceutical invitation. In 2014, an effort to further protect the public from counterfeit medications entering Finland, the Finnish government put into action an amendment to the Finnish Medicines Act. The amendment requires importers of medicines to Finland to hold a certificate of good manufacturing practice (GMP) from the country of export (Roschier, 2013).

The challenge remains of how to achieve a balance between addressing the ethical issues (affecting the audience/public at large) involved in planning, and remaining dedicated to the original intention/methods of the artwork when, at a certain point, the artwork in question takes on a life of its own, and the needs of the art must be also met. Your decisions start serving that art, in the creative process (Koski, 2012). A proposal for approaching this balanced awareness is addressed later in the chapter.

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28 These entry points included: 1) Email contact to the fake parent pharma company, Huxor. Audience members who inquired via email would be sent a response explaining the artistic research context of Finnexia. 2) Audience members who asked to see the Finnexia pill package at the performance would be shown a patient package insert which showed the molecular structure of the Finnexia pill (magnesium stearate), and included an explanation of the pill, stating that it is a placebo with no active ingredients. 3) During the performance those audience members sitting and sharing their stories at the round dialogue table would be told the artistic context of the project, only if they chose to inquire about the true nature of Finnexia. To my knowledge, two people during the course of the performance recognized the project to be fictitious through the placebo explanation in the patient insert of the Finnexia pill box. Those people, from what I understand, became angry after reading the information. These angry responses, one of which I witnessed first-hand, left me shocked and, oddly enough, seemed to further lock me into a need to maintain my own composure, that of the commercial facade, and to tend to my own emotional self-preservation. Simultaneously, I felt strongly compelled to disclose to these people the nature of the research project. However, I did not do this, because I felt I did not know how to carry this out in an appropriate way. I believe these are types of situations that I could have planned for more carefully in advance before the Finnexia performance – with contingency plans on how to handle strong outbursts of audience members' emotions in a safe and respectful manner. For this preparation, discussions early on in the artistic production phase are helpful – with research supervisors, other socially engaged artists, and university ethics experts.

8.6 Ethical Considerations in Artistic Research

Here I explore some ethical considerations taken before carrying out the Finnexia project, as well as thoughts of other artists and theorists on ethical obligations within the sphere of artistic research. In the case of artistic research, the element of risk appears to be a wild card, which we look to cloak in expressive freedom, while at the same time acknowledging its presence and tension with social and moral obligations. The ethical concerns that I gave attention to during my pre-production process (2011-12) were relatively locally based, within a narrow sphere. I had no idea that there could be repercussions towards the project on a larger scale within the Finnish medical community. During the period 2010-11, I also approached an art professor at Aalto University, and a visiting professor from the Helsinki Theater Academy. I inquired with the professors about any ethical guidelines in the research that might need to be considered. The only immanent concerns I came across involved permissions/consent for interviews and dissemination of video documentation. At some point during that time, I was told by university faculty that because this project was carried out in the context of artistic research, no ethical review process was required prior to presenting the Finnexia performance. Still, it seemed that I was ultimately responsible for addressing these concerns myself, and for researching existing general ethics guidelines for doctoral research in Finland. Perhaps it was best left this way. Otherwise, I may not have opted to take steps within the art that are deemed risky. I find it interesting that I did not expect any of the legal and emotionally charged outcomes that did manifest on a larger scale. During the planning of the performance, I was more concerned with the ethical issues relating to improvisational encounters between performers and audience. If, the nature of interventionist art is partially improvisational, then we cannot know exactly how the art will unfold in the moment of its event(ness). Here I refer back to Varto (2000) and Hannula et al. (2005), for whom art practice operates in the realm of art, whether framed within the context of research or not. For Varto and Hannula, et al., only the act of interpretation of the art is placed under scrutiny.

On the other hand, the ethical considerations of artistic work may be very different from those of the research institution. According to Koski, artistic intent can be seen as unethical, from the research standpoint, given its inherent element of risk:

> *Artist's intent can be unethical, and often is, from a research ethics viewpoint. Misrepresentation, confusion, friction, change…you want to cause something but it is unforeseen what exactly will happen. The borders of the work expand,*

> *this whole [ethics] chapter, for instance, talks about something you did not anticipate, but is at the core of the meaning of this work, I would think.* (Koski, personal communication, February 26, 2016)

If artists are willing to take risks (within or outside the research institution), then they may also need to be willing to face the unknown consequences of taking those risks. In my view, particularly in the case of art interventions, it may be best to err on the side of protecting the original artistic intentions. In the process of intervening, public art interventions potentially rupture, agitate, and momentarily tear into the fabric of public space. The consequences of this may never be precisely quantified before and after such an event. As a result, some things are left frayed, unanswered, unresolved, challenged. Perhaps, in the process, something is also reinvigorated, inspired, or enlivened. Thus, there is an inherent paradox of performance within this context of art interventions.

What of the responsibility of the artist to their audience here? Based on my experience with Finnexia, I would say that at the very least, the artist holds a responsibility to consider and plan for, prior to the performance, possible scenarios that could incite extreme emotion on the part of the audience. I think this process is one that requires two or more persons – ideally the artist themselves, along with another consulting artist who has experience with public, socially engaged interventions. In addition, within the context of a research institution, the artist-researcher would also consult with the doctoral supervisor and a member of the university ethics board. Through this dialogical process, the artist-researcher would gain knowledge and support to devise a plan to address incidents as they arise during the performance intervention. Even with such preparation, however, I believe no artist-researcher will be fully prepared for what might occur in an open, public space. It is this element of uncertainty that can make the outcomes of this type of research surprising and unsettling.

8.7 A Compassionate Hoax

In Finnexia, deception was an intended performative method – as a means to generate dialogue about cultural integration and language acquisition in Finland. The false hope and range of emotions generated as a result of this hoax-like deception was an unintended outcome. At most, I expected a fleeting sense of surprise and curiosity from most audience members who witnessed Finnexia. In this section, I suggest that false hope might offer moments of empowerment and vitality to its audience, even if it exists in sporadic mo-

ments. Does this compassionate, dialogical intention justify the outcome of 'false hope'? According to Koski, in the experience of a hoax, it is the moment of realization that 'this is not real' that might be considered empowering to the audience. In the act of a critical reading of the hoax, fake ad, etc., this comes into play (Koski, personal communication, February 26, 2016). In my view, the compassionate element of the Finnexia hoax emerges from two elements: 1) what is offered to the audience in the form of a space for personal dialogue, in the center of the performance space as an offering of a face-to-face, intimate encounter, 2) fake advertising as an invitation to play with the possibilities of what could be – in this case, an easier way to learn Finnish.

In retrospect, I consider whether or not such emotionally conflicting responses on the part of the audience offered any productive quality to the research. For some readers of this dissertation, the Finnexia audience's emotional turmoil involving anger, frustration, embarrassment, hope, and disappointment, may seem extremely troublesome. I understand this view. However, I also believe that these same emotional encounters can invite some level of self-reflection on the part of those who experienced them. At this moment, I may not be able to articulate what exactly was learned or realized for those people. However, I sense that there is some transformative potential in these encounters – internally and/or in relation to one's social environment. Ultimately, if I were to present Finnexia again in public as a performance, I would experiment with creative ways of revealing the fictitious nature of the performance, in a way that would still, to a certain degree, preserve the commercial image of Finnexia. Achieving this balance would present a great challenge, although it would be possible.

I see the Finnexia drug campaign in a similar light as the Yes Men's *New York Times* fake news headline campaign (2009), and Cooper's fictitious medication Havidol® (2007). Within the minds of their audiences, these campaigns generated a range of emotion – disbelief, joy, amusement, and hope. Most likely, as in the case of Finnexia, the audiences may also have experienced disappointment. A common goal among these projects is the aim is to confuse and disrupt audience perceptions (through the initial deception). A secondary aim might be to invite the opportunity for the audience to momentarily envision an alternate reality. In the case of Finnexia, this experience might have surfaced in the form of small dialogues offering exchanges of personal stories of language learning. It may emerge as newfound hope of learning a difficult language.

One difference between Finnexia and the other aforementioned works is the characteristic of the dialogical intent. Finnexia was presented with the aim of creating the possibility for personal, face-to-face dialogue in a public space about the experience of the foreigner in Finland and the process of

learning Finnish. This dialogical aspect introduces an additional layer to the public experience of this work, distinguishing Finnexia from the work of the Yes Men (*New York Times* hoax) and that of Cooper's (Havidol). Through its dialogical structure, Finnexia introduced its political intent on a more personal level – allowing direct dialogue to emerge in a public space about language learning and living in Finland. In this sense, Finnexia more overtly attempted to merge the public and private within its performance structure. In the case of Havidol and the *New York Times* hoax, the emphasis was on the creation of an idealized, fictitious environment to be engaged with primarily within the minds of their audiences, with dialogical possibilities emerging from that point, in a less guided format. As in the case of Finnexia, Cooper's fictitious pharmaceutical drug Havidol raised concerns among the public audience, inciting anger in some who claimed that Cooper, through her artwork, made light of potentially serious psychological conditions. Allegedly, some patients inquired about obtaining Havidol from their own physicians, feeling embarrassed and disappointed after discovering that it was not a real medication (Wenner, 2007). As demonstrated by the ethical concerns that arose through the Finnexia event, the layers of face-to-face dialogue offered by Finnexia did not serve as a safeguard against unsettled feelings towards the fictitious product. In this sense, the element of public dialogue in Finnexia did not completely prevent some of the issues around audience confusion that emerged in the satirical works by the Yes Men and Justine Cooper.

8.8 The Implications of 'False Hope'

At the core of Fimea's legal complaint was the concern that the Finnexia product creates a misrepresentation of Finnish medicine, and generates false hope in the public eye. Over the several years following the legal case, I found myself questioning the motives of Fimea, out of a desire to better understand the perspective of this agency, and that of the pharmaceutical industry in Finland. I started to wonder if the official concerns of Fimea might reflect some deeper Finnish cultural values in relation to the organization of medicine, the political interests of the pharmaceutical industry, and the protection of the public good. Koski points out that the reaction of anger expressed towards the Finnexia advert may be rooted in the cultural history of what is perceived as Finnish 'trustworthiness':

> *And, was people's anger [towards Finnexia] partly cultural? Finland is, at least according to statistics, one of the least corrupt countries, and there is a high level of trust in authorities in medicine and pharmaceuticals (maybe not*

> *so after some vaccines though). Perhaps people are not used to critical reading in that regard, because they never had to. In some societies, nobody would worry about lying because all they receive is false hope.* (Koski, personal communication, February 28, 2016)

One intent of Finnexia, through dialogical aesthetics, was to create a 'safe space' for foreigners, serving those who may be lonely in Finland, seeking others to engage in conversation. In this sense, Finnexia was an intervention not only into normative ways of representing and seeing the pharmaceutical, but also an intervention into alienation within public space – offering an oasis for people who feel a need for sharing stories, dialogue, for connecting with another person. It used the language of the private (corporate) sphere to bridge the gap between the personal and political. As Giroux (2001) points out, "for many young people and adults today, the private sphere has become the only space in which to imagine any sense of hope, pleasure or possibility" (p. xii). I would say that Giroux's statement here applies to many contemporary artists as well, who find value and meaning in using the private sphere of corporate rhetoric and marketing strategies as a vehicle for self-expression as well as a catalyst for socially engaged art (Cooper, 2007; Wyse, Hunt, Hockertz, Obrist, & Lebovici, 2007). In a broader cultural context, I believe that this technique is adopted more by American/Canadian artists, whose (public) artwork stands to visually compete with an overtly dominating presence of advertisement messages in public spaces (Heon, Diggs, & Thompson, 1999).

Returning to the concept of a safe space for public dialogue – this question began as the starting point of the research. Even at the present moment, the question remains of whether it is possible to achieve a safe space for political dialogue in public, when the foundation of the space is built on a deception that is not revealed to the public. What I can say from my experience in the research, is that my understanding of what constitutes a 'safe' space has shifted and become more complex. What is considered a safe environment for such dialogue is, I believe, culturally and personally defined. There is not one ultimate definition of a safe zone for political dialogue.

In my view, Fimea's concerns not only voiced the discomfort of its own agency, but also may have echoed the feelings expressed by performers and Helsinki media organizations who felt uncomfortable with idea of potentially deceiving the public. It is as though, throughout the Finnexia performance and shortly thereafter, messages from the public were being transmitted to me, conveying this ethical concern. If one message was not addressed fully, then the next message would appear with a louder voice, with a multiplied harmony, on a higher register, until in the end, a more powerful, in-

fluential body intervened. These voices leading up to the Fimea legal debate might also indicate that there were various ways in which Finnexia was perceived to be troublesome – in terms of its ethical relationality with some performers, audience members, liability concerns of administrators of media sources (6 Degrees Magazine and the Lost in Translation Facebook page). In the midst of this crescendo of ethical concerns being expressed on varying levels during the performance, I knew that these issues needed attention at some point. Some of these issues were addressed during the few follow-up interviews with performers and audience members after the event, and discussions with performers. On some level, I needed time to process and understand what was happening. Ironically, I could not bring myself to believe the responses of 'belief' towards the Finnexia medicine from some audience members.

In terms of what independent artists might do in the case of a legal concern with their work, this may be a topic of discussion with artists' unions in Finland. There are union organizations in Finland for visual artists, musicians and performing artists, which offer legal services. However, the extent to which they will support the vision/intent of the artist needs to be researched. If, in the case of the Fimea debate, the Finnexia project had been carried out by an independent artist with no affiliation with an arts union, then I may have been able to seek legal counsel via a public attorney, at my own cost. In Finland, the legal fees of a public defender are usually progressively based on one's income.[29]

8.9 Summary

In this chapter, I examined highlights of the ethical implications of the Finnexia performance, including responses from performers, the artist, the media, Aalto University as a research institution, and the Finnish Medicines Agency. Through this exploration, the inherent values and viewpoints of each these entities emerged into the light. Through this exploration of ethical concerns within Finnexia, it became more clear that these implications

29 According to a former Aalto University art professor, the last case that Finland had in terms of a debate on artistic freedom of speech occurred with Finnish writer Hannu Salama's literary work in 1965, in which some of his writings stirred objections by the state church, with the church claiming that Salama's critique of religion constituted blasphemy (Personal communication, October, 2012). The result was a sentence of three months of conditional imprisonment. Salama was eventually pardoned by President Kekkonen in 1968, with the help of the writer's union of Finland (Hänninen, 2014; Parkkinen, 2016).

were revealed to me from the inside out – from within the performance, and through my interactions with audience members during the performance, with representatives from media, and finally perhaps most significantly, with the Fimea case. From the artist's standpoint, the Fimea case may be seen as a fortuitous opportunity to extend public dialogue around the research theme of medicalization and the relationship between consumers and the pharmaceutical industry. If indeed meaningful dialogue requires the presence of two entities that can listen and respond to each other, then perhaps Finnexia and the Finnish Medicines Agency generated a dialogical dynamic expressing and challenging notions of self, other, ethics, and responsibility.

9 DISCUSSION

9 Discussion

This chapter presents a response to the thesis questions, in relation to themes from the practice review and literature review chapter. I will, throughout the chapter, touch on the following relevant themes from the practice and literature reviews: 1) ethical considerations in the context of public performance art and artistic research, 2) concerns over the reification of societal power structures within performative intervention, 3) relationships between ethics and aesthetics, 4) the role of the artist as a public intellectual, and 5) the dominant discourse as public pedagogy.

9.1 Consequences of Artistic Decisions

In this first section, I address the primary thesis question: **What is the relationship between artistic decisions and ethical outcomes in public performance?** The issue of ethics in socially engaged art takes a central position in this thesis. This came about not solely as a response to the legal complaint raised towards Finnexia by the Finnish Medicines Agency. The ethical concern had existed as an undercurrent in my performative work since the start of my doctoral studies in Finland. For example, in the Consumerin® performance (2009), I presented a live advertisement for Consumerin® (fictitious) medication that cures economic recession by stimulating consumer behavior. The piece was presented in several market spaces in Pori, Finland. I feared that at some point during the event, the performers and I would be approached by the police. This fear arose from the fact that in one instance of the performance, there was no permission requested to present in the public space. In another performance of Consumerin, I handed out fake pills to audience members, who, in some cases, ingested them on the spot. The pills were actually white sugar-coated, pill-shaped licorice candy. In the planning phase of the Finnexia performance, I was aware of potential ethical issues that might arise in the interactions between the sales people and the audience members. Particularly in the planning of my performances, there seemed to be a tension between wanting to be polite to the audience and fear of offending, but on the other hand, feeling the necessity to do things the way my art dictated with presenting fictitious ads. An art professor in Finland mentioned to me some years ago that he has always observed me as "an artist afraid of offending others, but wanting the freedom to do what she wants" (personal communication, January, 2016).

In the context of contemporary art, there is a debate about the extent to which artistic freedom should be afforded to artists, particularly those oper-

ating in public spaces. Some believe the artist should hold complete freedom to transgress societal norms in creating work, for the sake of allowing the art to act as a pointer to broader social debates (Ravini, 2017; Rancière, 2011). Others view artistic creation as a negotiation between artistic decisions and a responsibility to others involved in the presentation and reception of the work (Sahlin, 2017). Within this discussion, there are different views about whether an ethics of art practice should be regarded as situational, or based on standardized, transcendent principles. Risk-taking seems to be an inherent quality of performative art interventions, if concepts and issues are to be fully explored in a given space – while keeping the event open to possibilities for free public interaction and meaningful dialogue.

In the case of Finnexia, there was a concern about the confusion generated among some audience members who experienced the event. As mentioned in the practice review, Coven et al. (2007) point out that when divisions between fiction and reality are blurred, the audience may find itself in a vulnerable state. In this scenario, despite its attempt to engage with real life, the artwork may end up distancing itself from the public audience (Coven et al., 2007). The decision to generate an authentic looking pharmaceutical facade, partly through the physical presence of live Finnexia 'sales people' moved towards generating a 'validity of presence' (Phelan, 1993). Here I return to Goldberg (2001), who elaborates how "the live presence of the artist, and the focus on the artist's body, became central to notions of 'the real', and a yardstick for installation and video art" (p. 10). In the Finnexia performance, for example, the implications of the live presence of the artist became most evident for me once I took on a direct performative role as a Finnexia sales person (replacing Andrew, the sales person who chose to step down from the role).

This blurring of fact and fiction in Finnexia, generated through a combination of live presence and scientific visualization, at times moved closer to the real, evoking strong emotional responses from the public audience that ranged from surprise, amusement, hope, to anger. Faced with the time-based quality of performance, coupled with a blurred sense of reality, the public audience may find itself suspended within a state of liminality. According to Fischer-Lichte, (2008), if this liminal state is not eventually resolved, the audience may enter an internal state of near emotional crisis. Conversely, it may be that such an ambiguous, non-narrative structure exists as part of the intention of a socially engaged performance, ultimately leaving the audience exposed to the possibility of experiencing such instability. As Féral (1982) suggests, 'performance' attempts not to tell (like theater) but rather to "provoke synaesthetic relationships" (p. 179). The very nature of performance in the context of a socially engaged intervention involves "holding the performer in a liminal, provisional and suspended place" (p. 10).

In the case of Finnexia, my own ethical considerations arose during the planning of the performance. These manifested fully during the performance presentation in the Helsinki Railway Station, when I was called into the role of a Finnexia sales person after one performer chose to withdraw. It was only then that I came to fully understand the discomfort felt by some of the sales people performers. In those moments, I could also better understand the emotional impact that the Finnexia advertisement was having on the public audience – its potential to generate a sense of hope. It was in my personal encounters with the public audience that I could see how Finnexia may have, to a certain extent, reified the very hegemonic structures of the medical industry that it sought to satirize. By this I mean that, as the performance unfolded, the interplay of its media-based elements seemed to convince some people that Finnexia could be real. In particular, the use of seemingly scientifically based pharmaceutical information in the Finnexia performance created an image of medical authority that seemed to serve as a foundational base of trusted knowledge and credibility (Foucault, 2003, 1977a). In my view, this manifested through the display of the 3D animation showing the molecular and neurochemical mechanism of action of Finnexia. This pseudo-scientific information was also conveyed through the Finnexia website, in its explanation of how the medication works in the human brain to address multiple aspects involved in the language learning process: easing of anxiety, increase in self-confidence, memory capabilities, and abilities in phonetic pronunciation.

Essentially, then, Finnexia's satirically intended use of medical language and imagery, to a certain extent, created an image of hegemonic authority that produced some of the same effects that it aimed to critique: unquestioning trust and belief in the efficacy of pill-based medication and in the authority of the visualization technology of scientific data. I believe this authoritative medical image was reinforced through the performative, spectacle-like corporeal presence of the Finnexia: the sales people, the converging groups of public dialogue in public space, and the presence of the physical commercial set-up, including video cameras recording interviews with the public.

Within the context of artistic research, ethical considerations can and should become part of the creative process of an artwork, particularly in the case of research involving human participants (Bolt & Vincs, 2015). In the planning process and art practice of artistic research involving socially engaged art, the factors of the target audience, definitions of the participants/audience/public, research intentions, and artistic expression all come into play within the context of ethical considerations. According to Blair, there is an underlying question of what it means to be a participant or a subject in research, within the context of artistic research (as cited in Sinner, Irwin, &

Adams, in press). In these scenarios, a blurring often occurs between participant, observer, subject and artist.

During the planning of the Finnexia performance, the artistic decision to consistently maintain the fictitious commercial facade was a difficult one. Here, I revisit Thompson's statement that refers to "making meaning across the range of a broad public" (as cited in Möntmann et al, 2013, p. 112). Thompson emphasizes that aesthetic decisions in socially engaged art are ethical ones, when those decisions set expectations towards a certain type of audience – and ultimately determine who the work is for, and for whom it's not (p. 112). In Finnexia, the incident involving one of the performers' withdrawal from his role as sales person was one that forced me to consider the ethical concerns of the performance directly. The legal complaint from the Finnish Medicines Agency (Fimea) also reiterated these feelings of unease I experienced, and took them to a new level, making me wonder if what I had created as art might really be considered criminal activity. For several months immediately following the Finnexia performance, I questioned the value of my own intentions as an artist – even as a human being. The unanticipated incident with Fimea may also confirm how Finnexia as an event was able to raise, unveil, provoke, or bring to light the very relational structures within public pedagogies of medicine that inform the dynamics between doctor/patient and pharmaceutical industry/consumer.

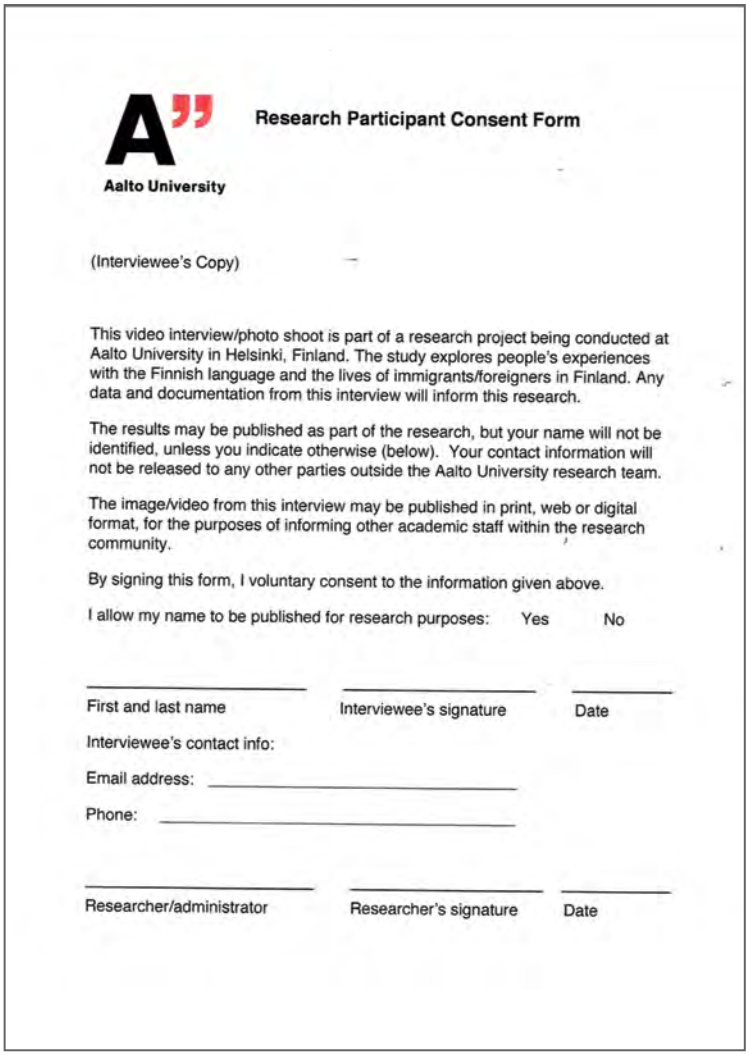
The decision to use appropriated media structures (medical advertising) within the context of public art presents potential challenges. In my view, the decision to use this type of media imagery can have interesting results in terms of the potential to spark public dialogue. However, its use is not without risks. As Thompson explains, one of the dangers in using media frameworks is that the intended message of the artwork may be 'flattened,' leaving the audience unaware of the artistic intent (as cited in Möntmann et al., 2013). In some cases – as it may have been in Finnexia – the audience can be erroneously led to take action in their lives, as though what they witnessed was real (advertising) media. This unfolding of responses and events prompts ethical issues. Haiven (2007), echoing Thompson's concern with media-based works (in the context of culture jamming), speaks of the danger of this type of work being overlooked and reabsorbed into the spectacle of daily life. For Haiven, this recuperation diminishes the possibility of a self-reflective experience for the audience. Generally, I concur with Haiven's (and Thompson's) concerns around the reabsorption of media-based public art – as I have witnessed this first-hand, to a certain extent, through my own research. However, at the same time, it may be that this 'flattening' characteristic of media-based public artwork also offers an opening (however narrow) for the public audience to momentarily experience a shift in perception

towards what they are viewing. In this case, the potential for obscurity also presents the potential for the audience to encounter a double-take: a sudden, subtle awareness of what is or is not there.

Here, it is also important to note my decisions (and their consequences) made around the wording choices of the research participant consent forms distributed during the Finnexia performance to members of the public whose interviews were videotaped at the round dialogue table. At the time of the performance, consent forms were given to participants to fill out and sign after their interview. The forms explained that the interview was part of a research project carried out by Aalto University, that "explores people's experiences with the Finnish language and the lives of immigrants/foreigner in Finland" (Figure 44). In order to protect the fictitious facade of the Finnexia event, the consent form did not disclose that Finnexia was a fictitious medication. In January 2017, because this detail of information was left out of the consent form, I was requested by the Aalto University legal counsel to remove any publicly accessible video data of the Finnexia interviews. In order to make this video data public, I would need to do one of two things: 1) contact all the participants in the video interviews and request a new consent form signature from them, based on a full disclosure of the Finnexia project and its fictitious context, or 2) blur the faces of all participants in the video documentation to protect their identity. Because of the time limitations and logistics that arose in attempting to contact interviewees,[30] I chose the option of removing the video documentation from public viewing. The decision I made in creating the consent forms – leaving out the information that Finnexia is fictitious – ultimately affected how the video data could be treated later in this written dissertation.

In socially engaged public art, the element of interaction between public audience members and performers is full of possibility – for fruitful insights, creative and explosive emotional response. Particularly in the cases in which the art is framed outside traditional frameworks of contemporary art, the range of possible reactions from the audience and performers expands. For artists, these factors can invite experiences that elicit rich dialogue with the public. For artistic researchers, this means that the ethical considerations may need to be more carefully navigated during the planning phases of the public performance. In the presence of improvisatory methods taken up during a public performance, fresh new ethical considerations may arise during each moment of the performance. These open-ended moments generated

30 Those contacted did not respond, with the exception of one person. In some cases, contact information was no longer current. Due to time limitations at that point, I chose not re-work the edited video documentation.



Aalto University

Research Participant Consent Form

(Interviewee's Copy)

This video interview/photo shoot is part of a research project being conducted at Aalto University in Helsinki, Finland. The study explores people's experiences with the Finnish language and the lives of immigrants/foreigners in Finland. Any data and documentation from this interview will inform this research.

The results may be published as part of the research, but your name will not be identified, unless you indicate otherwise (below). Your contact information will not be released to any other parties outside the Aalto University research team.

The image/video from this interview may be published in print, web or digital format, for the purposes of informing other academic staff within the research community.

By signing this form, I voluntary consent to the information given above.

I allow my name to be published for research purposes: Yes No

First and last name | Interviewee's signature | Date

Interviewee's contact info:

Email address: _____

Phone: _____

Researcher/administrator | Researcher's signature | Date

Figure 44. Research participant consent form (2012). Signed by audience members who participated in videotaped discussions at the dialogue table during the Finnexia performance at the Helsinki Railway Station.

through such improvisatory methods in public space also need to be considered as part of the risk of performative artistic research.

In socially engaged art interventions, the issue of the efficacy of the participation and dialogue is often questioned, particularly in the case of works that aim to address social and political issues. One approach to art interventions supports the formation of openness and understanding among artists, participants and audience (Kester, 2013; Lacy, 1995). Another view claims that dissensus – emotional tensions, and acknowledgement of differing views – promotes the impetus for political and social change (Mouffe, 2008). From the audience reactions in terms of believing Finnexia to be real, it seemed that the medical advertisement, in its relation to engaging with people on the level that it did so in the event, it came about as a manifestation

of the dominant discourse of medicine and advertising. It was reflective of the influence that the promises of pharmaceutical advertising may have on public and private identities (Sandlin et al., 2011). In this sense, the efficacy of the Finnexia advertising relied on the public pedagogy of existing global medical advertising.

9.2 Taking Responsibility and Letting Go

I now move on to answer the next question of the thesis: **What is the responsibility of the artist and audience in public art interventions, and in artistic research?** While the artist may hold responsibility towards the public when considering the functionality of the art and what the intervention does, I believe there is also a responsibility to the artwork itself that the artist is called to maintain. Otherwise there is a risk of the artistic concept – that original spark of intentionality – being buried under fear, self-censorship, bureaucracy and the opinions of others.

For example, when I was contacted via phone by the Finnish Medicines Agency in October 2012, the director expressed great concern towards public welfare in light of Finnexia. During the phone conversation, I was cautioned by the director that "we need to protect those people who are not smart enough to see this [satire] in Finnexia." Now, looking back on this conversation, it seems that the level of ethical responsibility could extend infinitely for an artist working in public, in this context of satire. When one works with satire, the risk is there, whether we are aware of it or not.

Regarding ethics in this project, I find it interesting that I did not expect any of the legal and emotionally charged outcomes that did manifest on a larger scale (i.e. with the Finnish Medicines Agency). During the planning of the performance, I was more concerned with the ethical issues relating to direct, conversational interactions between the performers and audience. Such concerns included how the Finnexia performers might feel while discussing the fictitious medication with the public audience; how to maintain the fictitious medical facade in the midst of audience questions; and preparing performers to deal with audience members who expressed strong emotional responses to the performance. I did not consider the possibility of large-scale repercussions within the Finnish medical community.

As I mentioned earlier in the thesis, I approached the Aalto Research Institute in 2011, as well as art professors within Aalto University. The only ethical considerations that were brought to my attention involved permissions/consent for interviews and the dissemination of video documentation. I was informed that because the doctoral artistic production was carried out with-

in the framework of artistic research, there were no additional legal/ethical guidelines to be adhered to. Even so, as Blair may point out, it may be that as an artist-researcher, I am ultimately responsible for addressing these concerns myself, and seeking out the appropriate protocols (as cited in Sinner, Irwin, & Adams, in press).

One responsibility of the artist in public art involves taking on the role of a public intellectual. In this case, the artist takes the role of leading others to experience their own political motivations and actions within a space where they are free to draw their own conclusions (Giroux, 2003). Here, the responsibility of the artist extends beyond the scope of protecting the performers and audience from psychological discomfort, physical harm, or fraud. In this situation, I also see a critical need for the artist to stay in line with the performative intention of the artwork, carrying this out to the best possible extent, in order to allow for its fullest potential to be experienced by the public. According to Biesta (2014), such an approach through activism in public spaces, in which the artist maintains a sense of openness, and willingness to invite chance and risk through art, may more readily allow for the emergence of civic action on the part of the audience. In cultivating these types of pedagogies, we cannot expect to simply transmit knowledge for purposes that are already decided (Rich & Sandlin, in press). The public pedagogue's important role here is not to instruct, nor facilitate, but to 'interrupt' (Biesta, 2012, p. 693).

Within my research, the concept of 'public intellectual' entered through my investigations of public pedagogy and the artist's potential to empower its audience by revealing 'societal ills' and the power structures reinforced through mass media. My investigations in this realm began two years after the Finnexia performance. At that point, my understanding of the artist as public intellectual was formed from a literal interpretation of pedagogy as 'instructional.' However, since then, my view of this role has expanded, along with my understanding of what 'pedagogy' might look like in the form of public art interventions. For me, the role of artist/public intellectual does not need to be taken on in explicitly traditional terms. For example, the artist may allow the possibility for the transformative experience of the audience by creating spaces of non-verbal, corporeal presence, as in the case of many public performance art interventions. It may be created via the use of humor, or through opening up space for dialogue, or by simply listening. These approaches may inspire people to engage, each in their uniquely empowered way (Brady, 2006). For the artist, whether operating in the art world or in a research institution, this requires a continual negotiation between the literal and the symbolic, public and private, and, as in the case of Finnexia, between fact and fiction.

The responsibility of the artist and audience holds weight in both the realm of the art world and the context of artistic research. This was evident in the concerns that arose during the development of the Finnexia branding materials; for example the choice of language to use in the advertising text; the planning process of Finnexia, to determine the framing of the advertisement; and the actual event itself, in the case of the performer and audience members who expressed discomfort towards the ambiguity generated by the advertisement. Here I draw again from Thompson's guidelines for social engaged artists (as cited in Möntmann, et al., 2013). Thompson encourages artists to take into consideration several factors in the planning phases of socially engaged works, with a central question being, "Whom is the work for?" As Thompson elaborates, "Aesthetic decisions must be made in order to gear a project towards a set of expectations for an audience. This is an ethical decision because one is choosing whom an artwork is for and whom it's not for" (Möntmann et al., 2013, p. 112).

Whom was Finnexia created for? The work intended to serve multiple entities: 1) The performance was primarily an offering to foreigners living in Finland, as an invitation to offer and share personal stories about language learning and cultural integration. 2) the performance was a personal synthesis for myself, as a foreigner in Finland working through the medium of medical advertising, seeking to connect with others. 3) Finnexia existed as a playful point of interaction for the general public audience, to (re)consider one's own relationship to medicine. I am not sure how to answer the question of who Finnexia was not for. On a fundamental level, it could be stated that Finnexia was not made for anyone who was already a native Finnish speaker, and not for anyone living outside of Finland. However, the categories within this scope become blurred when speaking about the satirical aspect of the project and the influence of medicalization and global pharmaceutical advertising practices. This is a question that perhaps, I could have considered more closely in the production process of Finnexia. I recall trying to make the audience for Finnexia as all-inclusive as possible; for example, trying to create the Finnexia website and other advertising material in multiple languages (which did not transpire), and encouraging Finns and non-Finns into face-to-face dialogue during the performance.

For me, the responsibility of the audience in public art becomes less clear. In public space, compared to an enclosed, traditionally framed artwork, the audience, in some ways, can be assumed to take on a greater responsibility. People make a decision to interact with the work or not. Members of the public also operate within certain protocols of advertising, with the expectations that go along with this. Somewhere in their psyche, they may be aware of the potential fallibility of an advertisement. However, in this case, the medical

context and use of scientific visualization may serve as elements that 'seal the deal' of the advertisement's message. In public spaces, to a certain extent, people are expected to take on more responsibility for their own actions, responses, and choices in relation to their immediate environment. If I had approached Finnexia as a public bystander, I believe I would have felt confused at first, and a bit excited, and I would have looked online for the medication. I would have gone and found out more about it. I would have felt both hopeful and skeptical. In this sense, I understand the confusion experienced by many audience members.

Prior to the Finnexia performance, I examined my own expectations from the standpoint of an artist and former medical graphic designer. Through this lens, while maintaining hope of engaging the public in dialogue about language learning, I chose to generally keep my expectations open to chance and possibility. As a result, I may not have considered the perspective of the public and the performers as carefully as I should have. In hindsight, in terms of practical preparations with the Finnexia performers, it may have been more fruitful to allow more adequate time to meet with each performer before the performance. This additional time would have allowed performers to ask questions, discuss in more detail the goals of the Finnexia project, and discuss how to handle different types of interactions with the public audience. As it turned out, the performers were informed of their role as a Finnexia sales person only through the guidelines provided in a Word document, followed up with a phone call (as described in Chapter 5). This limited preparation time was, in part, due to logistical constraints that arose between the point of hiring performers and the presentation of the event itself. In addition, in preparation for the performance, I could have formally tested the Finnexia advertisement in public focus groups, in order to gauge emotional responses. In this scenario, it is possible that this type of 'screening' preparation may have resulted in a very different outcome for the Finnexia in the railway station.

Here I return to Thompson's statement on the potential of an artwork to challenge existing forms of power: "the more one knows about art, often the less one knows how the general public is going to interpret it" (cited in Möntmann et al., 2013 p. 116). Thompson alludes to the idea that one's knowledge of the aesthetic dynamics around a certain art form may allow that person to feel that they can discern the instrumentalizing potential of the work. At the same time, this closeness to the artwork may leave the artist blind to any of the possible anomalies that may arise on the part of the audience, particularly within a public space. Relating to Thompson's quote, my experience of entering Finnexia entailed a mixed relationship to the artwork itself. At the time of the performance, I had worked with satire and performance in pub-

lic spaces, although in the case of Finnexia, it was my first time performing a work with such a layer of realism evident in the presented 'product.' Even so, I had no clearly defined expectation of how the event would be received or interpreted. From my standpoint, I could discern the details in the graphics and presentation that revealed Finnexia to be fictitious. Ultimately, I did not anticipate many people to believe that Finnexia could be real, or that the medication might generate a real sense of hope. What I did expect was a small-scale level of dialogical participation, along with some moderate, satirically based speculation on the part of the audience towards the fictitious medication. In addition, no extensive contingency plans were taken into practice around the event. This may have contributed to the conditions for manifesting such diverse and strong audience responses.

In the case of artworks that evoke strong emotional responses and ethical concerns from the audience and critics, Rancière (2011) suggests that those in the audience responding to the work attempt to consider how the art may reveal points of contention on a societal level – and to consider what their own (emotional) reactions might say about themselves. Addressing the responsibility of the artist to consider ethical issues, Beshty (2015) encourages a new way of understanding these concerns through an 'aesthetics of ethics,' particularly in the case of politically oriented art. For Beshty, this means that the artist has a responsibility to consider "how the work creates conditions of reception, how it makes whatever its message is perceivable" (p. 20). Read (1993) emphasizes the quality of the unknown in artistic experience. He describes the context of ethics in performance as one of possibility. Read suggests that performers enter into an unknown ethical situation without guaranteed resolution, "like the ethical relation which awaits creation" (p. 90). Given this, Read suggests a responsibility of the artist to move towards a possibility of new worlds by challenging existing norms. In the presentation of Finnexia, through implementing strategies to welcome the public into dialogue, I attempted to create 'conditions of reception' (Beshty, 2015), while at the same time making room for the possibility of 'new worlds' through a build-up of tension between fact and fiction (Read, 1993). I found this process of continual negotiation between ethical considerations and improvisatory action both exhilarating and challenging.

9.3 Considering the Outcomes of Finnexia

In this section, I answer the second subquestion of the thesis: **What can be *learned* from the dialogical encounters, and from the unexpected outcomes of the Finnexia performance?** At the onset of the Finnexia event, I

did not know what to expect. I approached the Finnexia performance space with a sense of openness towards the unknown. On a playful level, the intention of my artistic decisions was indeed to try to fool people into thinking the Finnexia medication could be real. In my opinion, the production quality of the Finnexia campaign did not meet my expectations of being completely airtight in its visual facade, since I had not completed the Huxor Pharmaceuticals website prior to the performance. I thought that, because of this, the camouflage effect of the advertisement would be ruptured. Even so, I hoped for the best – but what was this best that I hoped for? Primarily, I hoped for an intimate level of engagement with the public about personal issues related to language learning and integrating into Finnish culture. It was also my desire to make people wonder if this medical product could be real. I think I expected more people to question the validity of the advertisement facade. And, to my knowledge, not as many people did as expected.

There were questions regarding the details of Finnexia – its mechanism of action, its chemical and molecular structure, statistics on the clinical trials of the medicine, where it could be purchased, and the price. But few people directly questioned the authority of Finnexia and our presence in the space of the railway station. One of the performers, in a postperformance interview, mentioned this as well, that she was surprised at the level of trust people seemed to have in the image of what they were witnessing, especially given the fact that no medical authority appeared to be present at the Finnexia performance – a pharmacist or scientist, for example. Finnexia's outcome of generating a sense of hope in people resulted from a few factors, one being the mechanism of culture jamming (media appropriation) as potentially reifying the very power structures it critiques or satirizes. In the case of Finnexia, the hegemonic structures that may have been reified include those of product advertising, and the implied sense of authority imbued by figures of the medical and pharmaceutical community. This sense of trust displayed by the general public was, to me, also surprising in the sense that medications in Finland are generally not advertised in this fashion directly to the public. Thus, the direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising approach so ubiquitous to U.S. culture, seemed to operate relatively effectively within Finnish culture, where such forms of advertising are highly regulated compared to U.S. medical advertising guidelines (Fimea, 2018; Segercrantz & Lilja, 2018; Toivianen et al., 2004).

From a review of the video documentation and through interviews with performers, it seemed that Finnexia formed a sense of community, albeit temporary. This sense of connection revolving around the issues at hand – learning Finnish, finding work in Finland, relating to people while living in Finland – all seemed to grow from people's desire to connect with and discuss

these topics with others in a similar situation. In some cases, this sense of community formed outside of the physical site, in online communities in the form of threads of brief commentary, or in some cases, with the intention of protecting members of international groups in Finland from potentially dangerous advertising – in this case – protecting those from Finnexia, which appeared to some groups as a phishing tactic, or an effort to sell counterfeit medicine in Finland. Whether or not these communities generated meaningful dialogue with transformational potential, I cannot know for sure.

The experience of seeing the public audience drawn to the dialogue table in such a compelling way points to the possibility that there exists a need for such a space in Finland: a place to discuss personal stories of language learning and Finnish culture. What surprised me the most about the performance was this – that the public audience – despite being surrounded by the fictitious pharmaceutical facade of the performative event, were, in many cases, eager to share their personal stories of learning Finnish and navigating Finnish culture as a foreigner. The Finnexia public dialogues confirmed my fears about the possible consequences of not learning Finnish fluently (challenges with employment and social networking, etc.). On the other hand, the event generated a sense of hope for my own future here as a foreigner, allowing me to realize that language is only one way to contribute to society as a citizen (Finnexia performers, personal communication, September 25, 2012).

In Finnexia, the unexpected emotional and affective outcomes, to me, demonstrated the potential of the dominant discourse of medicine and pharmaceutical advertising to elicit a sense of trust and hope from people in the public realm. This response, as I witnessed from the Finnexia experience, can happen within an encounter of only a few minutes, to one that lasts over the course of a few days. Additional threads of dialogue that emerged in the aftermath of the intervention, including the online discussions and legal controversy with the Finnish Medicines Agency – were unexpected. Given that the topics of medicalization and pharmaceutical advertising were not reflected strongly in the content of the Finnexia dialogues, it may be that that the aim of medical satire was not strongly evident to the public audience. In this sense, the theme and satirical commentary towards medicalization stood in the background of the entire event, as a dormant form.

I am not certain that Finnexia carried itself out effectively as an intervention in the form of both a satire of medicalization and a socially engaged performance. Ultimately, I had to choose to emphasize one of these aims over the other. I chose to focus on inviting people to talk about their experience with language as a foreigner in Finland. For me, the main intent of the Finnexia intervention was to provide a welcoming, playful, intimate space for dialogue in a location that normally bears witness to people hurrying to-

wards somewhere, or standing around waiting for someone. The satirical element served as a scaffolding for the dialogical core of the event. It was important as a self-expressive element of the work, although it did not have an intent of being communicated directly to the audience as a topic for discussion. In my view, the act itself of presenting a pill for language learning served as a statement about overmedicalization. At the time, I did not feel it needed to be explained to audience members, or that the satirical nature of the project needed be revealed.

Perhaps a direct explanation was needed only in the rare cases where people were sincerely keen on buying the medicine, and going to the pharmacy, etc. Those would be exceptions. In Finnexia, there was a paradoxical approach of using the commercial spectacle in public, with an attempt to create a space for intimate dialogue and authentic, face-to-face encounters. The satirical element also operated through this paradoxical manifestation. Thinking back on this now, as to whether or not it was necessary to offer a full explanation of the medical satire of Finnexia to the public audience – I would not have changed much in this respect, since the self-reflective element around the medical satire, and an aspect of the framing for the public dialogue operated on the hinge of confusion between fact and fiction.

However, if I were to present Finnexia again, within this commercial framework, I would include following: 1) more explicit informed consent forms for interview participants at the dialogue table, explaining the fictitious nature of Finnexia; and 2) a full explanation of the research (and pill contents) to those participants who won the lottery prize drawing and were given a package of the Finnexia pills.

I did not expect medicalization (or the satirization of it), to be a primary topic of discussion with the public audience during the Finnexia performance in the Helsinki Railway Station. It was really only something generated as a pre-performance phenomenon, left embedded in the pharmaceutical commercial facade, and possibly enacted through the performance. I also see the medical theme as a topic to be picked up after the performance, with scientists, as well as consumers, or anyone interested. I did not intend to 'snap people into reality' with a dose of hard satire, as much culture jamming aims to do. The manifestation of satire was at the forefront of the creative process, as part of the discussions with producers and designers, and professionals involved in the branding of Finnexia. For me, the unfolding of the project's satirical gesture emerged through the production process, during the ten months leading up to the performance. This time period involved play, humor, experimentation, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. In this way, the production process could be understood as a performative act, in this sense –for myself, and for those involved in the production process.

From the outcomes of the Finnish Medicines Agency debate, two issues come to light in terms of what is of importance to the artist, the pharmaceutical industry, government agencies, and the public at large. First, ethical considerations may differ among the artist, government agencies, commercial industries, and research institutions. In each case, the ethical standards reflect the personal or cultural values of that given individual, governing body, or institution. What might have been thought of as being carried out according to standard ethical guidelines by one person carrying out a project, may indeed be viewed as unjust, or even criminal in nature, by another entity. Secondly, another point that arises from the Fimea debate is the relationship between *ethical* and *legal* considerations. These seem to exist in different registers. Regarding the ethical considerations of the pharmaceutical industry, and those of the governing agency of Fimea, whose interests are at stake? Those of the consumer, the pharmaceutical industry, or both? To what extent are concerns of power and control relevant here? In this case, might Fimea's statement emerge fully out of concern for the protection of the public interest, or might the complaint be vying for the protection of the image of Finnish medicine, and of the pharmaceutical industry at large? While we may not reach a conclusion here, I believe these are important questions to raise.

Through Finnexia, I learned that, as important as it might be to engage the audience with the multiple layers of an artwork, ultimately, if the artist wishes to potentially deeply engage people on one level, then the expectations towards the other layers must be relinquished. The other layers will be present on some level, and some people may engage with those, too. But the artist must decide which will take precedence in the performance itself. Perhaps this is the way it must be, in order to make space for richer dialogue around one particular theme.

9.4 Reflecting on Ethics in Artistic Research

My experience with the Finnexia performance has brought me to recognize the value of discussing ethical decisions in the creative process of artistic research. Even in the case of there not being an official ethics review required for a body of artistic research (as in the case of Finnexia), the act of considering various approaches to an artistic presentation and how these approaches may affect the audience/participants, is indeed a crucial aspect of the creation process. Artistic expression holds a primary purpose in many scenarios of artistic research. Even within this process, I believe the artist's intention of the work in these cases may be maintained throughout the ethics review at academic institutions.

I propose a dialogical approach to the discussion of ethical considerations within a given project – a conversation that at best, includes voices of the artist-researcher, doctoral supervisors, practitioners from the arts field, and representatives of the university ethics review committee. This approach could include a discussion of how artistic expression within the research, particularly that of public art, can (or cannot) operate within the ethics guidelines of academic research. Since the start of my doctoral coursework in Finland (2008), developments have been made in establishing more defined guidelines for doctoral candidates in the Art Department at Aalto University. For example, doctoral art students are now required to take at least the online component of a research ethics course (Aalto University Arts faculty, personal communication, September 15, 2017).

In general, in comparison with doctoral art programs of other countries, the research ethics guidelines in Finnish academic institutions remain relatively open regarding the art practice component of doctoral artistic research. On the one hand, this level of freedom may offer an environment that encourages open experimentation and creative risk-taking within an academic environment. Conversely, the artist-researcher, in this scenario, may face future obstacles in publishing the outcomes of such research in journals published by institutions outside of Finland, whose publications guidelines require ethics review/approval prior to publication. (Personal communication, Aalto University Legal Services, January, 2017.) In my view, the artist-researcher, before undertaking the art practice component of the research, would benefit from a discussion with their supervisor about ethical considerations within the artistic production of the research.

In addition, I believe artist-researchers would also benefit from a course on ethics and art that encourages a philosophical exploration of ethics in the creative practice, public art, and interventionist performances. I mention these aspects of the doctoral arts curriculum as a way of considering how academic offerings and degree requirements may help to build an expanded knowledge base from which artistic research can operate. As in any academic institution, such curricula and ethics guidelines evolve over time, with particular aspects being dealt with as they arise within the research of doctoral students.

9.5 Observations on Cultural Integration in Finland

After reviewing the video interview data and experiencing face-to-face encounters with the public audience – and during a period of reflective time since that data review – I can now at least to a moderate extent begin to get a

glimpse of the broad range of experiences and life situations of immigrants living in Finland. What I see most clearly is the variation in the perceived need among immigrants to learn the Finnish language. For example, as a Caucasian/Latina, native English-speaker from the United States, my predicament may be markedly different from someone living in Finland originating from another country, of another ethnic or racial identity, arriving in Finland out of extenuating circumstances (e.g. seeking political asylum) and possessing no strong language skills in either English or Finnish. In my case, although working knowledge of the Finnish language certainly helps my situation in terms of socializing and feeling included as a part of Finnish culture, my need to master the Finnish language may not appear as urgent as the need experienced by someone in the previously mentioned situation.

Since the Finnish culture (in Helsinki) is relatively receptive to English-speaking, I am able to easily navigate through my daily life in mostly English. In addition, I have had some success in finding teaching positions and graphic design employment in Finland (Helsinki and Pori), relying only on my English language skills. Finally, the attitudes and perceptions towards immigrants in Finland may differ, when comparing those held towards native English-speaking foreigners (particularly those of U.S. origin) with those towards immigrants from other countries and of other ethnicities (Leinonen, 2012). Here, my purpose is not to expand on this topic. Rather, I mention this observation in order to raise awareness of issues surrounding the politics of cultural integration in Finland that came to my attention through the outcomes of Finnexia. In my view, the topics and concerns that presented themselves within the outcomes of this research demonstrate the emergent and generative capacity of artistic practice. While such ethical and sociopolitical concerns may arise through this type of artistic research, the question then remains of how to move on with these issues – within one's own artistic practice, academic research and beyond.

9.6 Summary

In this chapter, I attempted to answer the thesis questions, based on the outcomes of the research, and within the context of theories from the literature review. I included my observations and interpretations around artistic decisions and ethical issues that arose through the Finnexia performance intervention. I also touched on emergent issues that arose from Finnexia, around the politics of cultural integration in Finland. In the next chapter, I close with an overview of the aims of the thesis. I discuss the contributions and shortcomings of the research, and address the remaining questions.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

In this chapter I offer a summary of the thesis, describing the aims of each chapter, and the successes and unsuccessful aspects of the research, in relation to the research aims. Finally, I pose observations for further consideration. In this thesis, I have attempted to 1) create a theoretical foundation for discussing and analyzing the primary artistic production of the research, Finnexia, 2) provide an overview of my performative, socially engaged artistic methods within the context of artistic research, 3) describe the conceptualization, planning, and public performance of Finnexia, the primary artistic production of this research, 4) examine the unexpected emotional, ethical and legal outcomes of the Finnexia performance, and 5) address the research questions within the context of the theoretical framework.

From the standpoint of dialogical potential, one aspect of Finnexia that may be considered unsuccessful is that the social dynamic of the live performance in the local space of the railway station might have come across as too polite, since the conversations generally remained within the framing of the fictitious advertisement. Might the severity of maintaining the Finnexia pharmaceutical facade have short-circuited, and thereby prevented any possibility for deeper discussion about the politics of cultural integration and language learning – issues related to race, and ethnic discrimination? Another point of contention in Finnexia might be the fact that some people became emotionally upset when finding out that Finnexia does not exist, and that no one during the performance was directly told the nature of the art project.

At the same time, the emotional outcomes of the performance and legal repercussions could be seen as a success of the research, in the sense of providing evidence of Finnexia achieving one of its goals – appearing as a convincingly real medical product. It is interesting to think about what kind of dialogues might have emerged had the Finnexia product *not* appeared as convincing to as many people during the performance in the railway station. It could be argued that another questionable point of the research is the degree to which Finnexia may have reified the discourse of medical advertising. By this I mean that the Finnexia advertisement, through its reference to the image of medical authority, seemed to convince some audience members that the medication was real. This dimension of the performance could be addressed more closely in a future iteration of Finnexia. For example, in future presentations of the performance, I would implement more direct ways of following up with members of the public audience after the performance, particularly those people who appeared to believe that it was real. I would ask for the email and phone contacts of those people who received a package of

the Finnexia medication (placebo pills). I would also directly contact those participants who shared their personal stories about learning Finnish in the interviews at the round dialogue table. As it stands, after the Finnexia performance, there were follow-up interviews with only two audience members from the dialogue table.

At several points in time since 2012, I have considered the possibility of contacting those audience members who participated in interviews at the dialogue table. This would have been done in an effort to explain the Finnexia project in its research context. In these follow-up interviews, I would also have asked the participants how they had perceived the Finnexia advertisement – the nature of their emotional response, and whether or not they believed it was a real medication. For a number of reasons, I did not follow through with this idea: out of perceived lack of time due to other commitments that arose alongside my research, and in part, out of fear of what I might encounter through such dialogues.

A productive aspect of Finnexia might be the way it seemed to generate a temporary space for public dialogue around an issue that people who approached the performance seemed eager to discuss: learning Finnish and experiencing Finnish culture as a foreigner. I believe this was created, in part, through the development of a relatively convincing pharmaceutical visual framework in the performance space. In this sense, Finnexia may have filled this need by forming a contingent community in physical space around these topics. Critics of the performance may argue that Finnexia created this space at an ethical cost.

The legal debate with the Finnish Medicines Agency, along with the concerns of the media and performers, have led me to think in new ways about ethics and aesthetic considerations in the case of performative, interventionist art. My thoughts are that also, in this format of socially engaged art practice, it is important to consider the possible repercussions of artistic decisions, particularly within public spaces. In the final outcome, however, there will inevitably exist some unforeseen detail. Someone will ultimately be offended or find themselves in a state of discomfort. Surely one can minimize the risk in this case, although I believe one cannot completely eliminate it. This observation poses significant questions for artistic research within academic institutions – including whether or not the academic research institution is an appropriate venue for such artistic methods that, in my view, require a certain level of improvisatory freedom in which to generate new experiences. The question remains of how to navigate these seemingly competing perspectives on ethics in art practice and artistic research in public spaces. For me, there exists no single answer or approach to this question. A more complex response involves taking into consideration the ethical re-

search guidelines of a given institution, along with the issues that arise in the moment of presenting and encountering the work itself. This approach takes a level of background preparation, openness to the response of the participants, and willingness to discern one's own internal assessment of the situation.

Until recently, the unfinalized aspects of the Finnexia outcomes bothered me and left me unsettled, as though I could not be considered to be doing 'real' research unless there was some measurable, quantifiable, and utilitarian outcome to the dialogues. These unresolved aspects of the research included dialogues with those participants of the Finnexia performance who seemed to hold a belief in the product, and who may never have learned of the fictitious nature of the medicine. Another aspect involved the fact that we cannot know exactly how people in the audience processed their experience with Finnexia after leaving the event. This was a concern for me, particularly with those people who won a package of Finnexia pills as a lottery prize and took them home. At this point in time, I have reached an acceptance of this unsettled feeling, as part of the work itself. While these loose threads and uncertainties concerned me, they were also aspects of the performance that I now accept as part of the uncomfortable reality of the project's outcomes. This unfinalizability may appear troubling from the context of art as research, in the sense that some audience responses to the artistic experiment may never be known – only speculated on. In my view, from an aesthetic standpoint, this not-knowing exists as an inherent part of the work – as an element left to the possibilities of our imagination. It is this open-ended quality of some of the Finnexia encounters that invites more questions about the research itself, and about our relationship to knowledge, medicine, and our notion of reality.

This process of coming to terms with uncertainty and loose ends relates to a "methodology and reflexivity of discomfort" (Pillow, 2003), which emerged through my art practice in this research. As described in Chapter 3, this method, as it applies to my own research, involves acknowledging and leaning into unsettling emotions and experiences that arise through the research, rather than rushing to cover them up or push them away. The methodology of discomfort invites an attitude of acceptance towards unexpected situations, interactions with participants, research outcomes, and external responses to the research, without calling for an immediate need to change, define, or categorize what is happening. This approach may allow the artist-researcher to look at the remaining questions with openness and curiosity, rather than grasping for complete resolution: an act that, in my view, may result in overlooking the underlying complexities of the research outcomes. I believe that in this space of openness and curiosity, and through subsequent

art practice and emergent threads of the research, new perspectives on the situation(s) may reveal themselves.

For me, this research has brought to light a glimpse of how art functions or does not function in public spaces. It has shown me that as individuals, regardless of our role our voices hold the potential to influence the lives of others around us in ways that we cannot anticipate or even imagine. For this reason, our decisions matter. Despite the moments when we doubt the significance of our own voice through art-making or through our everyday interactions, we can attempt to remind ourselves of the impact of our words and actions, and how these might affect the people we encounter on a daily basis.

I cannot predict the future path of performative interventions in public space as artistic research. However, I can say that most likely, this form of art practice will continue to raise new ethical, aesthetic, and political questions within the art world and especially within academic research institutions. The questions that arise through these practices will challenge artists to reconsider their own definition of ethics with their own art practice. The same questions will challenge artist-researchers to reconsider the relationship between their own art practice and institutional ethics research guidelines. From the standpoint of artistic research, public art interventions may also encourage new perspectives towards the use of improvisational and experiential methods in knowledge creation.

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Lisa Erdman (U.S.A) is an artist, educator, and researcher. For a brief period, Lisa worked as a graphic designer of direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertising with Harte-Hanks Interactive, Inc., in New York. Through this experience, she adopted the aesthetics of pharmaceutical advertising into her artistic methods.

Using satire and corporate parody, Lisa's multimedia artwork explores the politics of medicine and cultural identity. She is interested in examining the mechanisms that shape one's personal identity and one's relationship to medical authority. Her work employs strategies from conceptual art, speculative design, science fiction, and performance.

Upon completing her doctorate degree, Lisa plans to pursue postdoctoral research with healthcare professionals, combining multimedia arts methods with clinical medical training. She is also seeking collaborations with astronauts and space engineers to design living environments and cultural experiences for human habitation on Mars.

Lisa earned a Master of Fine Arts in Electronic Arts from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Dance, Interarts & Technology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

What is the responsibility of the artist in public art interventions? Which ethical responsibilities arise in art practice, within the context of academic research? How might these concerns affect artistic decisions? These questions become central to contemporary, socially engaged art practice. In addition, as artists and artist-researchers increasingly borrow from commercial media in their practices, issues of representation and audience reception become paramount. Artistic decisions become ethical decisions.

Performing false hope examines the unexpected ethical issues and emotional responses that arose from Finnexia®, an advertisement campaign for a fictitious medication that helps people learn the Finnish language. Presented as a live performance intervention in the Helsinki Railway Station, Finnexia aimed to offer a space for public dialogue about the foreigner in Finland. The performance also presented a satirical commentary on overmedicalization and the proliferation of pill-based medical treatments. Finnexia served as the primary art production of Erdman's artistic research.

The author examines the ethical and legal consequences of generating *false hope* in the public eye. In this case, 'false hope' refers to the scenario in which some audience members expressed a growing sense of belief in the existence of Finnexia. The book reveals the paradoxes, insights, and potential risks that may arise through artistic interventions in public space.

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