



# **Festivals in Norway's Southern Hemisphere**

In depth, qualitative research into the southern festival market and a selection of its festivals. A look into the motivation and voluntary work in the southern Norwegian festival scene.

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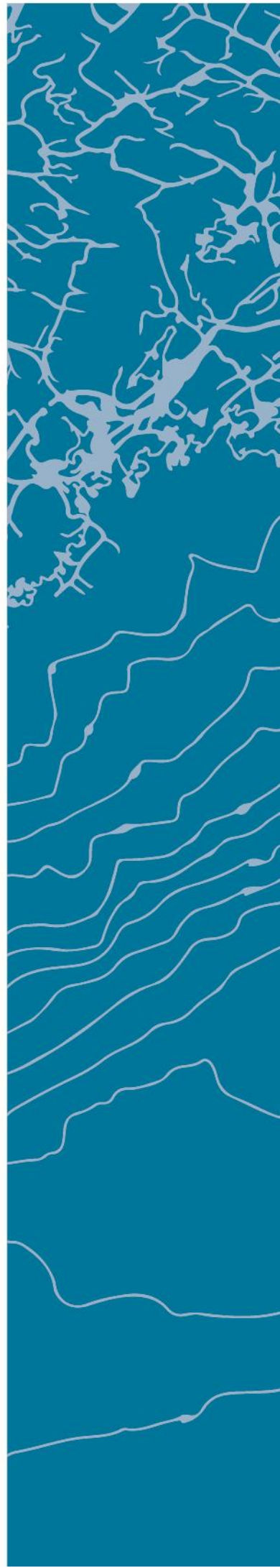
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*“And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music”*

- Friedrich Nietzsche

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Motivation

I remember my first experiences watching live music very clearly. I was close to 4 years old, watching my father's KISS Alive DVD from 1977. As the band was playing I sat on the couch, mesmerized by the amount of energy, lights and the way they interacted with the crowd. There was a magical atmosphere between the band on stage and the audience, which even through a screen was translated as something entirely unique. Through the years growing up I started going to shows whenever I had the chance, permission and money. As I grew older I started to immerse myself in the festival scene. It was the ultimate live experience. During a festival, you can experience an array of emotions coming at you like a freight train, each varying from one show to the next. Concerts coming at you from all directions, music everywhere. People discussing music, listening to music, wheezing while running to catch the next show on the other side of the festival grounds. I was always impressed with the idea of festivals, and how they each portray themselves differently when you enter their doors. From the food, they serve, to the musical palette they present and the conceptual art on the posters in the streets. I found myself thinking "who is doing all of this? Where does all this equipment come from? Who arranged for these artists to come here?". There was always the thought that somewhere in the crowd, maybe even next to me was the one responsible for all of this coming together. The one who had the answers to all these questions. Was it more than one person though? Was there a team involved doing different tasks? From seeing the price of tickets, I always thought "Wow, they're probably making loads of money. There are so many people here". All these questions further fueled my interests to dive into the core of what makes a festival come together and function like clockwork. When I moved to Kristiansand in 2012 to start my education, I realized there was a rich history of big festivals and spearheads in leading Norwegian festivals from here. Skral, Quart, Hove, and many other festivals I had heard of had deep connections to local players here. A few years later when I started immersing myself in the business side of music I knew immediately what I wanted to write about in my master thesis. I was going to write about the southern Norwegian festival scene.

## 1.2 Relevance of Topic

With the ongoing rise of the digital medium the music market in Norway has steadily increased each year. Unfortunately, the numbers for 2016 have not yet been released at the time of me writing this thesis. The numbers presented below are however acquired from the most recent report delivered by the Arts Council of Norway. From 2012 up until the end of 2015 the total income of the Norwegian music industry market has increased by +7% overall, totaling a sum of 3727 million NOK's. From 2014 to 2015 the sales of physical music have taken a turn and increased by 48%, sending the income of downloading into a dramatic fall from 2014 with -44%. Streaming has taken its place and almost doubled its income from 2012-2015. Tickets sold for concerts in Norway are also seeing an upturn after the small setback of 2014 where sales went down by -2%, since then it has turned around and is back up by +4% in 2015, totaling a sum of 1929 million NOK's. (Halmrast, Nilsen, Refsli, & Sjøvold, 2016, ss. 11,16,20-22) These numbers show promise for the music industry in Norway and for the coming years of being such a small but tightly packed industry. Along with the expanding industry, the festival scene in Norway has been growing rapidly in the last couple of years. Ranging from both the ultra-commercial to the very niche-oriented local festival. According to The Norwegian Ministry of Culture there are as of now over 1.000 cultural festivals being arranged every year. More than 600 of these are music festivals. (Graatrud, 2014, s. 5) In 2015 alone the 93 out of 95 festival-arrangers whom delivered reports executed 5799 various events. Including visitors to free events there's been estimated a visitor-total of 2.1 million attendees. Considering that Norway's total population as of 1. January 2017 is 5.258.317 people, is an astounding number. (Rykkja, Anders og Ericsson, & Birgitta, 2016, s. 12) To arrange local festivals has become a trendy way to let people experience local food, music and scenery. Everywhere you go there is always some sort of festival about to start. Festival-researcher and professor Reidar Mykletun at Høgskolen i Stavanger (HIS) argues that this is a reaction due to the rise of the major festivals. "This is a natural consequence to the rise of the gigantic festivals of the last 18 years. Those festivals are very expensive and difficult to arrange. So therefore, there will be others whom seek different solutions. These small festivals take a day or two. The big ones usually a week...I am certain that we will see a continuing rise of smaller festivals. The big ones are like dinosaurs and will become extinct." (Nordal & Reite, 2016, ss. 3-4)

There are some interesting aspects to this both in terms of the motivation behind the people arranging it and why people are so obsessed with starting something of their own. Starting a new festival is a lot of work and almost always doomed to not make a profit for years to come during the struggle of obtaining and maintaining the audience and sale of tickets while making sure everything runs smoothly. Often based entirely on a horde of volunteers, a tight budget, sponsorship by local and national cultural funding. So why do they do it? What entices a group of friends, colleagues, students to start such a tiring project? Nationally 20.000 people worked as volunteers either before or during festivals in 2015. (Rykkja, Anders og Ericsson, & Birgitta, 2016, s. 40) In Kristiansand, a city way south in Norway there are close to 10 music festivals being arranged in near vicinity during two months of the summer alone. To dig deeper into the motivation of the individual festivals, their origins and visions for their event we could uncover some interesting information behind why festivals have become such a big trend in later years.

### 1.3 Intention of Thesis

My intention with this thesis is to shed some light on what it takes to arrange a festival, the challenges and risks they face in doing so, and more importantly why their respective leaders chose to start their own. I intend to compare the data I collect from interviewing leaders and key players from four various sized festivals ranging from the most mainstream success to the festival whom with pride call themselves “Norway’s least visited Christian festival”. I have no intention of generalizing or comparing the festival scene in Norway or the southern parts in the least, only to provide a snapshot of the scene as it stands today. I find it interesting to compare the data due to the chance of there being similarities in their intention and methods, but also to investigate what makes them so entirely different. I have in no way the intention of glorifying either side, only to compare and educate interested parties in such a study. I also intend this thesis to become a resource for others like myself whom find an interest in the festival industry. Ranging from the average festival-goer to other festival-arrangers. This topic is surprisingly rarely written about other than in side notes found at the bottom of a barely relatable subject in another thesis or article.

I intend to use whatever data and resources I find and collect them in this dissertation. I intend to find out what criteria exist that constitutes success for a festival in the southern parts of Norway and how the market and local vicinity affects and contributes in this aspect.



## 1.4 Limitations

I will limit my research interviews to a set of four festivals whom are all located in the southern part of Norway. The reason I do this is to have more concise data from a specific set of interviews consisting of subjects in extremely wide variety. In addition, the festivals I have chosen each represent different types of music festivals the Norwegian festival market consists of in terms of booking and audience profiles. The southern part of Norway has seen a lot of music festival history and houses “veterans” of the festival industry whom may shed light on some of my questions. The questions I have prepared for each interview are all the same to help me stick to the subject and make sure I get the data I need for comparison. Also, due to the limited time given to complete research and execution of this thesis I do not have the time to conduct research during a festival as I would have liked to. To have some extensive data to capture the essence of a live music festival.

Therefore, the most part of my questions and data will be centered around past festivals that have been arranged, or are to be arranged in the future.

## 1.5 Structure

My dissertation will be structured in six chapters. In chapter 1 I introduce my topic and proper justification for choosing this subject, the relevance of the topic along with the limitations and most prominent research material. In chapter 2 I lay out some historical background to pinpoint how and why the Norwegian festival industry had this enormous growth and appeal to the Norwegian society. In chapter 3 I present the validity of my research methods and data, along with the implementation of validity in qualitative research such as mine. In chapter 5 I introduce my interview subjects with their background and role in the festival market, and then I present my findings from the interviews. I also compare the results of my interviews with the research of history explained in chapter 2 to paint a picture of the living and breathing festival in all its empirical form. Finally, in chapter 6 I offer my conclusion to summarize my process and findings.

The reference style used throughout my thesis is APA as suggested and preferred by our University.

## 2.0 Historical background & Previous Research

### 2.1 Previous Research

As previously stated I found little academic research on my specific topic with the parameters and limitations I have set myself to uphold, other than various articles, scarce interviews and other of the like. However, I have taken interest and immersed myself in the research found in the book by Aksel Tjora “*Festival! Mellom rølp, kultur og næring*”. In this book, he and his co-writers have gathered a lot of interesting data concerning various aspects of what a festival means to the Norwegian cultural eco-system, the local identity and the industry in general. Tjora has contributed greatly to research into Norwegian festivals as a professor in sociology at NTNU (Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet). I have also considered the book “*Lokalt kulturliv i endring*” by Olaf Aagedal. He has studied the cultural progression to a festival-based culture in Norway. Simon Frith’s “Live Music Matters” gave me international perspective on the importance of the incredibly important sociological factors of a live event and how they intervene in the economic factors. Furthermore, I contacted Norske Konsertarrangører (NKA, Norwegian Concert arrangers), which is a democratic member-society comprised of all the biggest and smallest culture arrangers in Norway. Working together they shape the way the concert industry works in Norway and educate on new innovations and how to become the best arranger possible. They also make annual reports of the live industry numbers in Norway and display them for free on their website. I found a lot of very interesting data explaining the growth in the Norwegian live-market over the last few years. These reports gave me the statistical backbone to base my research on and further strengthen the relevance in my topic.

### 2.2 Cause and Effect

Causality is described as the agency that connects one process (the cause) with another process (the effect), where the first is partly responsible for the second, and the second is dependent on the first. A pretty basic term describing progression. I find it important to state my understanding of this beforehand in this part of the chapter due to the way the description is phrased. It phrases perfectly the bond between recorded music, and live music. As the industry of recorded music has changed, so have the live industry.

It would benefit me to briefly go through changes in recorded music before I start describing the progression of the festival market, just because of causality and the effect the state of recorded music has had on the live market. So firstly, I will give a brief presentation of some of the most important changes in the way we consume music, and changes in the industry.

The industry of recorded music like most creative industries is heavily influenced by technology. As far back as before the 1900's we have had synthesizers. Albeit simple in effect compared to the instruments we have attained today, most of the same principles apply. The home recording studio by far, has been one of if not the biggest change in music of all time. To be able to sit at home and write, on any given instrument, and then record yourself with simple equipment at a price tag most can afford. This is industry changing evolution. The music industry has seen their greatest triumphs and hardest blows economically from the progression of technology. The transition from the vinyl records of the mid 1900's to the Compact Disk (CD) which rapidly became the standard vessel of recorded music, brought great revenues to the industry due to the low cost of production and the increased ease of distribution and quality. With this increased interest in "digital sound", P2P (peer-to-peer) file sharing software was created. Most notably was Napster, which was launched in 1999 by Shawn Fanning. Napster proved to become one of the biggest industry-changers the music business has ever seen. By deriving the industry of all control over the medium that had now become intangible, Napster set the new standard of consumption in the blink of an eye. This change brought about a transformative effect which effectively changed all aspects of the industry. Businesses went bankrupt and people lost their livelihoods. But many saw opportunities where others saw chaos. Apple popularized the idea of purchasing albums online with iTunes, and used it as a marketing tool for their iPod. iTunes introduced the idea of fixed prices for individual tracks and albums. By making it possible to pick and choose your tracks instead of buying whole albums, the consumers got picky. Today we can easily see the influences of that notion in the industry, as the single has become a much more prominent sales-point of recording than the album. Spotify launched in 2008 and has become the most prominent player in streaming. They would later introduce the ability to share playlists with other users. This would change the way we listen to music forever, and introduce another major business market. Spotify in a way only further elaborates on the idea iTunes started. The pick and choose mentality. 2015 we streamed globally 317.2 billion songs, a gigantic rise from the 164,5 billion in 2014. (IFPI Digital Music Report 2016, 2016)

Streaming shows no signs of stopping, and will probably still be the relevant standard in many years to come. In IFPI's global music report from 2016 it is stated that revenues increased 45.2 % to US\$ 2.9 billion and, over the five-year period up to 2015, have grown more than four-fold. In IFPI's Digital Music Report from 2016 they showed statistics that back this. The digital share of the industry revenues is now at 45 %, while physical is at 39 %. This is the first time in history this has happened, while the year before they were tied at 47/47 %. (IFPI Digital music report 2015, 2015) This means that digital music is now the main revenue stream of recorded music.

Live music and recording are both part of what David Hesmondhalgh calls the "cultural industries". (Hesmondhalgh, 2013) The cultural industries are made up of; Recording, Publishing and Live. The dynamics between these is highly interesting but I will focus my attention on live and recorded music. During recent years, the live sector of the music business has overtaken recorded for the first time as the largest sector. (Wikström, 2013). This ties in with the lower income derived from sales of recorded music. Whereas the album was once the main seller, and live was a marketing tool, the roles are now reversed. Live suffered as the recordings sold, and now the table has turned. (Frith, Live Music Matters, 2007) The album is a warm up before the big international tour the artist is working on. Pollstars 2015 Year End Report states that "It was also a good year for the global concert business with the Top 100 Worldwide Tours generating a total gross of \$4.71 billion. That is up 11% over 2014..." (Pollstar Pro, 2016) Artists realized that the music they have made cannot sustain them by album sales alone, and so touring and concerts became their best bet. Along with the increasing consumption, the festivals in particular, became important as the showcases of new artists and further growth of the live sector. (Nordgård, 2013) As the consumers now spend less money on recorded music, they have more money to spend on live concerts. This view is apparent in the marketing of artists today. Online and social media focuses heavily on live studio sessions and exclusive performances on TV shows and the like for further promoting that you should go see the artist live. Alan Krueger describes this as "Bowie Theory", referring to an interview with David Bowie in 2002. Bowie stated that "Music itself is going to become like running water or electricity [...] You'd better be prepared for doing a lot of touring because that's really the only unique situation that's going to be left."

## 2.3 A Recent Historical Perspective

Norway is a country whom in later years have been investing heavily into cultural growth. In the early stages of the 1900's Norway started investing in the classical music and concert-culture. In the 60's and 70's after the rise of musical counter-cultures and a globalized cultural industry, musicians and the audience in general started to erase the boundaries between high and low-culture. The boundaries both creatively for the musicians and for the consumers changed. In reaction to this development the state issued a revision in the national governmental funding of music in the early 90's. To accommodate the development in the newfound public interests. The cultural hierarchy that had once existed became more and more faded.

The state expressed a culture-policy which would move towards making sure all genres of music would be treated equally and funded as equally as possible. This was further embellished in 2005 with an increase in funding set to stimulate the cultural industry in Norway across all spectrums and genres. The emergence of digital, and evolution in the international music industry was also a contributing factor to the increase in funding. In 2005 the total assets set towards music was at a 454 million NOK's, however in 2013 it is set at 1 billion NOK's. This is a staggering increase of 123,7% in 8 years. (Norges offentlige utredninger, 2013, ss. 136-142). From this increase in funding also going towards support-funds more and more local events suddenly had the chance to establish themselves. By looking at the numbers from 2004 we can see that 28% of the population in Norway had visited a festival that same year. Four years later that number increased to 32%. Then in 2006, from the 56 festivals whom reported their numbers it was estimated that a total of 1 million people had visited their festivals that year. Same in 2010, 55 festivals reported a total attendance of 1.4 million people. (Norges offentlige utredninger, 2013, ss. 266-269). There is no doubt from looking at these numbers that festivals were becoming one if not the most important cultural arena for the Norwegian artists and musicians. Most of these festivals being arranged only from private initiative and the iron will to build something for the local community to enjoy and to pull attention to their local culture. With the ability to get funding from local and national support-instances, the festival scene flourished. The country was experiencing what culture-researchers are calling "*Culturizing*" (Aagedal, Egeland, & Villa, 2009, s. 12) Norway was in fact one of the countries in Europe with the most arranged festivals per area, per year in 2008. (E24, 2008, s. 1)

A lot of these festivals are local independent festivals based around the traditions native to the towns location or local history. These are often arranged entirely on voluntary work and the sense of building an identity and contributing to preserving local culture. Several thousand volunteers rush to lend their hand to festivals every year. (Lognvik, Torstveit, & Lurås, 2016) This development also affects the bigger more commercial mainstream festivals. There are few new big Norwegian festivals, but mostly the same big ones whom have only gotten bigger. Festivals like Øya and Slottsfjell continue to stay on top both financially and in size. Some exceptions are Tons of Rock in Halden (established 2013) and the immensely popular EDM party, Findings Festival (established 2014) in Oslo. Festivals such as Øya, Slottsfjell and Palmesus are seeing exponential growth due to the increased interest in festivals. Professor Aksel Tjora made a comment on the development of the popularity of Norwegian festivals in 2014 (Graatrud, 2014, s. 2):

“The prophecy of the coming death of festivals from a couple of years ago, was exaggerated. More people attend festivals, not just young people. Festival enthusiasts bring both children and grandmother along, and festivals have become more family-friendly. People have good finances and willingly pay the fee for festival tickets. Social media makes sure more people know about the festivals, and a unique festival profile can draw both people and artists across borders. There is so much enthusiasm for the given festival among the participant that they come regardless of the artists.”

– Aksel Tjora, 2014

This notion was also supported by then-CEO of Norske Konsert-arrangører (Norwegian Concert-Arrangers) Gry Bråtømyr:

“We see an increase in establishing new festivals, and we have a member registry record every year. Festivals are growing in symbiosis with a good organizer environment in several places in the country. This makes it safer to arrange festivals. Organizers have gotten better on both economy and the overall experience”

– Gry Bråtømyr, 2014

The so called “coming death of festivals” that they are referring to is the event of a serious decline in attendance at a series of small-medium sized festivals during the summer of 2008. (Ravnstad & Landrø, 2008) Slottsfjell and the bigger festivals noticed next to no difference. But the smaller festivals suffered economically.

Olavsfestdagene in Trondheim suffered a deficit of 7 million NOK’s from this summer alone.

From this both festival-experts and experts in economics projected the death of the booming festival culture in a few years' time. The director of Sparebank 1, Marvin Wiseth commented on the situation as simply a problem of competition and a crowded festival-market.

“During this spring I counted via the Internet and I ended up with around 500 (festivals), that means that it is more than one festival on average per county (kommune) and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those are being arranged in June-July-August. This way it is going to be a very heavy competition. I sadly do not think that there is room for everyone. So, I believe that those whom survive are those who take care of their economy and provide the highest artistically quality in what they are doing.”

- Marvin Wiseth, 2008

Emma Lind from Agderforskning (Research in Agder) had some rather interesting comments on this event in relation to the market south in Norway, as they are facing the same case when it comes to competition.

“What we have seen here in the southern parts of Norway is that there are many ways for festivals to compete, and one of those is to find your own niche. We can tell that festivals also seek to partner up with the local businesses to strengthen their economy. And of course, this also means that festivals now face an increasing need to professionalize themselves.”

- Emma Lind 2008

Tjora further researches the sudden increase in popularity around festivals by taking a closer look at the festival audience themselves. (Tjora, 2013, ss. 30-51) He argues that with the increasing amount of festivals being arranged there has become an increasing tendency to use the attendance of certain festivals in the same way as you would boast of an achievement or understanding of something of notable social worth. I.e. to choose one cultural event over another to separate oneself or relate oneself to an ideal to appear trendy and in vogue. This notion is supported by the occurrence of Palmesus, Poolside and Findings Festival whom both boast the most popular names of EDM (Electronic Dance Music). These events are the essential parties “everyone” wants to go to. The place to be, so to speak. Palmesus sell out all their tickets for next year's event a week after the current year's event. This is unprecedented in Norway and has never been the case for a festival as young as this one. It is therefore an undeniable proof of an abrupt change in the way festivals are marketing themselves, and the way the rest of the festival industry react to this. The founder of Findings Trond Opsahl from Sky Agency describes the EDM movement and Findings as a shy-away from the so called “cred-music Norway”. (Schreiner, 2016, s. 3).

Daniel Nordgård, a Norwegian researcher, teacher at the University of Agder in Kristiansand, and contributor in Tjora's book (Festival!), gives great insight into the development in the Norwegian festival scene from three individual festivals themselves. He discusses the increased number of festivals in Norway to have a correlation with the increase in prices which artists operate in. He describes the notion that the increase in festivals may be due to the increase in focus of artists and the increase in the need for bigger capacities of live performances. A natural development when considering the decline in revenue derived from recorded music. Naturally then, as more festivals appear, the more can the artist claim in payment due to the increase of demand. The festivals he interviews show a concern for the lack of bigger acts getting established, and the increase of smaller-medium sized acts. This in correlation with spoiling the audience with a major artist one year, and not being able to follow up immediately with artists of the same caliber the next. He also elaborates on the position festivals have in Norway as stepping stones for creating the big artists of tomorrow. An important factor separating the festival from being just another concert. It can be an important showcase of new talent fronted by a household artist topping the bill and drawing a crowd. (Festival!, 2013, ss. 54-69)



## 3.0 Choice of Methodology

In this chapter I will present the methodological approach chosen to address the research questions in my interviews. My main three questions whom the questionnaire I wrote center around are: How is the festival-market south in Norway shaped today, who are the major and minor players and how do they appeal to their audience? How does their festival function and why was it established, how much of a difference is there in the vision and intention for each individual festival? How do they utilize local resources and volunteers, do they each focus on representing their local community despite their size or booking-profile? Do they all coincide in harmony despite the tight summer schedule and limitation of audience?

### 3.1 Research Design

This thesis is based around the In-Depth Interview model. The approach focuses on eliciting a vivid picture of the interview participant's perspectives on the given research topic. To gain insight into the experiences and opinions on particular events. This design is especially well put to use in situations where the researcher wants to create a comfortable atmosphere for the conversation to flourish around the topic and to let the interview subject feel confident to share as much information as possible. (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, ss. 29-32) The questions for this thesis centers around the desire to better understand the festival market, and the coordinated clockwork that is the festival arrangers and their administration. By focusing on the festival field and its players one also focuses on people whom work hard due to their fascination and love for music and art. In this kind of thesis which I focus to write, a quantitative methodology would not be applicable due to lack of human opinions and perception. This would undoubtedly work if the thesis was focusing on an economic standpoint, or in-depth market research with statistics laying the ground work. But for a thesis such as this where the focus is set on the people, it would not function per intention. It would certainly not answer the questions the thesis is based on. The qualitative approach is much better suited for a thesis such as this to unravel the ways of voluntary work, cooperation, art perception and human intention.

### 3.2 In-Depth Interview

Qualitative research is to “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”. (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, s. 3) How to acquire data and conduct studies like this depends entirely on the thesis, intention and topic. For a consumer-behavioral thesis, a focus group may be found to provide the most accurate data. For a situational thesis on a given event, a field study would be a natural choice. But this thesis is based around a specific field consisting mostly of people whom act based on notions that revolves around human factors. These human factors include the appreciation of art, cooperation, the sense of community and the desire to create. The best way to write a thesis such as this is to conduct an in-depth interview designed to create a comfortable atmosphere where the experiences, beliefs and thoughts on these human notions can be collected as data. Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest, & Namey list a great many reasons for choosing the in-depth interview over for example focus groups which could also have been a suggestion for consideration to my thesis. I would like to refer to this table here:

**Table 4. Strengths of in-depth interviews versus focus groups**

	<b>Appropriate for</b>	<b>Strength of method</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	Eliciting individual experiences, opinions, feelings Addressing sensitive topics	Elicits in-depth responses, with nuances and contradictions Gets at interpretive perspective, i.e., the connections and relationships a person sees between particular events, phenomena, and beliefs
<b>Focus groups</b>	Identifying group norms Eliciting opinions about group norms Discovering variety within a population	Elicits information on a range of norms and opinions in a short time Group dynamic stimulates conversation, reactions

The argument towards gather interpretive perspectives in accordance with particular events, phenomena and beliefs is the very essence of what I am trying to achieve with this thesis. I would also like to refer to a paraphrasing of Per Mangset, a sociologist and professor emeritus at Høgskolen i Telemark. This paraphrasing was made by Olaf Aagedal in 2009 where he writes as a paraphrasing of Mangset: “To progress in this situation and understand new moves and connections in the cultural field, Norwegian cultural-political researchers local in-depth studies of the cultural field and a qualitative approach”

(Aagedal, Egeland, & Villa, 2009, s. 13)

The main strength in choosing the in-depth interview lies in just that the subject this thesis is about, is represented by every single subject chosen for the interviews. Their answers are valuable data both individually and cohesively.

### 3.2.1 Selection of Interview Subjects

My selection of interview subjects was very deliberate. I did extensive research into the individual festivals based in the south of Norway, and picked out the four whom best represent different varieties you would find in the Norwegian festival market. I wanted to focus my research in one person per festival. This one person would have to be able to answer my questions regarding all aspects of the festival they belong to and have a grasp and opinion on the current state of the industry, market and scene. Therefore, I sought to choose the heads of each festival, also making sure they were either veterans or founding members in the festival. This to have the potential of going more in depth on the history of the festival and the scene. I was lucky enough that the heads of these festivals that I had sought to include were of varying age and sex. Half were men and half were women. This gave me the chance to get even more invaluable data consisting of data from entirely different perspectives.

The music industry is notorious for being male dominated, and women in leader positions are far apart. However, in recent years' women have started to make their way back into the industry. Due to the nature of this industry I found it worthwhile to get the perspective of women in leader positions as well because they will have an entirely different idea of how the industry works, how to arrange festivals and to work in the cultural field in general. I researched heavily into how to properly conduct an In-depth interview. I paid great attention to *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide* by Natasha Mack, Cynthia Woodson, Kathleen MacQueen and Emily Namey. They focus extensively on the ethical, practical and social aspects of conducting the interviews, which is a great recipe in succeeding to collect the desired data. The techniques described for utilizing body language, tone and phrasing of the question were incredibly helpful and valuable for when I was conducting the interviews.

### 3.3 Implementation of Design

In order to get a hold of the interview subjects I sought to contact them by mail as an appropriate way of introducing myself and my agenda.

With the help from my supervisor and various connections in the music scene here in the south I acquired the information to contact them. When asking for permission to conduct these interviews I made sure to state the nature of the thesis and the summary of my research questions. The subjects seemed very interested in participating, and made an effort to schedule a meeting as soon as possible. I let them decide the location for the individual interviews to let them feel comfortable in the situation and environment. The locations consisted mostly of cafes and public spaces where the possibility of enjoying a cup of coffee was possible. I made sure to be as prepared as possible for any eventuality that could occur during the interviews. I brought a digital recorder of sufficient quality which recorded the entire conversation, digital and physical copies of the questionnaire for the interview subject to read should they desire it. Every interview went along without any hindrance. The atmosphere was pleasant and the topics stayed relevant and constructive. After the interviews were concluded I started transcribing the audio recordings.

Transcribing means to make a written copy of the conversation from the audio recording. This was done to make the writing process easier, as the interviews were done in Norwegian. Also, it would be much easier to send back to the interview subjects for validation and any potential desires for revisions on their part. When sending out the transcriptions there were very few whom had wishes for revisions in general.

There were a few ways they phrased themselves that they wanted to change, but other than that no further revisions were needed.

### 3.4 Validity

In this following section I will lay out the strengths, weaknesses and nature of my chosen research methodology: qualitative research. I will also explain the factor of validity and its impact on my research and the field of qualitative research in general.

### 3.4.1 The Nature of Validity

Explaining validity in qualitative research requires a quick summary of what validity means and what it means in this context. In short, validity in the field of quantitative research is explained as the factor that "...determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are.

In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit "the bull's eye" of your research object?..." (Joppe, 2000, s. 1) Validity in the qualitative field has been described more as "construct validity" (Wainer & Braun, 1998) The construct mentioned here is the hypothesis, questions or notion that lays the groundwork for the data which is to be gathered and what data which is chosen. Validity in the qualitative field is therefore very dependent upon the work laid down beforehand, and the specific intentions of the thesis. The discussion on the appliance of validity in qualitative research is made up of the idea that validity would not apply to the wide range of factors included in the field of qualitative research. However, researchers realized the need for some sort of qualification of their research. So, validity was thus adapted and developed individually by many researchers as concepts befitting qualitative research.

Giving validity a new set of terms to be used in the field. Some of these include terms such as: credibility, rigor, plausability and trustworthiness. (Dodd & Davies, 2002) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) (Seale, 1999). These terms will make the concept of validity and testability work in qualitative research, and so allow this field of research to produce higher quality findings and results. In the research, I have conducted for this thesis I find no reason or basis to question the trustworthiness of any of my interview subjects.

This due to the answers they produce reflect the answers of the other subjects, and the questions are designed to revolve around the area of expertise they all share.

The groundwork laid before-hand in this thesis supports the answers provided by the interview subjects and the findings later described in this thesis. The topic of generalization and triangulation being a contributing factor to validating the research for this thesis is a factor I feel the need to address as well since it is a major form of validation in qualitative research. As stated in the chapter 1.3 earlier in this thesis I have no intention of generalizing the festival scene, as the ways of arranging a festival in Norway does not include a "recipe" or any formal "instruction".

They are all individual creations based around their local scene and the people arranging them. However, by choosing to focus my research on such a specific market such as the southern festival scene I find myself sitting on data which paints a very vivid picture nevertheless. There is a “communal” factor to the festival scene and everyone is depending on each other to pull interest towards the area, and so they all find themselves copying certain aspects from each other. So, by choosing such a wide spectrum of research objects as I have for this thesis, there are indeed factors and data that will fall into generalizing and therefore validating my research further.

### 3.4.2 Internal Validity

The main questions for validation of research conducted in the field of qualitative research are all connected to the factor of internal validity. The question posed by Lewis and Ritchie (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, s. 274) of “Are we accurately reflecting the phenomena under study as perceived by the study population? This gives rise to a host of subsidiary questions all of which concern the strength of the research methods used and the quality of analysis and interpretation that takes place”. To combat this question, I will further rely on Lewis and Ritchie for their five checkpoints of validity for my research in this thesis:

“- Sample coverage: did the sample frame contain any known bias; were the criteria used for selection inclusive of the constituencies known, or thought, to be of importance?

- Capture of the phenomena: was the environment, quality of questioning sufficiently effective for participants to fully express/explore their views?

- Identification or labelling: have the phenomena been identified, categorized and 'named' in ways that reflect the meanings assigned by study participants?

- Interpretation: is there sufficient internal evidence for the explanatory accounts that have been developed?

- Display: have the findings been portrayed in a way that remains 'true' to the original data and allows others to see the analytic constructions that have occurred?”

(Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, s. 274)

When selecting my interview subject's I was set on finding the people whom best represent the entirety of the spectrum that makes up the festival scene here in the southern part of Norway. I sought to get in touch with the heads of these festivals, the people whom had insight into the aspects I specified earlier in this thesis.

These were the only restrictions I set for myself when searching for subjects. I was lucky enough that the people I was eager to have represented were far in between of both age, sex and background. I immediately set myself to chase the aspect of variety when planning this thesis, and so that was a great coincidence for acquiring data. I would argue that due to the variety in my selection they are entirely representative of the festival scene here, as their differences reflect in their festivals and so in the scene and market cohesively. Perhaps the variety is not the greatest source of internal validation in my thesis, but the intention was to interview heads of festivals in the given scene and that grants it the internal validation needed. When speaking of the known biases in the selection they are of a fair bit of importance. Since all of the subjects work in and this thesis is based on the music scene, preferences is a recurring theme.

The bias is based around their interest in music, and experiences from working in the industry. Heads of festivals often do the booking and profile of their festival, and so the music they enjoy having is essential. The subjects were aware of the core theme of the thesis, but were only given a summary of the questions which were to be asked during the interview itself. Therefore, they would have no time to come up with pre-written answers or any of the sort. All subjects were asked the same exact questions in the same order every time, and so the possibility of inconclusive data from sloppy questioning is not an issue.

When talking about the second point “capture of the phenomena”. The interview subjects were all allowed to choose the location of their interviews themselves to create the most comfortable environment and atmosphere possible to them individually. As stated earlier, the subjects all chose almost the exact same sort of environment to conduct the interviews. Café’s with a small crowd and with themselves holding a cup of coffee in hand.

The questions were also as stated earlier asked in the same phrasing, order and tone of voice. The subjects were all asked questions designed to not be answered with a plain Yes/No answer. This was done intentionally to keep the conversation flowing, and encourage elaboration and expression of experiences and stories.

The quality found in myself as an interviewer are lacking at best due to my very limited experience of conducting academic qualitative research. However, there is no major evidence to support that my behavior affected the outcome of the conversations as the subjects all expressed appreciation and joy in participating.

However vague as evidence it might seem, it is sufficient when it is displayed as a recurring theme across the various interviews and the hours of conversation time recorded.

This was mostly due to the research laid down beforehand into how to properly conduct in-depth interviews and reading the guides and handbooks on properly handling interview subjects.

When addressing the third point of “Identification or labeling” the problem of a biased approach is evident. In being only one person I am at a disadvantage of not having anyone else to discuss my findings with. But I have strived endlessly to keep my own feelings and thoughts on the subject out of the thesis as much as I can as to not corrupt or discredit any findings and data I have collected, but rather support claims with research and statistics in great variety. Also, I share little background or experience in arranging festivals or leading an arrangement such as the ones I write about. And with this I have very little experience to draw from and corrupt my findings with.

My findings have undoubtedly shed some light on the research questions I posed to lay the groundwork from this thesis. As stated in the framework of my thesis I wanted to explore and paint a picture of the festival market here in the south of Norway as it stands today in an age of rapid cultural growth. I never intended to have any sort of conclusion as to solving any issues or predictions of the future. My findings from the in-depth interviews conducted summarize sufficient data concerning the festival scene and its current state and challenges. The evidence is supported by the empirical experiences and professional statements by the very people whom are responsible for there being a scene to explore to begin with. The findings presented are direct transcriptions derived from the raw data collected in the interviews. They have been translated to English from Norwegian but only with close attention to not in any way suggest a different method for phrasing which could present the opinions of the subjects in any misinterpretation or false way. As stated earlier, I have kept my own feelings and opinions off the subject and have in no way tried to swing the data to wards any direction or conclusions.

### 3.4.3 Validation of Findings

Thus far I have explained the nature of validation in the qualitative field, and presented methods for validating my data and findings.

I have argued that the methods explained above are the most sensible ways of trying to validate any claims or research data in a qualitative thesis such as this one.



I have taken the five principles presented by Ritchie & Lewis and applied them in my research method.

I have also pointed out contributing factors of validating my subjects as reliable sources in a qualitative study. I am however making no sorts of claims towards my data representing all festivals in Norway, the festival market internationally as a whole or any of the sort. This would be an entirely different thesis. I am simply as stated in my framework earlier in this thesis trying to capture the work, difficulties and events of the southern festival scene in this moment in time. Also, focusing on the people whom are making this happen. I base my interest and framework of the intentions and relevance of this thesis on the historical research presented in chapter 2. This stands as the root of the thesis being written and strengthens the historical evidence of how the festival scene has arrived at in this point in time. The validation of any sorts of conclusion would be irrelevant for this thesis as I am not making any sort of effort to arrive at such a claim.

## 4.0 Analysis & Processing

In previous chapters I explained my process of collecting data and how I have implemented my methodology and qualitative research design. Now I will continue on to describe my process of analyzing my data and processing.

### 4.1 Process of Analysis

As with validating data there are numerous ways to analyze the data collected in qualitative research. After researching and sifting through various approaches I settled on the one I find to best suit my research approach and which will best present my findings. First, the processing of my raw data was first priority. With several hours of audio recording I needed to transcribe it word for word. This turned out to be a tiring task, but essential. As it is with the nature of qualitative research, the data will be voluminous and fragmented.

I focused on capturing as much relevant data as possible from my very experienced interview participants, so to reduce the data down to its essence was of high importance. Lewis and Ritchie argue that this is an essential part in the analytical process, and encourage the process of reduction to synthesize your data into a higher quality for presentation.

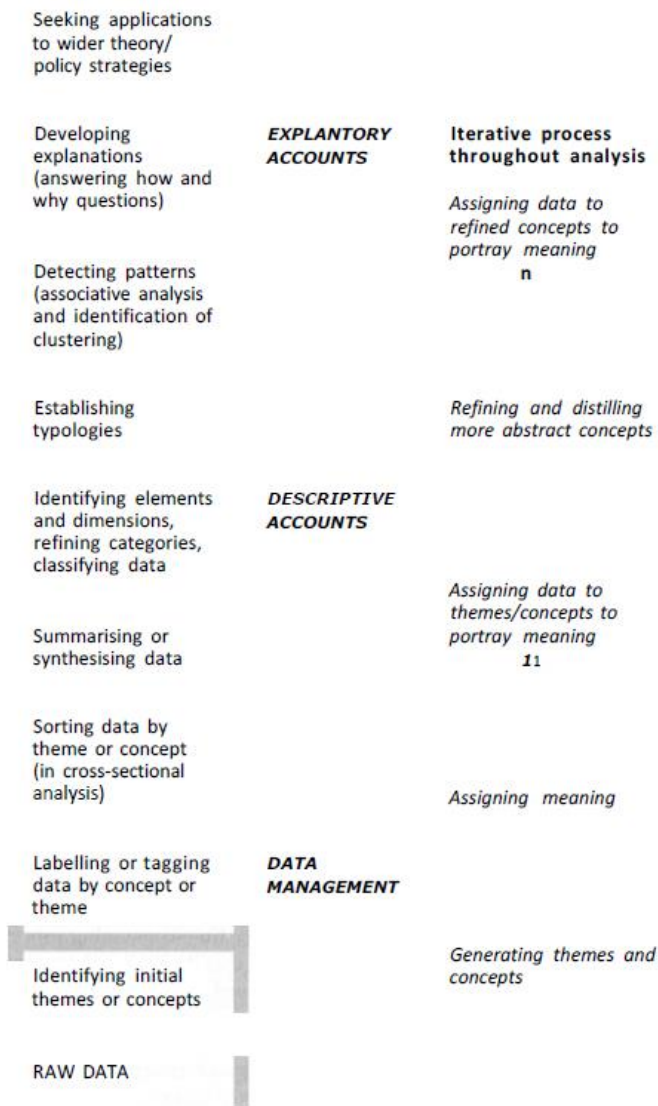
They present various ways to conduct this form of analysis and I have chosen to follow this method of analysis in my research. Why I chose this is simply by the fact that it focuses on staying true to the original data, which is crucial when dealing with in-depth interviews and citations from conversations. They present it in the form of what they call a “Analytical Hierarchy”, presented in the table (Box 8.1) provided below. What makes this table incredibly useful for qualitative research is its ability to “move up and down the analytical hierarchy, thinking conceptually, linking and nesting concepts in terms of their level of generality, lies at the heart of good qualitative research.” By being able to return down the hierarchy as well as moving up gives the researcher the ability to always go back and check his research is staying true to the raw data and recover additional detail adding to the picture he paints. This gives the ability of a greater sense of reflection which in the case of my thesis is invaluable as it deals with a lot of reflections and opinions.

This mirrors the basis of scientific research in what is called the “Scientific Method”, described by the Oxford Dictionary as: “

A method of procedure that has characterized natural science since the 17th century, consisting in systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing, and modification of hypotheses.” (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, u.d.) I find this interesting as it strengthens the argument for qualitative research and this method in particular, by rooting it in one of the fundamental aspects of general natural science.

**BOX 8.1 THE ANALYTIC HIERARCHY**

A depiction of the stages and processes involved in qualitative analysis



(Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, s. 212)

When first getting into the task of doing the various stages of data management I found it easiest to simply start reading all the transcriptions and comparing the notes side by side and sorting the discussions thematically. Thankfully I kept the same line of questioning throughout all my interviews so the sorting was fairly simple except for cases where the subject digressed from the subject or explained other relevant information.

I found the data collected from the interviews to be incredibly rewarding given that this was a topic centered around the immediate present and the subjects were active participants in the shaping of the market I was researching. The reduction of my data was also fairly easy due to the surprisingly small amount of irrelevant information derived from the interviews. There is always a risk of ending up with an hour of conversation with only a fraction of valuable material. I was incredibly grateful that this did not end up being the case. The reason for this I believe was because of my structuring of the line of questions, staying on topic for a few questions then moving subtly on to the next topic without losing touch of the flow of conversation. After sorting, reducing and identifying my findings from the raw data I went on to apply them in a general sense summarizing the answers from all the participants in a spectrum applied to each question. It was here that the picture I was trying to depict, the snapshot I was looking to capture started to emerge. When being provided by both very diverse and unified opinions and experiences on this subject I discovered several interesting factors to the subject I was researching. In the upcoming chapter 5.0 I present my findings from the interviews, they are presented in the same way they were collected to better maintain the purity of the data all the way back to the raw data. I also found the order and structure I used to be the most sensible approach of presenting due to the various topics I address. They all depict great variation in emotion and conversational nature. An incredibly important factor strengthening the research conducted in In-Depth interviews are its ability of “eliciting individual experiences, opinions, feelings”.

(Mack, Woodson, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, s. 30)

And to better preserve the purity of the answers as close to the original data as possible I chose to stay true to the original order of questioning in my presentation of findings.

## 5.0 Interviews & Findings

In this chapter I will first present my interview subjects whom all participated in making this thesis a reality. I will give short presentations of their role in the festival and some minor history on their influence and participation in the cultural work that has made the festival scene in the south grow and prosper through the years. Later I will present my findings in the form of my processed, translated data from the interviews. All quotations from personal interviews made during this chapter reference the transcribed interviews that are provided as appendixes with this thesis. I will use the data to present the southern festival market and the work that goes into arranging a festival and the joys and challenges that come with it.

### 5.1 Introducing the Interview Participants

As stated earlier in this thesis I wanted to focus my attention regarding the southern festival scene around four different festivals. By choosing festivals in great variety in terms of size, audience and musical profile I had then a better understanding of the market. I could have chosen to focus more heavily on the big sellers only or only focus on the indie market whom pride themselves on being their opposites, but I realized that I would then lose out on an interesting aspect in my thesis. What do they have in common, despite being so different? To find the people I wanted for my interviews I exhausted my options and looked into more than 15 different festivals whom are represented down south in Norway. The choice for my festivals was pretty clear from the start, but I wanted to be sure that I was getting enough variety to be confident that I covered enough ground without having to include more festivals. Me and my supervisor settled on these four that participated and interviews were conducted soon after.

#### 5.1.1 Cathrine Sørensen, Måkeskrik

First out was the festival “Måkeskrik”, where I talked to Cathrine Sørensen. Cathrine is the head of the festival, head of economy and booking. She describes the Måkeskrik festival as “...a music festival with a focus on music.”<sup>1</sup> (Sørensen, 2017, Personal Interview).

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<sup>1</sup> Translated

Måkeskrik is centered around good music with the ability to sway the audience with a great live show, and their idyllic location in Bendiksbukta. Bendiksbukta is a pivotal location in the town of Kristiansand where several of the biggest events in music have been held. This includes the notorious Quart Festival. They describe themselves as a middle-sized festival with an audience maximum capacity of roughly 2.000 people per day, and a two-day duration. Their audience consists mostly of adults between 25-40 although the festival doesn't have any age restrictions. The volunteers whom participate in arranging the festival is however significantly younger, consisting mostly of people from 16-25. The festival has been going on for 6 years this year (2017).

### 5.1.2 Anne Ruth Gjelsås BJORÅ, ÅGSETH

Next, we have the festival Ågseth, where I got in touch with their head of festival Anne Ruth Gjelsås BJORÅ. Anne Ruth also functions as the head of the esthetic and artistic aspects of the festival where she books visual artists. Her description of Ågseth is their motto which is "Norway's least visited Christian festival"<sup>2</sup> (BJORÅ, 2017, Personal Interview). The festival is meant to be a drug-free alternative to other festivals. Their first year was in 2009, and their previous year of arranging was in 2015. Ågseth focuses on music and art with authenticity whom also acknowledges themselves with the Christian faith. Like Måkeskrik they also focus heavily on their location which is in a small field found deep in the forest, at Åkset in Marnardal. Ågseth is based a 100% on volunteers. Their audience profile is extremely wide from babies to 80-90-year old's. Anne Ruth explains that they do not have a focus on trying to reach out to the masses, but rather just focus on that the people whom are interested in the festival and do attend have a good time. The festival is arranged over the span of three days with generally 12-13 bands and artists playing non-stop during the day until nightfall. They also do not have backstage or any forms of segregation of audience and band, to encourage social interaction and building a sense of community during the festival.

### 5.1.3 Heine Strømme, Palmesus

Next, we have the festival/beach-party Palmesus where I talked to Heine Strømme. Heine works as the head of artist booking in Palmesus and has been with the festival since the start.

Heine describes Palmesus as “a beach party at Bystranda in Kristiansand, arranged the first weekend in July every year”.<sup>2</sup> (Strømme, 2017, Personal Interview). Palmesus’ focus is not on the music or the artists but the event itself. Heine describes that their main concern is their profile and making sure that people are there with their friends having a good time, and spread the word about the beach-party to everyone they know. Bystranda is a beautiful beach located just outside of the city-central, and is filled up with a giant stage, several party-tents and bar-concepts every year for the two day event Palmesus. Palmesus is a festival/beach party with a maximum capacity of 30.000 people in the audience over the span of two days. Their audience profile consists of two separate parts. Their main audience are young adults between 18-30 years of age. They also target another audience, people over 30+. These are the ones who inhabit the VIP tents and other segregated parts of the event. The festival is headed by six people whom all work with this full-time as their main workplace. Then they have 45-50 project leaders heading different sub-sections, and lastly around 1900 volunteers whom sign up to participate every year. Palmesus was arranged for the first time in 2009 by Heine and some friends whom wanted to arrange a beach party. They are now moving into their 8<sup>th</sup> year of arranging.

#### 5.1.4 Toffen Gunnufsen, Skral

Lastly there’s the festival Skral, where I talked to Toffen Gunnufsen. Toffen works as the head of booking at Skral, but he has been working with booking and arranging festivals since the 70’s. He has been a key person in working with festivals such as Quart, Hove and Q25. Toffen has seen the history of this market happen and has been instrumental in its progression and so he was an important figure for me to include in this thesis. However now he is focusing on Skral festival. He describes Skral as “the small festival with the big heart”.<sup>3</sup> (Gunnufsen, 2017, Personal Interview). The people whom were involved with starting Skral are still with the festival today and that is according to Toffen essential for keeping up the unique profile of Skral. Skral was first arranged in 2003 and was run up until 2008 when the arrangers had to choose between doing amasters degree or continue arranging the festival. At that point they were seeing 3-5.000 people each day over a period of 2-3 days. When Hove festival was shut down Toffen took action and talked to the guys whom had arranged Skral and the owners of Hove about ressurecting the festival.

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<sup>2</sup> Translated

Taking over as head of festival and booking he helped them start Skral back up and once again arrange the festival in 2015. Skral is still going today and set for another year of festival at Groos in Grimstad.

Now that I have introduced the interview subjects I will summarize my justification of choosing these. These are all extremely different cultural events chosen to participate in a study set to include them in trying to find a common cohesive understanding of a wider field. This is exactly why I wanted to have such a wide variety in my selection. I have said this several times throughout the previous chapters in this thesis, but to paint and understand the bigger picture here we need all areas represented. In the field of cultural industries you are dealing with a wide spectrum of personalities, policies and agendas. This due to the different reasons people chose the line of profession. Due to the love of music, interest in copyright, love of creation or otherwise, it creates the need to understand that all these together sum up the strength of diversity which makes the industry so interesting and fragmented.

## 5.2 Findings & Interviews

### 5.2.1 Understanding the Vision

My interviews all started with the introductions summarized in the previous part of this chapter where I start off the conversation by getting the subject talking about their role in the festival and of themselves in general. This was to create a safe introduction to the conversation without coming across as pushy or stressing.

After that I went on to understanding what their festival represented, asking them what their festival represents and stands for. This question is where they started getting more enthusiastic and got generally excited about talking about their event. There was a major difference from the seemingly stiff tension of meeting someone new to the joy of presenting their project. This was something I had anticipated and tried to plan when constructing my line of questioning. The conversations softened up more as the conversations went. First in the vein of inquiring some background and showing interest in the history of their involvement I ask them the question of “Why did you choose to start this festival? What was the dream/vision for the festival?”<sup>3</sup> This question is quite essential to my thesis and so I wanted to include it early while we were still in the stages of presentation.

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<sup>3</sup> Translated



Naturally from such a wide spectrum of individuals the answers were varied but still held to some degree the same nature in their intentions. They all wanted to create something unique in their local vicinity to fill a void they felt had potential.

Måkeskrik became a spiritual successor to the Quart festival after the festival went bankrupt in 2009 due to failing ticket sales. The Quart festival was a festival rooted in Kristiansand and the local audience. The festival had done very well for many years but failed to entice the audience in 2009. Sørensen describes the hole in the market left by Quart as a stepping stone to establish something new. Being a seasoned worker in arranging cultural events and participating in other festivals she struck out to fill the empty space herself. **Sørensen, Måkeskrik:** *I grew up during the era of the Quart festival and that was a big thing for me and my friends, so it was a sad time when it went away. Even though I had moved away from home I always went home to see friends and parents. I had been playing with the thought for years, and that it could be fun to try it out yourself. I was working with doing the booking at Rockefeller and several other places at the time, and it was the guy I was dating at the time who said; why don't you try it yourself? You're as good as all the other people who do it. It wasn't easy getting more people involved. Cause there was no money. But it was the idea of creating a awesome festival.* (Sørensen, Måkeskrik, 2017, Personal Interview)

Ågseth started out with a jam session in the deep forests of Marnardal. Åkset as the location is actually named became a spot where they aspired to create a drug-free, music focused festival-option. The interesting part of this festival is their idealistic approach to arranging. They are not focused on making a lot of money or reaching a wide audience of any sort. They focus on the people whom know about it and are interested in the festival and the music, and they arrange when they have the time and the energy. This makes them unique in the aspect of most festivals as they are not driven by money even after several years of arranging. This aspect was a big reason for me to choose them as they give an incredibly interesting take on what it is to arrange a festival.

**Bjorå, Ågseth:** *We have all been a lot at Skjærgårds (Seaside Festival) and thought that was really great. But it started becoming a lot more than just music. They started booking the same bands year after year. We wanted something a bit more exciting. The guy whom bought the location had this vision of focusing on an artistic expression and a drug-free alternative for the youths whom were interested in a cool festival that was not Skjærgårds. It started out with three friends jamming out there.*

*Then they asked each other if they should make a festival to elaborate on the concept. So, there was a friendship created with people whom wanted to jam. Most of our bands are unknown to most, but it's exciting music. We arrange when we have the energy. Everything is based on voluntary work, it takes a lot. We may be perceived as quirky because we do not have the goal of being perceived as the most "hyped" festival. It just becomes the coolest naturally. (Bjørå, Ågseth, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Palmesus was established as a unique concept to the southern Norwegian scene where anything remotely similar was nowhere to be found. Intended as a smaller event they saw it grow bigger with the increasing number of interested people. They realized the potential of growth from their first year alone and started building the concept.

**Strømme, Palmesus:** *There wasn't that many other beach parties at the time. I had always wanted to have a beach party in Kristiansand, so we were supposed to have a small gathering for a couple of hundred people out at Odderøya but then there was a lot of work getting it set up, and it wound up becoming a lot bigger. (Strømme, Palmesus, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Måkeskrik, Ågseth and Palmesus were adamant about creating the festival they wanted to attend, and which they saw was nowhere to be found in their local vicinity. This takes us right back to the same core intent as the rest of the festivals being arranged all over Norway. Despite their varying size, profile and appeal they are all intent on the same idea. Although our last festival Skral does not share the same idea for the creation of the festival, they share the same principles of local pride and community.

Skral seems to have been founded almost by accident following a video project which was supposed to demonstrate how to arrange a festival. Due to the appeal of the festival more people got interested than they first expected. The students working on the project reached out to Toffen Gunnufsen for advice and help in arranging the festival. They had questions regarding the length needed to call it a festival, and Toffen concluded that it had to be two days for it to be a festival. This is interesting when addressing Palmesus as they are a two day event but do not refer to themselves as a festival but rather a beach-party. But then again they do fit perfectly into the category of festivals. Skral was centered around having a good time and the slacker lifestyle, something that in Toffen's opinion really suits the audience and resonated well.

**Gunnufsen, Skral:** *Skral started out in 2003 up until 2008. It was established by a couple of students whom lived in Homborsund, it was started in a garden.*

*It was originally meant to be a movie about making a festival, but it turned out to become so popular because it was all about having a good time. I was running Quart at the time up until 2006. They called me and asked if they needed a permit for selling alcohol, I told them that would be a good idea.*

*They asked how many days there had to be for it to be a festival, and I told them two days. Even coming up with the name Skral (to be skral means to be weakened, lame or shaky). They tried coming up with different names, but they were all taken, so they thought that was kind of lame (skralt). Hey that was a cool name! An what came out of that was the idea that if it all went south then it didn't matter because it was a "skral" festival. What was important to us was that the original people whom started the fesival are with us. They are important for preserving the core values into the new. Everything is very slacker-styled, every piece of sponsormaterial must be hand-made, and promo is presented in a very humorous and quirky way. (Gunnufsen, Skral, 2017, Personal Interview)*

## 5.2.2 Location and Local Scene

Next, we move onto why the festival is situated right where it is instead of anywhere else in the country, and how they focus on presenting local factors, music and businesses, and also their relationship with the local community. A fairly important factor for the festival market today as I have presented earlier in chapter 2 with the pride of locality and sense of community. The general idea was much the same as stated earlier that they were enthusiastic about building something with their friends and close community which they already didn't have. However, the response each festival faced was very diverse which was surprising coming from such a tight knit community such as the cultural market here in the south. Usually this diversity was related to the press though and not the local audiences.

Sørensen describes the main reason for having the festival in Kristiansand of all places is the location that Bendiksbukta provides. Bendiksbukta is a beautiful, quiet bay just outside of the city. Situated so close to the city central but showing no signs of it, provides a fantastic location for a festival such as Måkeskrik. This is also where the Quart festival was arranged for many years up until its last year. Sørensen describes the south as a great way to attract a non-local audience due to the summer time being great there. A fact many Norwegians are aware of due to the high number of sunny days recorded every year, and the location near the seaside.

She also describes that Måkeskrik is actively focusing on local engagement, pretty much across every aspect of the festival. From food, artists and tech rental.

**Sørensen, Måkeskrik:** *I have been asked why we are having the festival in Kristiansand since it is an “impossible” city to have a festival. The only reason is probably the venue, Bendiksbukta, and Sørlandet (the southern parts of Norway).*

*It’s easier in a way to invite to Sørlandet with the seaside summer. There’s often very nice weather, but it’s the atmosphere too, and Måkeskrik is a city-festival in a green nature setting. It’s easy for people to find and return from to go back to the city-center afterwards. You don’t necessarily need to bring a tent. Usually we always strive to have at least one local artists at the festival. We have had that every year, one or two artists.*

*We always front local food-distributors, so we try to have a focus on the local without it being excluding in any way. Everything from technical rental, backline, food, hotels is local. We receive very good responses from everyone, and hear that Måkeskrik is the festival everyone wishes all the best. Everything we hear about how we present ourselves, the artists, the area and pricing are good things. (Sørensen, Måkeskrik, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Ågseth shares Måkeskrik’s close affection to their area. The area’s name Åkset is the inspiration for the name of the festival as well. Bjorå is adamant that the festival would not exist without the area, as it is a central part of the festival, providing atmosphere and serenity. Ågseth is driven by a DIY (Do It Yourself) idea which makes them rely heavily on local support and volunteers. As the festival is held in such a remote location they acquire help from local forces and those whom are interested or already inside the scene the festival has set. Local food and music are also described as rudimentary. Sponsorships from local grants sustain the festival, and is essential to its survival. They can also see a popularity growing from the local residents of the nearby vicinity as there is not many other events happening of their kind.

**Bjorå, Ågseth:** *It’s hard to describe Ågseth as a festival without describing the area. We could not have arranged the festival anywhere else. It’s in the middle of the forest, and you have the calm sensation and the atmosphere. It’s almost the heart of the festival. We have a lot of artists. We always have at least one foreign artist, but it is also supposed to be an arena for the locals to show themselves. So it is absolutely rooted in the local. We have gotten sponsored and tried to make a lot of the food ourselves, but tried to focus on our open grill because it helps build a sense of community.*

*Last time we arranged we got a deal with the local potato-baker whom is always stationed in the town square in Kristiansand. It's very interesting because there is a man who's at least over 80 years old and he shows up every year. The last couple of times there are more and more locals who show up. Adults whom set up their camping chairs and just sit down. The last time there were a lot of kids and a very cosy and family-friendly vibe. Free and open in the middle of the woods, I think they feel that it's exciting that there is something going on. (Bjorå, Ågseth, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Palmesus, although not having any particular wants towards local artists are extremely dedicated towards fronting and engaging local businesses and having local influences visible at the festival. From sponsors to the food they serve. By having such a clear profile and commercial aim with their festival they are very attractive to businesses wantint to reach an audience, and so they are able to provide their sponsors and suppliers with great exposure during the time before and during the festival across the entie city of Kristiansand. Strømme also addresses the sense of local pride which Palmesus is very clear in portraying with the choice of including local influences. The fact that Palmesus, being the major player here in the south, focuses on local influences is stimulating and important to the market. By showing local businesses that the exposure a festival can provide can be extremely useful to a business lets other festivals benefit from the example they have set.

**Strømme, Palmesus:** *We are very concerned with recruiting local businesses, and having a dialogue with sponsors and bringing attention to each other. For example hotels, restaurants, banks, insurances, radio and TV. We have the local butcher Slakter Frivold with us, they have been with us in many years. Bekkereinan which is a nieche-butchery/meat-producer in Kvinesdal are tasked with the main food-sale this year. We have the local bank (Spareskillingsbanken). When it comes to artists we focus on interesting and well known acts, and not if they are local. But we always manage to bring in something local and fun every year. The week where Palmesus is being held we are very visible in the city picture, there is no doubt that Palmesus is happening. We want the people in our target audience to be proud that we are in Kristiansand. At the start no one knew we existed, but now we are established and people are very interested in what we are doing. (Strømme, Palmesus, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Gunnufsen continues talking about the interesting nature of Skral, about the duality of their audience. Their audience is comprised of both the audience from the old days of Skral, and th new audience from their re-launch.

Gunnufsen states that it is crucial to take care of both entities to keep this festival grounded in its roots and principles. He also mentions that Grimstad is ideal to Skral due to just this duality. He talks about the fact that there hasn't been any clear segregation between the youth and the older audiences at parties throughout the years in Grimstad and that the mindset there resonates well with the festival. The team they assemble to work on the important factors of the festival is comprised of local forces due to keeping in touch with the festival's local connection and nature.

**Gunnufsen, Skral:** *What is interesting about Grimstad is that the hybrid between house-parties in the 80's & 90's was a hybrid with adults and kids at the same party. That is very special for Grimstad. Skral is a paradox since we both have the old audience and the new. Skral won a prize for the best festival in Norway before it was shut down. People missed this little thing. We try to keep our team local, instead of just bringing in someone from Bergen or something.*

*Some of the sections of work is very rooted in Sørlandet and so we focus on having local people there. We create roots in the local scene by using local people. (Gunnufsen, Skral, 2017, Personal Interview)*

There is a sense of importance towards a communal factor within all these festivals in some form, whether it's in the form of volunteers, food, pride of location and so on. By bringing in the focus of locality they have created a relationship with the local community and a sense of pride in establishing an event for the locals. They all base their profiles according to their target audiences and the location of which they are basing the festival. The festivals are each very different from one another and the way they choose to run the festivals shine through from the exact people I have interviewed. They are the heart and soul of their festival.

### 5.2.3 Painting the market

Finally after moving through the process of getting to know the subjects and their individual events, I move into the business side. Asking a series of questions to get their views on the current festival market in the southern parts and the future for the market in terms of the current number of events fighting to capture an audience. These questions are crucial to my thesis as it is these answers I need to be able to make the snapshot of the market and understand how they all coincide without smothering each other due to the short spaces of time between their events.

How is the market divided up, and what predictions do they have in terms of the future? What was interesting about their perspectives was that neither of them were particularly concerned with the other events and festivals being arranged. Which was something I did not anticipate. They were all generally positive towards the ever-increasing number of events being arranged, or not concerned with the idea at all.

Måkeskrik according to Sørensen does not have any direct competitors in the local vicinity. She mentions Skral due to the occasional match in booking material. But Skral is still some small ways away from Måkeskrik and is relying heavier on more mainstream acts. Sørensen describes herself as excited that there is so much happening in the south. She is convinced that the increasing number of events will stimulate the local audience to get out the door and get used to attending more than they usually do. However, she has a concern towards the priorities of local media in accordance with the growth. But she is also clear in that Måkeskrik suffering difficulties financially is not at the cause of the market or media. She is not concerned with the well being of the southern market for the future at all.

**Sørensen, Måkeskrik:** *In a way I think it's great that there is a lot of stuff happening, and all of these events do not necessarily compete over the same genres and audience. Some may think that there is too much going on, but I think that it is a great thing that people get used to attend. Instead of going to a concert and wait half a year until next time they check out something new. We do not have many direct competitors in terms of our target audience. Even though I see some competition in Skral. There was a lady a year ago whom was interviewed on the street about what she was doing for the summer, and she said that we need to support local festivals so she was going to Skral. She was from Lund in Kristiansand so I had to laugh a bit at that. Competition is a good thing also, except if one gets de-prioritized in the media. That is not good. The way everything looks right now it seems everything will be fine. Måkeskrik is one of the only ones struggling, but we did that prior to the competition and I feel it would be wrong to say that we struggle due to there being other things going on. The south seems to be thriving at the moment. (Sørensen, Måkeskrik, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Ågseth's view on the market is interesting as they are not driven by ideas of profit or reach. They have no real concerns towards the rest of the market and see no competition in the other events whom work towards capturing audiences.

Ågseth works to engage local sponsors and try to even out as to not lose money on arranging, but are perfectly fine having their core audience present and arranging on their own terms. The problem of choosing between any festival or Ågseth is, according to BJORÅ of no threat whatsoever. She was certain that most of the other festivals would not even know about them. In my conversations with each interview subject, the question of whom else I was interviewing came up. And as BJORÅ states, no one knew about Ågseth at all. Despite the lack of interest in the rest of the market, BJORÅ had herself encountered the subject which I described in chapter 2 of “festivalisering” (festivalizing) in Norway. She describes an article about festivals being the new concert, as there is one everywhere nowadays.

**BJORÅ, Ågseth:** *That’s the great thing about having an ideal festival, or whatever you wanna call it. Where there is little focus on profit. We arrange when we have the energy. It’s important that we get sponsors and stuff for evening out economically. But there is no focus on competition because we are so different, and those who know of us they attend and that’s what we want. We do not have a goal of becoming many. I do not think theres anyone who thinks “Should we go to Skral or Ågseth?”. I think the other festivals can agree there. They probably don’t know of Ågseth to begin with. As a musician I am happy to see that there is happening a lot of things. I read the other day that festivals is the new concert, that says a lot.* (BJORÅ, Ågseth, 2017, Personal Interview)

Strømme, like Sørensen believes there to be room still for more events to happen through the year. He firmly believes that the choice of profile and having a niche to work in is the important part of establishing something. He describes the interaction and dynamics between all the players to be collegial and pleasant, which is a great thing for such a competitive field. Palmesus also has no natural enemies or competitors for the profile they have set themselves anywhere in the south or Norway for that matter, according to Strømme. He describes this fact due to the economic failures in their peers of this profile. He mentions some of the other major players in the market, including Skral and Måkeskrik and encapsulates their aim and current status very well. He is determined in that their aim is to sell tickets and being very honest in their vision for Palmesus.

**Strømme, Palmesus:** *I am surprised by how many there’s room for, and I still believe theres room for more. There is no one else who do what we do because they have all gone bankrupt. But Cirkus Ravnaldalen, where Highsakite and Sondre Justad is playing. That’s interesting to see, someone doing not exactly the same as us but with a different profile and are able to reach an audience and build itself up. Måkeskrik are doing another year, they have a fanbase.*



*Canal Street in Arendal is the same. Skral is back up. Norway Rock is re-established in Kvinesdal. There is a lot of different stuff, and everyone does not have to do the same thing. Those who are interested in something needs to find their niche and satisfy their audience. Beyond that we don't really have any competition, not even in Norway. We want to be a commercial festival/beach-party, many others focus on musical profile and presenting new artists and stuff like that.*

*We are interested in selling tickets. But there is definitely room for a lot of strange things. Everything is very collegial and nice. (Strømme, Palmesus, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Gunnufsen mentions Palmesus as the only major event in the southern market. The others are according to him middle-sized festivals. According to Gunnufsen the profile in which Palmesus operates is highly dependent on location and scene. He mentions Kristiansand, Tjøme and Slottsfjell as the places for this sort of appeal to have a chance in Norway. He also, like Sørensen only see Måkeskrik as a potential competitor but again different in their profile and audience orientation. It's interesting to see the information and dynamics in between these events to reflect throughout the interviews and coinciding in most aspects. He also like Strømme emphasizes on niche focus. Finding a path and sticking to it. Diversity seems to be an ongoing factor in the discussion of a filled market. It seems only natural, although the appeal of starting a festival usually comes from seeing an event you love and wanting to do what they are doing since it seems to work. Gunnufsen also talks about this in the sense that locking oneself to specific genres is a dangerous game to play today due to the economic gamble of such a tunnel vision. He also talks about the Norwegian music scene when it comes to booking. The major and middle-sized acts are many of the same names across festivals every year. There is always some sort of coherence with the acts that are on tour throughout the Norwegian market. He therefore suggests that booking should look beyond the Norwegian borders in danger of everyone booking the same. Which would then become the very problem of being in direct competition with each other.

**Gunnufsen, Skral:** *There is a lot of events in the middle-sized range except for Palmesus. But they are something completely different. They hit that popular vibe, there is perhaps two places where that could have happened. That's here or Tjøme or Slottsfjell. The closest thing to Skral is Måkeskrik, but it's more rock oriented and aimed towards Kristiansand. The most important thing is to find a niche. There is no problem with having a lot of festivals if everyone doesn't aim towards the same. That's dangerous.*

*What is a pity is that some move towards genres because they think there's money in it. Like Måkeskrik, they are very conscious about their booking and aim towards their audience. If we end up booking a lot of norwegian acts, then we end up booking the same stuff. That's what the arrangers need to look for. We do not have a competition with Palmesus for instance. (Gunnufsen, Skral, 2017, Personal Interview)*

The market displayed from the interview findings above is incredibly diverse, and rooted in niche-focused events whom all have clear ideas about their audience and booking profile. They all suggest that there is no immediate crisis of a overfilled market and that as long as the diversity persists the market and events will be fine as for the competition from other events. It's interesting to see how many of the answers received remains rooted in the same notions and opinions despite the wide diversity of background and profile. They all show great enthusiasm for the expansion of the market and no intention or fear from their peers, rather the opposite, joy for their success and dedication. A refreshing fact when discussing the field where economy, opinion and strategic marketing to remain visible are rooted issues.

#### 5.2.4 The near future and challenges

I wanted to get some perspectives on what the near future offers for the festivals and their thoughts on their own future. What challenges lie ahead, and what prediction can they divulge on the progression needed to sustain the current appeal festivals portray. I also took to questioning what it would take to have them stop arranging the festival, and what makes the risk and challenges worth it. It's an interesting question to have them answer as they all do this for different reasons and intentions with varying degrees of economic success. And so, the answers here would provide further insight into the thought process of wanting to keep going through failures or difficult times.

Måkeskrik is now focusing its time and energy on the booking to get that done and move on to marketing the festival. When addressing her interest in the festival's future she is keen on doubling the audience per day. Selling out is an idea they all as arrangers seek but it is not a must. She would like to see more people attending so that the economics would get more realistic and the booking would benefit from the security of sales. Pre-sales are a known issue for most festivals due to the many risks you face. Weather is one of the main concerns of most festivals as they are located outside.

Bad weather may result in extremely poor sales due to many waiting till the last second to buying a ticket. She addresses the problem of experiencing deficit and economic instability. Through the years, the festival has experienced ups and downs but continued to push on to regain what they had lost and due to the festival always being executed in a great fashion with great reviews from the audience. She admits the idea of either changing the formula or looking to making a decision concerning the viability of the festival if this trend were to continue.

**Sørensen, Måkeskrik:** *Our main goal for the near future is to finish the booking and get on to the marketing bit. Those are the two things we work on the hardest, because it's what the audience sees. They don't care how much we paint in advance. Everybody wants to make money, both because of the feeling of safety and to know if your event is viable. If you sell out, then you're going to have a much easier task of starting the sales next year. That's the main issue for most festivals, pre-sales.*

*If you get bad weather, then you have much more money to lose than if you have sold well. So first of all, we want to boost sales and maybe in 5 years we can sell 2-3.000 tickets per day. It doesn't need to be any bigger than that. As long as we preserve the intimacy. But then you can afford bigger artists, because artists are currently incredibly expensive. Our first year we lost a lot of money, it was our biggest deficit. We felt like idiots. The economic question of whether we should keep going came up. But then the question of how many festivals make money the first years also come up. And should we say that that money is now lost, or regain them in the long run. We have lost money for several years now and when should one call it quits? The execution of the festival has always gone well. Had the case been that the economy was great but the people weren't happy with the event, the booking and that we were terrible arrangers then it had been a lot worse. You have to be reasonable, but we haven't given up since we all believe that it can go well. But there is a limit to everything. If we lose money this summer, then we have been doing this for 6 years. Then the question of whether we should bother will show up. If you don't make any big changes for it to work, then it becomes ridiculous. Either stop it all together or try to do things a little different. Should we make a one-day summer party that costs a lot less? (Sørensen, Måkeskrik, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Bjorå states that Ågseth is currently in a state of no particular activity. Due to the core participants having families and living busy lives it is important for them to prioritize differently than before.

She states however that the audience has not forgotten the festival and is eager every year to see it return. She is particular that it is just due to energy and the interest in making the effort any particular year. The festival is not shut down or in a state of closing, but rather selective about the year they arrange. The demand from the audience and volunteers for the festival is there however. She describes the reasons for putting in all the effort comes down to experiencing the festival when it is happening and seeing people doing the same and enjoying it.

**Bjorå, Ågseth:** *We have no real plans at all. We need to consider that many of us have families and need to prioritize differently now. Our audience is the most enthusiastic. They're asking us when there's going to be a new festival, is there going to be a new one for next year? There has always been an interest in arranging the festival for what it is. We have a faithful audience. It just depends on energy. You can become tired of it, it's a lot of work. It would just be that we can't find the energy to do it. It's hard to choose but walking around in the field feeling the atmosphere and mood up there. That people get so much out of this. It has to be experienced.* (Bjorå, Ågseth, 2017, Personal Interview)

Palmesus, like Måkeskrik is aiming to finish their immediate tasks and setting up all the necessary plans that will shape the festival and prepare for the execution. Strømme talks about their expansion through the years as the concept grew. They were hard set on improving their concept every year and emphasize on a returning audience constantly spreading the word of the festival to their friends. When asked on what it would take for the festival to end Strømme states that the fun would be lost. That they would no longer feel the need to arrange or want to. A great situation to be in for sure as the event is highly popular and is in no immediate danger of losing an audience, being able to sell out the next years tickets mere 7 days after finishing the current years event. (Skogedal, 2016). Strømme states that they are in no immediate danger of arriving at this conclusion yet. They are still filled with dreams for this event and Palmesus will continue on for years to come. He also states that all the work is gratified by seeing people enjoying the festival and having fun. He also enjoys attending the festival himself to see it all flourish.

**Strømme, Palmesus:** *The next three months we are set on finishing what needs to be finished and get it done. It's time to land all the big plans and execute them. In 2009 when we first did this more people than we anticipated attended. We were just really stoked to do things even better the next year. Every year the ball just kept on rolling, and we continued to do new things. It's really been a journey from year to year where we have improved all the way.*

*Interviewer: "What would make you call it quits?"*<sup>4</sup>

*That it wasn't fun anymore, that we would feel that we arrived at the end and the dreams are lost. We are nowhere close yet and so that doesn't terrify us yet. Interviewer: "What part of the work gives you the most joy"*<sup>5</sup> *Without a doubt standing at Palmesus and see that all that we have worked for works and that people are happy. (Strømme, Palmesus, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Skral started out a stated earlier with a bigger success than anticipated when considering the students weren't even aiming to establish a festival. The festival ran smoothly through the years but ended when studies became a priority over the festival. In 2016, the year after they started back up, the festival was struck with bad weather and had pouring rain. This resulted in the loss of a great sum of money. They have then had workshops and meetings trying to figure out how to recover and make a better effort this year (2017). The booking Gunnufsen states, is leaning a lot more mainstream to entice the younger Skral audience and students. Due to the duality of their audience they try to split up the days to accommodate the old audience as well as they according to Gunnufsen pick a day to attend. Due to the great year they had in 2015 when they started back up, the owners are still interested in keeping it rolling. But as Gunnufsen states in accordance with Sørensen from Måkeskrik, if the trend of losing money keeps going there would have to be some drastic changes and the question of viability would appear. As of now the festival is selling fine except for the day-passes which grant a one day pass to the festival. Those passes are incredibly hard to predict as they serve as a last chance out the door to attend the festival. This is reminiscent of Sørensen's idea of the audience being late to leave the house to attend cultural events. Gunnufsen states that one of the core scares of the festival industry is waiting to see the numbers from sales. When you have all the money going out to pay for rental, artists and the necessities and you cannot see the progress in sales before any of the audience actually pays attention to pre-order, then you are playing a high risk game of waiting and anticipation. Gunnufsen describes his greatest joy in working in the festival scene to be booking. Booking is a stress-less environment for him and it's what he has always done for his ongoing 40+ years in the business. But he also states like the others that seeing the audience enjoying what they bring is a great reward for the hard work and dedication they bring to the festival.

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<sup>4</sup> Translated

<sup>5</sup> Translated

**Gunnufsen, Skral:** *When we started back up it went well, we made a lot of money. We lost a lot of money last year, we rained away totally. We sold well the first day last year but then it rained hard the second day and the line-up was too urban, Oslo oriented. We had The Weeknd but he cancelled. This year we are probably more commercial and we can tell that by the sales and program. Then the owners are also interested in keeping it going. We've had workshops to figure out whom we should aim towards and so on. The old "Skral'ers" choose one day and we can't wait for them. So, we aim towards the students at the university. Even though we had an enormous loss last year, we had made money the first year, and that doesn't happen too often. It often takes 3-5 years to make money. So, it wasn't that big of a problem. If we lose money this year, then we have to address the question if there is a need for Skral down here and if it is viable to continue. It would all depend on the loss and the reason. We can tell the festival-passes are selling fine, while the day-passes have no movement before the days in advance. At Hove for example we sold 35 million NOK's worth of tickets. But they didn't sell for more than 5-10 million NOK's until 2-3 weeks in advance. Can you imagine that liquidity-squeeze? When there is supposed to arrive 25-30 million NOK's during 2-3 weeks but you don't know? That is what's so great about middle-sized festivals, the costs are lower. It's crazy, but it's fun though. And you need more conceptual things. Things that create an experience throughout the day. If you don't have the experience-festival, then you have a problem. Before we stood buying records, it's not like that now. Its single-based and so is the festival-consumption as well. I find it the most fun to book bands myself. I have been doing it always. It doesn't stress me at all. Money can be stressful. The best thing would probably be that the audience is enjoying themselves. You create a party of sorts and when you arrive and see people enjoying it, all the stress disappears. That's what's great about festivals, when you are done, you're done. The you have three weeks off, and then you're back in. (Gunnufsen, Skral, 2017, Personal Interview)*

All festivals are optimistic about the future of the market, but they are mindful of the changes occurring in the consumption of music and festivals. The single-based consumption Gunnufsen discusses is highly relevant for the festivals as they control the appeal towards specific artists. Depending on what hits the artist has and their reach towards the festivals potential audience is key. This does not apply to every festival enthusiast out there, as some actually visit a festival to check out new acts and music. But the initial pitch to start the process of selling tickets lies somewhat rooted in household names and headliners nevertheless.

Concerns about sales seems to be split right down the middle as Palmesus has been sold out for 10 months, and Ågseth are currently not in session. Måkeskrik and Skral are paying close attention and state their concerns when looking back at previous years.

### 5.2.5 Volunteers and the Importance of Appreciation

As my last line of questioning I chose to address another important factor in arranging festivals, volunteers. As the years of festival arranging has been going by, there has always been volunteers lending strength and dedication towards the festivals. But with the local festivals becoming such a big trend there is many more volunteers than ever due to the nature of arranging a local festival without a big budget. (Lognvik, Torstveit, & Lurås, 2016) It would then be interesting to see how all these festivals I interview stand on the subject of the importance of volunteers and how they treat them. Since they are all of a great variety in size and musical profile I get to cover a bigger picture and address several aspects and capture a greater spectrum of perceptions on the subject.

Right off the bat Sørensen states that festivals are only able to do what they do because of the volunteers that contribute. Palmesus and Øya are no exceptions despite their size. She states that if they were all to be paid, then that would be an extra cost that would introduce further pressure on the economy of the festivals. Both an economic loss but also a loss of a core value in the festival industry. The mentality that they do the work to help build something as a unit centered around a desire to contribute to something they believe in. She also reflects on the great standard of economy many Norwegians enjoy today, being able to spend a little extra, and so the idea could be that instead of working to get a free pass, we could just pay for it. Still thousands all over Norway flock to engage themselves as volunteers. The sense of exclusivity and pride in being able to attend and do something others are not is also a big thing. Being able to say that you have worked as the artist contact for your favorite artist for example, or met them when cleaning up cups, this is something many find exhilarating.

**Sørensen, Måkeskrik:** *I don't think any festival could make it without volunteer work, even though Palmesus and Øya are the big ones they need even more volunteers than any of the others. If everyone was getting 1.000 NOK's each then that would become an extra big cost. One thing would be the economic part, but it would be a shame to take away the thing about voluntary work. They do it because they want to, the money isn't the driving force.*

*It's the sense of community and engagement. We depend on it. There's not any major change but there is many festivals whom make money, and then there's many whom get used to voluntary work becomes not so voluntary. Especially those whom have more responsibility, they may get payed a little bit, a symbolic sum. Many may think "Why should I work as a volunteer? I can just pay for it?". But despite the good economy many still want to do the work and contribute in building something. Be a part of something. I think many can appreciate that. It's a hip thing to have cool artists, and it's cool to say that you work at that festival. You get some extra insight into the festival. I myself have worked at several places. I have been artist-contact at Malakoff, club-responsible at Slottsfjell, worked at the info-department at Quart. And worked at By:Larm and Oppturfestivalen in Stjørdalen. I never had the work on the floor, I was recruited. Always been independent. (Sørensen, Måkeskrik, 2017, Personal Interview)*

At Ågseth they support Sørensen's claim that all festivals are in need of volunteers. The sense of community and ownership which is gained by putting your heart into the work is essential. She talks out of her own experience since the festival is based 100% on volunteer work. Being a volunteers is more than just getting the pass or a small sum. There is a sense of commitment and dedication into working hard for something you enjoy.

**Bjorå, Ågseth:** *You need to have the heart for something to bother to invest the energy and effort to work as a volunteer. To share the vision. There are probably more festivals than the one we have whom are based on volunteer work. We live for this and think it's a lot of fun, so we work extra hard to make it work both for ourselves and others. It gives us something. At our festival, there are only volunteers, no one is getting paid.*

*I think all festivals are depending on it. From Slottsfjell to Hove. It's important to make it a good festival. That people feel a sense of ownership and contribute in shaping it. Feel that it means something to the festival. I think it's important to feel like a part of a community. That you get included by those with a bigger responsibility and recognized. Not just as another one of those working the floor. We at Ågseth do all the crap-work without dividing anyone. Usually working anywhere else you get like a festival-pass or some sort of payment, but those working as volunteers would maybe do it anyways? They aren't volunteers just because they get paid. If you invest the energy in something then it's because you think it's cool. I've worked at a lot of camps and stuff like that. In a Christian setting. When you live in a small place it's just natural to contribute. (Bjorå, Ågseth, 2017, Personal Interview)*



Palmesus was an interesting one for this question as I had no idea how they treat and function when it comes to volunteers. Being a highly commercial and successful festival, the question of whether they actually have a volunteer program or simply rely on paid professionals was an interesting aspect to address. I was fascinated to see that Strømme expressed the very highest enthusiasm towards volunteers and also stating how much they mean to Palmesus. Most positions like Måkeskrik and Ågseth are filled by volunteers at Palmesus as well. The inner circle at Palmesus started out on the floor as volunteers, but as they show dedication and skill, they rose in the system. He also states that as the festival has grown they have made sure to let that drip over to the volunteers. By coordinating and working closely on improving the experience of being a volunteer at Palmesus, they increase the interest in signing up. The experience of being a volunteer Strømme states, is to work hard but have the opportunity to sit down and have a great time with your friends whom you are working with, reflecting the experience of attending the festival itself. Feeling a sense of accomplishment and purpose in doing the work. Palmesus operates with close-to 1900 volunteers every year. What was interesting is that in contrast to Sørensen's statement that the economy of the festival could suffer due to paying every volunteer, Palmesus states that the research they have done on the subject predicts that the costs of taking care of the volunteers evens out with the costs of hiring professionals. But he emphasizes that having volunteers is much more beneficial to Palmesus than just having hired workers. The talk of Palmesus that exists between volunteers and onto their friends and social circle is invaluable and a core factor in the marketing of Palmesus. As he has stated earlier, Palmesus is the place to go for you and your friends. A point they work hard to keep in focus around the idea of Palmesus. In addition he states that the volunteers that work at Palmesus come from diverse backgrounds, people with education and high skill in the areas they place them are interested in working for free to help build the concept.

**Strømme, Palmesus:** *It's a lot of people showing up and doing their best. With us they fill all positions such as ticket sales, voucher sales, execution of event, security, artist-contact, drivers, wellbeing. There's not a thing we don't use volunteers for. Many start as volunteers with us, but those who work hard gets more and more responsibility as time goes. Most of the people whom are paid by us started out as volunteers and worked their way up the system. For us I can say that we have gotten more organized and fit to care for people and tell them what they are going to do and how they should do it. Being able to give people breaks, food and drink and feedback. Before it was more of a half-assed thing, with a lack of structure to care for the people.*

*It's not just a show up at eight and work until the sweat is pouring, you're supposed to be able to sit down and have some food and drinks with your friends you work with. Feel that you are doing something sensible and not just working without goal or purpose. I myself worked at Quart, Øya, Studentfestivalen in Oslo. I worked on stage, in the bar, in security, light/sound. It varied from place to place, some places I felt that I was in on something big and great. Other places were more "well-well"<sup>6</sup>. So, it varied a lot. For us it's entirely essential, we have 1900 volunteers more or less. We are completely dependent on them for making Palmesus work. It needs to be said that we have calculated that it costs just as much to have volunteers as it costs to have people being paid to do the same work. But to have volunteers gives much more to Palmesus than just having people there whom gets paid to do the job.*

*Many tell their friends that they are going to work at Palmesus and do this or that. Those who get paid just go down there, do it and then go home. Volunteers create more movement around Palmesus which you don't get by paying them a salary. The dynamics you create is important to Palmesus. I experience a greater interest to join. Skilled people and typically people with education in what we need whom begs to work for free with the exception of a ticket. We are very privileged to be in that kind of position. (Strømme, Palmesus, 2017, Personal Interview)*

Gunnufsen elaborates on all the statements given by the other three festivals as to what volunteer work is at its core, and the importance of the work and dedication they provide. And emphasizes on what Strømme said earlier that volunteers can be as professional and important as any hired worker. He also support Strømme in the fact that volunteers have had a significant change of hospitality given to them during their work in a festival. He describes as Strømme that the volunteers were handled in a less professional manner all those years ago than they are now. He also states as Sørensen did, that festivals as they are arranged today would not be possible without the work of volunteers. And even though there may be some volunteers receiving a symbolic sum for the extra work or increase in responsibility they have, it will never reflect the amount of work they put into it. He states that if the interest in working as a volunteer for a festival is great, then the festival is doing fine. He mentions the staggering numbers of Hove and Roskilde's number of volunteers.

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<sup>6</sup> Translated

Thereby giving us a perspective on just how many volunteers contribute on an international basis even in some of the biggest festivals in the world.

**Gunnufsen, Skral:** *Volunteer work is people sacrificing time and energy to give for a common good. Whether you do it through a union or a festival you give to create something. You make a sort of pact, they give something to us and we give something to them. Volunteers are not a given thing today, absolutely not. We really appreciate these people. Many see volunteer work as non-professional, but they can be just as professional. There's a lot of force in volunteers. Many think that they are just for selling tickets but that's not the case. We see that the roles where risks are relatively low with limited time and physical work is right for volunteers. Like backstage, information, accreditation and others. There is a lot more of HMS (Helse, Miljø, Sikkerhet – Health, Environment, Safety) and follow-up than before. Before they were driving trucks and stuff like that. Before they weren't being followed up sufficiently. They needed food. They got a t-shirt and a ticket. Now we have volunteer-agreements. At Quart, it got a whole lot more professional as time passed. But at first it was friends' friends and oral agreements. Now there are proper agreements and rewards. Without the work of volunteers, it would never be possible to arrange festivals such as this. Completely impossible. The volunteerism is still there, even though they get some money for it, the payment does not match up to the work being done and the hours invested. Some volunteer positions are very sought, like working promo. With posters, flyers and stuff like that in advance because then you have time off during the festival. Working during the festival, I think that has gotten more organized than before. In a festival spanning two days you work one day and then you have the festival for one day. If I were to work I would probably work the day before or the day after the festival. With us they get a hot meal, lunch, t-shirts, a couple of parties and it's a social thing. It's important that as the event gets bigger they get taken care of. We can tell that if the interest in voluntary work in a festival is great then the festival is doing well. At Hove, we had 3.500 volunteers. It was mental. Absolutely crazy. At Roskilde, it's 20.000 I believe.*

(Gunnufsen, Skral, 2017, Personal Interview)

The festivals all agree on the terms of what volunteer work represents to a festival. It is the hard core of dedicated people whom work tirelessly to create something they believe in as a community. From Palmesus to Ågseth they all emphasize the fact that no matter how successful you are, volunteers are a part of the festival market as it stands today. The whole recipe for a festival would have to change dramatically, should the volunteers disappear.

Many of the interview subjects have worked as volunteers themselves and worked their way up the chain and gaining experience in which they apply to the work they do now.

Showing that those on the floor working may one day sit at the top.

The misconceptions that just because you have a successful event, therefore you don't need volunteers and can just hire professionals is highly misrepresented in the reality presented from these interviews. It would seem that the volunteer work, no matter the cost of hospitality or the position they represent is crucial in the execution of any festival. Both for their immense dedication and hard work, but also as a marketing tool utilizing the word of mouth principle which seems to still be one of the important factors in promotion even today with all the digital medias at our disposal.

## 6.0 Summarizing & Discussing my findings (Conclusion)

As I have now presented the findings from my in-depth interviews, I will summarize and present my concluding statements based on the the various aspects presented above from my subjects and what they mean for the market and the future of the festival scene here in the south. But as this is qualitative research and I am still not seeking to make any rash conclusions or prove any form of objective truths for a market of this complexity and spontaneous nature, these will be presented as interesting perspectives on the situation depicted as it is today.

The festivals whom are represented above in my dissertation are of substantially varied nature. They all fill an audience profile in the spectrum of festival-goers in the southern festival scene. I went into this thesis with the idea that I was going to get a lot of incredibly diverse ideas of vision, thoughts on credibility and musical tastes. The usual misconceptions that I would guess any individual with a musical interest would be quick to predict when considering my selection. But what I found was a group of individuals all seeking the same goal with variable strategies and approaches. It wasn't the cliché idea of one wanting to get filthy rich and the other being full anti-establishment oriented. The answers received were scarcely revolved around anything other than the idea of creating something unique to the audience they themselves had been a part of. They were all reflective on their situation and quick to praise other players that might be considered competition to them. When discussing the nature and intention of establishing their own festival it seemed they all agreed on the fact stated numerously about the current trend of arranging local festivals. (Nordal & Reite, 2016) They all wanted to make something happen that wasn't present in their local vicinity, creating the festival they wanted to attend themselves and the people around them would find entertaining. They may not all have the same views on economy and profile they want to portray to their audience. But to expect they would all agree in the way they portray themselves and the money they make from arranging four so entirely different festivals would be highly unlikely.

When addressing the future, they all praised diversity and reveled in the thought of a market on the rise, where new players appeared all the time. Rising to the challenge rather than criticizing the market as overpopulated. Which was one of the concerns I myself had when addressing the current market in my line of questioning.

But as stated by each, diversity is key in maintaining the viability of an industry based around such high levels of risk. They each spoke about the current scene and market in the south and were all generally agreeing in that there is room for all the players currently filling up the market, as the factor of focusing on a specific niche and not being in direct competition about an audience is crucial. There seems, despite the sheer number of festivals being arranged between May and September, which is the high-season for festivals in Norway, (Visit Norway, 2017) that there is actually still a viable chance for all the events to do well. It all depends on the way they market themselves and satisfy their audience. The clear message when asked about volunteer work was that it is absolutely essential. As Strømme stated “It needs to be said that we have calculated that it costs just as much to have volunteers as it costs to have people being paid to do the same work. But to have volunteers gives much more to Palmesus than just having people there whom gets paid to do the job”(Strømme, Palmesus, 2017, Personal Interview). So, the core reasons for having volunteers working at the festival is not an economical reason which many may believe, as its “free work”. But it’s not like that at all. It’s the hard work and sense of building something together, it’s become a part of the festival experience. Friends join in on the work together and enjoy the festival in advance or after working to acquire a festival-pass. Also, they see that with the market evolving and becoming easier to make money, the volunteers get treated better and are being seen as a more valuable asset than before. This is a factor that will be even more important for the coming future of festivals should the interest in arranging and the market continue to grow as it is. If the volunteers lose interest or get forgotten, then the festival business would suddenly find themselves alone.

The painting I have been searching to portray in this thesis is now completed, and I will shortly summarize some of the factors discussed above that shows the diversity and factors enabling these festivals the viable chance of coexisting in the southern market. Like the rest of the norwegian festival scene, the southern market shows great diversity, pride of locality and rigorous belief in the event. Ågseth is the festival whom call themselves “Norway’s least visited christian festival”. They base their festival on the joy of music and the experience of the deep forests of Marnardal. A drug-free event based entirely on the love for the event and communal engagement. Måkeskrik set out to fill the gap left after Quart’s demise, and continuously work to satisfy their audience whom despite varying attendance show up every year. They represent a good example of some of the difficulties in running a festival, but ceaselessly work to improve and overcome.

Skral led by Gunnufsen is the festival whom shows that there is always an audience waiting to once again return to a concept of familiarity. The loyalty many others aim to establish with their audience is reflected in Skral. They also like Måkeskrik show that there is little reason to shut down due to difficulties or challenges. That is a part of arranging. Gunnufsen gives us a great depiction of the biggest risk that the market can provide, economy and liquidity. Lastly Palmesus is the great example of the “new age” of festivals. I described this briefly in the end of chapter 2 with the Findings festival. Exclusivity and the factor of being seen and showing people you were at a cool event, is a big part of Palmesus profile. Preferring to classify themselves as a beach-party due to the music being a secondary factor of attraction. Despite this notion, Palmesus shows themselves to be very much concerned, like the other three festivals to focus on local engagement. Both in the business side and in having volunteers contributing to their event. A factor they all agree is invaluable to any festival, no matter how big or successful they are. The varying approaches to running a festival is a great indication of broad experience and knowledge on marketing and techniques in which to utilize in reaching an audience. As previously stated, the subject I address in this thesis is scarcely written about, which is why I set out to gain knowledge and address the subject during a time where the festival scene is at an all time high. The future is looking bright for innovation and the development of new concepts. Gunnufsen states that the future belongs to the “concept-festivals” which he suggests is the festival with activities in addition to the music. (Gunnufsen, Skral, 2017, Personal Interview) Bearing this in mind in addition to his appeal to create something unique and new, there is little doubt that there will be no immediate threat of a lack of events in the years to come. The festivals here in the south coexist based on great diversity, dedicated volunteer work and pride in locality. They are intent on creating a market where all can thrive and stimulate new audiences and appeals despite great numbers of individual events.

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# Appendix

## 1.0 Questioning Route

### Spørsmål for intervju:

Hva er navnet ditt og stillingen din i festivalen?

Hvordan ser publikum og målgruppen deres ut?

Fortell om arrangementet deres, hva er festivalen deres?

Hvorfor valgte du/dere å starte festivalen?

Hva var drømmen/visjonen for festivalen?

Hvordan følger festivalen den visjonen dere hadde i starten, i dag?

Hvordan spiller Kristiansand by inn i festivalen?

Hva tenker du om bruk av det lokale her på Sørlandet og Kristiansand med tanke på artister, mat osv. på festivalen?

Hvor mange er dere i kjernen av festivalen i dag?

Hva slags interesse har dere opplevd lokalt i forhold til festivalen?

Hvordan er konkurransen her på Sørlandet i forhold til mengden festivaler med så kort avstand gjennom sommeren?

Hva tenker du om fremtiden for de individuelle festivalene på Sørlandet med tanke på økende mengde arrangementer, festivaler, artistpriser osv.?

Hva venter i umiddelbar fremtid for festivalen?

Har problemstillingen om er det noen vits i å fortsette dukket opp underveis? Hvorfor gjør vi dette? Hvorfor dukket det spørsmålet opp og hvorfor bestemte du deg for å fortsette?

Hva tror du skal til for at du sier stopp?

Hvilken del av arbeidet gir deg mest glede?

Hva forbinder du med ordet frivillig?

Hvilke roller mener du frivillige typisk fyller på en festival i dag?

Hva slags forandringer ser du rundt frivillighet på festivaler i dag fremfor hvordan det var før?

Har du selv jobbet som frivillig tidligere? I så fall hvor, når og hva gjorde du?

Hvordan opplevde du arbeidet som frivillig?

Hvor viktig er frivillighet for festivaler?

Hvor attraktivt tror du det er å være frivillig i dag fremfor tidligere?

## 2.0 Interview Participant Consent Form

### Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

#### *”Strømmetjenester og legitimitet”*

##### **Bakgrunn og formål**

Formålet med studiet er å kartlegge brukeratferd og skildre deres meninger rundt temaet musikkstrømmetjenester. Vi har som problemstilling å se på hvilke faktorer som kan utgjøre en rolle i konsumenters bruk av strømmetjenester for musikk. Denne masteroppgaven finner sted ved Universitet i Agder sitt fakultet for kunstfag, ved studieretningen Music Management, og gjennomføres ikke for eksterne oppdragsgivere, og ikke i samarbeid mellom flere institusjoner.

Personen er forespurt deltakelse fordi vedkommende befinner seg innenfor en målgruppe som passer godt med forskernes forutsatte avgrensning, og er henholdsvis tilfeldig plukket på bakgrunn av tilgjengelighet for valgt dato, og for å samsvare med nevnte målgruppe.

##### **Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?**

Datainnsamlingen vil foregå i fokusgrupper som tar sikte på å ikke vare lengre enn 2 klokke timer. Opplysningen som innhentes gjennom disse fokusgruppene vil i størst grad være deltakerens oppfatninger, meninger og perspektiver. Denne dataen vil registreres i form av notater, samt lyd/filmopptak men vil behandles særdeles forsiktig som anvist i neste punkt.

##### **Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?**

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt.

Opplysningene vil kun bli behandlet av prosjektgruppen, som i denne forstand er vi to som studenter i samarbeid med veiledere. Personopplysningene som samles vil bli oppbevart digitalt på våre personlige datamaskiner som er låst med brukernavn og passord, og vil i oppgaveteksten bli anonymisert til *alder og kjønn*.

For å opprettholde personers anonymitet ber vi om at du som deltaker viser respekt ovenfor de andre deltakerne og holder den informasjonen som blir gitt av dem innenfor de veggene hvor fokusgruppen ble gjennomført. I publikasjonen vil deltakerne kun bli gjenkjent gjennom deres ytringer, alder og kjønn.

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes **20.05.16**.

Etter prosjektets slutt vil personopplysninger og opptak bli slettet, og kun anonymisert data i den form nevnt ovenfor vil gjenstå.

##### **Frivillig deltakelse**

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

### **Samtykke til deltakelse i studien**

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)