

VOICING REALITY:  
THE HYBRID FORM OF DOCUMENTARY MUSIC VIDEOS

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The documentary music video is an audiovisual expression that adds documentary elements to the music video form. Since its origin, music videos have been a form of experimentation and innovation. Especially in the 21st century the music video form has taken up a broad variety of aesthetics that can be enjoyed online. Moreover, because our reality has become more complex, the audiovisual ways of representing this reality has lead to a wide range of documentary forms.

The heterogeneity and flexibility of form allows for documentary elements to integrate with music video characteristics. This study examines how documentary music videos can be defined. Furthermore, it looks at different functions documentary elements can add and how these videos can find a way to give an authentic representation of reality. In addition, this study attempts to understand the meanings that can be created by the synergy between these two divergent audiovisual forms by means of two case studies.

The videos selected for this study are “Hidden Wounds” by dEUS and “Wyclef Jean” by Young Thug. These cases are studied through close reading and with focus on the concepts of music video aesthetics, documentary conventions and the potential of hybridity. By looking at the conventions and expectations we have about documentary and music videos, this study tries to understand how these videos voice reality.

The study starts by understanding the hybridity of the documentary music video. On the basis of a categorization of the different functions that documentary elements can add, it will become clear how these elements integrate with the music video form. This study introduces amplification, resonation and distortion as functions of the relation between music and image in documentary music videos. The two particular videos that are analyzed are exemplary cases of these different functions. Besides that, the case studies attempt to show the potential documentary music videos have to represent a unique perspective on reality.

This study concludes that music videos can be an effective form to give an authentic audiovisual representation of reality and that the documentary elements can functions in versatile ways. Furthermore, it became clear that the connotations we have of music videos as well as documentary are essential in making meaning of documentary music videos. This study recognises the documentary music video as a form of popular culture that voices reality in a meaningful way.

Keywords: Music videos, documentary conventions, hybridity of form, reality

## Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	1
- 1.1 The Heterogeneity of Form .....	3
- 1.2 Research On a (Not So) New Form.....	4
- 1.3 Questions and Outline.....	6
- 1.4 Theories and Methods.....	8
2. Recognizing the Documentary Music Video.....	11
- 2.1 Uncertainty of Reality.....	12
- 2.2 Understanding Hybridity.....	13
- 2.3 The Music Video Experience.....	14
- 2.4 Combining Documentary with Music Video.....	16
- 2.5 Documentary Functions In Music Videos.....	18
3. “Hidden Wounds”: A Resonating Complexity of Reality.....	25
- 3.1 Complexity.....	27
- 3.2 Visualization of the Voices: Who Are We Listening To?.....	30
- 3.3 Visualization of the Voices: I Want To Be Heard.....	32
- 3.4 Visualization of the Voices: You Choose To Listen!.....	33
- 3.5 Resonate Awareness for PTSD.....	36
4. “Wycef Jean”: Distorting the Music Video.....	39
- 4.1 Juxtaposition.....	40
- 4.2 The Director’s Voice.....	42
- 4.3 The Artist’s Voice.....	45
- 4.4 Director versus Artist.....	48
- 4.5 Director versus Viewer: This Is Not a Music Video.....	50
- 4.6 “None of this matters.”.....	53
5. Conclusion.....	55

6. Bibliography.....60

Appendix.....64

- 1. Longlist Fullscreen Program at IDFA 2016.....64
- 2. Longlist Fullscreen Program at IDFA 2017.....65
- 3. Hidden Wounds - The Veterans.....68
- 4. Song Lyrics “Hidden Wounds” .....69
- 5. Title Cards “Wyclef Jean”.....73

## 1. Introduction

It was the last day of the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) 2017. Tired and saturated by all the documentaries of the past days, I thought I could handle one more screening. For the second time IDFA organized a program of music videos in collaboration with Fullscreen, that could be amusing and upbeat, I expected. Fullscreen is known for showing music videos in the cinema, and does so at several different events and with diverse selections. The selection at IDFA consisted of 14 videos that somehow combined documentary conventions and content with the music video form. What I saw were videos that portrayed real characters from all over the world; a female skateboarder in India, the everyday life in Buffalo NY, a hunter and dog musher in a remote area in Canada, Krump dancers from Los Angeles CA and the dog show contestants of a competition in the Netherlands to name a few. The experience was overwhelming for me. Not only was it impressive to see these videos on the big screen, but their essence left me thinking about the possibilities of the combination between documentary and music videos.

As I mentioned, I had certain expectations before seeing the music video program - I thought it could be simple and fun. These assumptions were mainly based on my experiences with watching music videos. Growing up in the 1990's meant growing up with music videos. Besides MTV, the Dutch music channel TMF (The Music Factory) started broadcasting in 1995. (IsGeschiedenis, 2011) This had a big influence on my familiarity with music videos and shaped the assumptions I have. During my lifetime music videos have been present in popular culture in many different forms, on a variety of platforms and in rich numbers. The popularisation of the internet, also in the 1990's, meant that many forms of popular culture were about to be adapted for or transformed into new online (plat)forms. Instead of television, online video platforms like YouTube, Vimeo and VEVO are now the main place to distribute music videos. These platforms allow videos to use different technologies and challenge the music video form and its aesthetics. (Korsgaard 2017, 173.)

In addition to these experiences, I have a great interest in documentary practices and I have been studying and working with this subject for the past six years. The documentary form has also undergone change during the last decades and particularly ‘our understanding of realism in relation to sound and music in the digital age has become highly complex.’ (Rogers 2014, 3.) In the twenty-first century we are surrounded by and exposed to sound and music to a high degree, for example in public spaces. Moreover digital devices such as smartphones provide a great source of sound. This means we have an increasingly vivid soundtrack in the reality of our everyday lives that complicates how we interpret the representation of reality, for example when documentary elements are used in music videos.

Continuous changes in technology and aesthetics have been challenging the field of documentary film today. This allows for a versatile range of forms to exist in the documentary realm. Moreover Thomas Austin and Wilma de Jong add that ‘[e]ven as the spaces occupied by documentary expand, the accompanying diversification and hybridization of the field throw into question some of the foundational claims made for it.’ (Austin & De Jong 2008, 2.) What is considered a documentary is always questioned by the changes in the field. This means that our understanding of documentary conventions are constantly challenged and reconstructed by the alliances that documentary engages with. This is particularly interesting to consider in the case of documentary music videos because the combination challenges both our understanding of documentary and music video.

Besides, ‘[t]he relatively uncommercial aspect of documentary throughout its history has forced the genre to the continuous search for its ideal platform.’ (Vicente 2008, 271) This means that it is not uncommon for documentary filmmaking to look for possibilities to engage with other forms in order to appeal to its audiences. This results in a broad variety of forms that can be considered documentary. Therefore it is challenging but useful to constantly approach the concept of documentary in a flexible way, to see its influence and integration in popular culture today. That is why these documentary music videos allow me to study the hybridization of documentary and music video in the field of Popular Culture Studies.

## 1.1 The Heterogeneity of Form

After experiencing the combination of music video and documentary form for the first time at IDFA 2017 it was evident to me that there is a lot to say about the synergy between these audiovisual forms. The combination not only stretches our understanding of what music videos can be but also questions our assumptions of documentary elements. Despite my confidence for the subject it has proven to be complicated to explain what I mean when I introduce the concept of a documentary music video. The two audiovisual forms seem to have some contradictions in their characteristics that make their combination hard to imagine at first. For example, the music video usually has a commercial aspect while documentary often does not have this connotation. Music videos are considered to be entertaining and imaginative while documentaries are supposed to be informative and realistic. And how can documentary content be expressed in such a short video where music occupies most of the audiotrack?

On the other hand music and the moving image have a long tradition, dating back to the origin of film technology. Music video finds its precursors in many developments throughout film history. The combination of music and moving images can for example already be seen as early as the silent cinema accompanied by live music. Then the musical genre after the arrival of sound in film has been influential. Subsequently in the second half of the 20th century musicians explored audiovisual relations by making music video-like films, to name just a few. (Korsgaard 2017, 26–32.) This means that music video is based on a variety of developments that enable many different possibilities for the audiovisual form. Music videos can use these possibilities to be innovative and develop continuously while relying on and combining existing practices.

In documentary filmmaking, music also has been present to a greater or lesser extent in the past, and the soundtrack plays an increasingly important role nowadays (Rogers 2014, 1). It is therefore perhaps not that surprising after all to combine music video and documentary. Even though documentary film is generally perceived as a truthful representation of reality, ‘it often remains persuasive, subjective, emotional and narrative.’ (Rogers 2014, 3). It is precisely this subjective perspective on reality that



allows for a lot of creative possibilities in the documentary form, for example the documentary music video. Or as Holly Rogers puts it: ‘As soon as an aesthetic decision is made, the line between the real and the fictional begins to flex.’ (Rogers 2014, 3.)

This flexibility is also part of music video characteristics as determined by Mathias Bonde Korsgaard: ‘The “mediality” of music video is flexible and historically unstable, and therefore any definition of music video as a medium will only partly fit with the body of work it is supposed to cover.’ (Korsgaard 2017, 37.) It is hard to define all that music video can be, because of its ability to adapt and transform over time. Korsgaard continues: ‘So rather than compromising a unified field, music video is actually defined by its very heterogeneity, its wide range of different audiovisual expressions.’ (Korsgaard 2017, 37.) This heterogeneity is the key to the combination of music video and documentary. The ever evolving music video form and the flexive lines between fiction and reality engage with each other in their open-endedness. In this way they can form a hybrid that can lead to an authentic audiovisual representation of reality.

## **1.2 Research On a (Not So) New Form**

The heterogeneity characteristic of both documentary and music videos was also noticed by Laurel Westerup at the Visual Evidence Conference in 2018. This is where she presented her first thoughts on the combination of music video and documentary in her presentation ‘Toward a (Not So) New Art: Music Video-Documentary Hybridity’. (Westerup 2018) In her talk Westerup affirmed that the flexible definition of both forms enables ‘their cross-pollination with other media forms, including each other.’ She discusses a few examples that represent the authenticity documentary content can add to support the song, but also mentions the reflexive power that can arise by contradicting images to the song. Documenting elements can already be found in early music videos, such as live footage, and documentary elements are used in a great number and in various creative ways in examples today.

The hybrid form between music video and documentary that derives from their synergy can take many shapes. The existence of this hybrid form has been acknowledged but not intensively studied yet. Westerup's talk at the Visual Evidence Conference in 2018 is the only source that is entirely devoted to the combination of documentary and music videos. It is important for this study to know that there has been some academic interest in this topic and that the significance of this confluence between music video and documentary is recognized. Therefore Westerup's presentation is an encouraging source for my research. As she demonstrated, the combination between music video and documentary elements is certainly not new, but there seems to be a current trend for these videos nonetheless. The two Fullscreen programs at IDFA in 2016 and 2017 can function as proof that there are enough documentary music videos to justify this research. (See the longlist for the Fullscreen programs at IDFA in appendix 1 and 2.)

Furthermore, since the music video found its place online, the form has gotten a new digital life and the flexibility of the form could further expand (Korsgaard 2017, 173–174). Music videos are some of the most watched videos on YouTube and online releases of videos can go viral, which means they reach a huge international audience (Vernallis 2013, 6). Besides that, technological developments and the internet also provide new possibilities to create platforms that can be especially made for the music video and can add interactive components. In other words '[t]hese new technologies provide the ground for the stylistic transformations that have unfolded in the last fifteen or so years.' (Vernallis 2013, 4.) Examples of these contemporary music videos will be addressed and analyzed in this study to get a better understanding of recent popular culture in general, and to recognize the potential of the combination of music videos and documentary practices in particular.

These recent forms of music videos raise questions about new audiovisual aesthetics in the music video field. This field has been relatively neglected in the academia during the last three decades, but because of current changes in the past decade that enabled exciting forms to evolve, research has been increasing (Korsgaard 2013, 501). To contribute to research on new audiovisual aesthetics and to recognize the documentary music video form, I will take a closer look at the possibilities to expand the boundaries

of the music video genre and address the aspect of documentary content and conventions used in music videos.

### **1.3 Questions and Outline**

To get a better understanding of how the combination between music video and documentary takes shape, it will be necessary to describe their characteristics and find a way to define these forms. As I mentioned, the basis of the combination is precisely the versatility of how these forms can be defined. Even though it is difficult to find an inclusive definition for both these forms there are conventions and expectations at work that can be helpful analyzing documentary music videos. My own expectations when I first saw these kinds of videos at the screening during IDFA are no exception and even motivated me to start this research.

What I aim for in this research is to examine how the flexibility and hybridity of form work in the case of documentary music videos, and how these videos play with conventions and expectations to create meaning. The questions I want to answer are:

- How can the documentary music video be defined as a hybrid form?
- How can documentary elements integrate with the music video form and conceivably find a way to give an authentic representation of reality?
- How can different meanings, added by documentary elements to the music video form, be categorised?
- How can selected cases of the documentary music video show the potential of the representation of reality by means of this hybrid form?

In order to answer the first three questions I will look at the characteristics of both music videos and documentary film and determine the assumptions we have about these forms. To understand how the hybridity works it will be unavoidable to determine some formal traits for both music video and documentary, to be able to see how they can negotiate their features in combination with each other. Subsequently I will look at the

challenges and potentialities for documentary conventions in relation to the music video form. On the basis of a number of examples I will show that documentary content and conventions can have different functions when used in the music video form. I attempt to make an overview of the possible functions that documentary elements can add by means of examples. Therewith I want to show how this combination can create different ways to voice reality. My research material is based on the longlists for the Fullscreen program at IDFA in 2016 and 2017, composed by Jasper Hokken and Job de Wit and that are added to the appendix.

Consequently, I will answer the last question by discussing two music videos that I selected from the longlists, which both use certain significant documentary conventions. The first video I will discuss finds its principles in the documentary field but expresses this content in an interactive music video form. Both the music video and the pop-song “Hidden Wounds” (2013) by the Belgian indie-rock band dEUS, are about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This video was part of the IDFA selection in 2013 and on the longlist for the Fullscreen program. The song is based on an article written for The Guardian about war veteran Jimmy Johnson who is jailed for the second time, convicted of murder and who wants to raise awareness for PTSD. (James, 2010) When dEUS frontman Tom Barman read this article, he felt the need to express Johnson’s story in a song to document the issue of PTSD. Subsequently the music videos for “Hidden Wounds” continues this process by portraying many different veterans who are suffering from PTSD. Moreover, the music video is featured on a website that is specifically created to provide more information on the topic of PTSD. On the website the viewer can experience the interactive music documentary in multiple original ways.

The idea for the second music video that I will analyze derives from traditional music video aesthetics, but uses documentary conventions to literally save the video from a huge fiasco. This music video is for the popular American hip hop-song “Wyclef Jean” (2017) by Young Thug and was part of the Fullscreen program at IDFA in 2017. Besides, the video won the MTV Video Music Award for Best Editing in 2017. In the video, director Ryan Staake explains how basically everything went wrong while making it. Hence the video is about making the video itself. This causes ambiguity and

forces the viewer to think about the reliability of what is shown. The video stirred a lot of excitement, not only at the IDFA screening, but also immediately when it came out in the beginning of 2017 and went viral overnight. (Ducker, 2017) The video now has over 35 million views on YouTube, it gained a lot of attention and can lead to some confusion among its viewers.

#### **1.4 Theories and Methods**

This research deals with two concepts that are both difficult to define. Documentaries as well as music videos are probably more defined by their diversity of expression than their consistency. With concepts such as documentary it might be less important to fix a comprehensive definition according to Nichols, but '[m]ore important is how every film we consider a documentary contributes to an ongoing dialogue that draws on common characteristics that take on new and distinct forms, like an ever-changing chameleon.'" (Nichols 2010, 6). Especially because this study looks at the hybridization of documentary and music video it is important to have a multilateral approach. As Korsgaard mentions concerning music videos: 'Media hybridization and convergence also necessarily entail a theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary hybridization and convergence.' (Korsgaard 2017, 15). Because, also music videos are defined by their heterogeneous character.

In the light of media hybridization the basis for this study relies on existing theories of both music video studies and documentary studies. The aim is to find an understanding of the hybridity of the documentary music video form by expanding on the existing theories. The concept of voice has proven to be useful for this research. Voice is a concept that is often used in documentary studies. As Nichols states: 'The voice of documentary is each film's specific way of expressing its way of seeing the world.' (Nichols 2010, 68). Voice in this context means a unique way of expressing. Therefore by voicing reality I mean the variety of forms used to express the way we experience the world. It focuses on *how* documentary can represent reality and therewith what form is used to express this.

This way of understanding the documentary voice, connects to the documentary music video form. In principle music videos already try to voice songs by means of images. In other words these videos find a way to express music visually. In the case of documentary music videos this voice is documentary and the way of expressing is the music video form. In chapter 2 I will further explain and explore how the synergy between documentary and music video finds different ways to represent reality.

To analyze how the documentary elements function in combination with the music video form, I will conduct close readings. This approach will reveal how these videos play with conventions and expectations and how the different elements influence the authentic representation of reality in the documentary music video. The videos I have chosen for this research, will show the different potentialities of the documentary music video in voicing the reality.

For this analysis I will focus on both audio and visual components and consider their relation to each other. Since my background is in Media Studies my main approach is focussed on the visual part of the analysis. However, in the case of a music video, it is necessary to discuss some musical features in the analysis as well. This approach will show that the combination of documentary elements and music video can lead to a meaningful audiovisual representation of reality and pushes the boundaries of both documentary and music video aesthetics. This allows for a broader understanding of documentary as a concept and music video as a form.

With this research I do not claim that the observations I make and the interpretation I draw are the only way to understand the documentary music video. Rather, I hope to show some way to approach the heterogeneity of music video form and the versatile ways of voicing reality by means of combining different elements in an audiovisual form.

The research material is provided to me by programmer at IDFA Jasper Hokken, who kindly shared his overview of the longlists for the IDFA and Fullscreen program of

2016 and 2017. The directors of the videos that are used as a case study in this research are aware that their video is included in this study and I would like to thank them for their work. We must not forget that '[t]oday's unique audiovisual relations developed through music video directors' and editors' experiments at reconfiguring images and sound.' (Vernallis 2013, 5) This freedom of experimenting with music video form allows makers to play with the constructiveness of film, reveals the illusion of reality and is a manifestation of the hybridity of form. This means that besides showcasing the music and the artist, music videos can develop numerous visual ways to create a meaningful experience for the viewer. Or as Carol Vernallis put it: 'Music is one thing that people in our culture can still care deeply about, and we should not be surprised by the fact that many videos are strongly felt.' (Vernallis 2004, 201).

In chapter 2 I will determine several different functions that documentary elements can add to the music video form. On the basis of the characteristics of documentary and music video I will develop a categorisation of different documentary music videos. Chapters 3 and 4 will focus on two particular examples of documentary music videos that both use documentary elements in a significant way. There is a dichotomy between the two case studies. The first video, "Hidden Wounds" (2013), finds its basis for the idea in documentary content but expresses this in a music video form. The second video, "Wyclef Jean" (2017), originates from a music video intent but uses documentary elements to create a different story from the music video material. This is interesting for this research because it can show how the documentary elements can be applied in different ways. Besides that the two case studies represent examples from different categories that will be determined in the second chapter. The last chapter I will conclude this research and suggest further studies.

## 2. Recognizing the Documentary Music Video

The subject of this research has a double, dual nature because it is an *audiovisual* form and it uses characteristics and conventions of both *documentary* and *music video* to express itself. This means that also the approach to the subject needs to address these dual natures. Therefore I have decided to call this form **documentary music video**.

This term emphasizes that the form evolved from the music video, since there is a clear combination of music and images, but in these cases the images add meanings that aim to function as a documentary. In other words these music videos intend to give an authentic representation of reality.

To study a hybrid form such as the documentary music video, it is necessary to start by understanding what both separate audiovisual forms are and introduce the characteristics that this hybrid consists of. Because there are certain conventions and expectations connected to the terms documentary and music video, they will influence our experience of their combination. As obvious as this might sound, the more difficult it is to impose a fitting definition for such flexible concepts as documentary and music video. Many attempts have been made to form definitions and on the basis of some that are useful for this research I will clarify how I understand the concepts of documentary and music video in order to analyze their combination.

Therefore I will attempt to describe how the characteristics of both audiovisual forms contribute to their combination and explain their hybridity. Subsequently I will look at how these characteristics combine and discuss the contradictions and similarities that challenge the combination between documentary elements and music video form. Thereafter I will indicate some possible functions that documentary elements can add to music videos on the basis of several examples, to recognize the significance of the documentary music video form.



## 2.1 Uncertainty of Reality

To understand how documentary elements function in combination with music videos, I first have to clarify what the term documentary means in this research. Because documentary is such a flexible term John Corner has suggested that the word ‘documentary’ is better used as an adjective than a concept on its own. (Corner 2000, 862). In this research documentary is the adjective to music videos. This is helpful for understanding the documentary music video as a form where documentary elements were added to the music video. But the question still remains: *What* is added? What makes something documentary?

Because of its empirical relation to reality, it is not surprising that the term documentary is so ambiguous. It holds true that ‘[m]any of documentary's claims to represent reality are rooted in the ontology of film [...]’ (Honesty Roe 2013, 17) Because a camera can document almost anything that happens in front of it, it produces images that are a representation of that exact encounter. But documentation is not the same as documentary. When John Grierson first coined the term documentary for his own filmmaking in the 1920’s, his definition, “the creative treatment of actuality” was particularly focussed on creativity and therewith the influence of the filmmaker on the documentation. (Carroll 2003, 193-194.) When you document something, deliberate choices are made on what to document and consequently how to represent that. The document holds an indisputable relation to the reality but once represented as a documentary, it is not reality as such. A documentary film therefore is not real, it is a reference to the real, it is a reference to something documented in reality but transformed into a construction of meanings. (Balsom and Peleg 2016, 12.)

Indeed this causes uncertainty about whether these meanings should be interpreted as something true. But maybe this is precisely what is intended to happen. As Hito Steyerl states, this uncertainty is a defining feature for documentary, which means that ‘[t]he only thing we can say for sure about the documentary mode in our times is that we always already doubt if it is true.’ (Steyerl 2011.) This uncertainty is essential and can become visible in forms such as the documentary music video. By adding the

uncertainty of reality to music videos, the existing conventions of both forms are challenged. This can show that there is a constant tension between reality and fiction. So rather than separating reality completely from fiction, it can be more useful to understand documentary as an alliance between reality and fiction. This emphasizes that an audiovisual expression is always constructed and therefore can only represent a perspective on reality, and is not real itself. Documentary creates an uncertainty that is defining for the form, especially when documentary forms a hybrid because this provokes the viewer to think about what is real. Furthermore this also affirms that documentary therefore is a hybrid form itself.

## 2.2 Understanding hybridity

Robert Stam widely discusses the potential of the hybridity between documentary and fiction in his chapter “Hybrid Variations on a Documentary Theme” in *Keywords of Subversive Film/Media Aesthetics*. In his essay he addresses many different examples of this hybrid and advocates that it ‘has been mobilized as a radical aesthetic resource.’ (Stam 2015, 185.) This means that approaching documentary as a hybrid of reality and fiction allows for a more subjective and broad understanding of the term that can express itself in multiple ways. Stam recognizes and discusses these different forms that exist in the documentary realm and he indicates the music video as one of those hybrid forms (Stam 2015, 186). Even though he classifies music video as a ‘minor genre’ of film, he realizes that the form can function effectively for expressing documentary content and has potential to convey a documentary message (Stam 2015, 196–199).

Coincidentally Stam uses Wittgenstein’s term ‘family resemblances’ to describe his way of classifying documentary’s hybrid variations - a term also used by Korsgaard when defining music videos. Korsgaard explains the term as follows: ‘[T]here is no one single trait that ties together the entire family of music videos, but rather there is a range of traits— not all of which might appear at the same time.’ (Korsgaard 2017, 33–34) This adaptable approach can be useful for understanding the documentary music video form. Because the definition of both audiovisual forms can be approached in such a flexible

way, it gives them a heterogeneous quality. This means that it becomes possible to hybridize formal traits in numerous different ways and therefore music video can allow documentary elements to integrate and thrive.

Furthermore Korsgaard explains that music video's hybridity is made possible because of at least three main reasons. Firstly music videos' ability to communicate in multiple different forms on the semiotic levels of music, lyrics and image. Secondly the quantity of music videos produced up to today, and those yet to come. Lastly the experimental nature that music video has always had, which stimulates to be innovative. (Korsgaard 2017, 37) For documentary music videos this means that these reasons create a lot of potential for the form to develop. All these reasons contribute to the variety of ways for documentary elements to interrelate in the music video form.

There are many different ways for documentary elements to merge with music videos and to find a symbiosis to exist in the same form. Later in this chapter I will demonstrate how the documentary music video can function. For some videos the combination is merely representing documentary content in the music video form or just a music video with some documentary elements. For the examples that I have selected for this research however, the documentary music video transcends the formal traits of both forms, to become a hybrid that can stimulate meaningful interpretation. These videos explore the relation between the music and the images in such a way that the added documentary elements can have different functions and express a variety of meanings. The interpretation of this coalition can lead to an authentic representation of reality as will become more clear in the analysis of two specific documentary music videos in chapters 3 and 4.

### **2.3 The Music Video Experience**

Even though the documentary adjective to music video causes a complex engagement, there are often quite explicit connotations and certain expectations of what a music video should convey. Initially when the music video emerged in the 1970's it was

considered a short format, intended to have promotional characteristics to popularise the song and the artist for the entertainment of the audience. The images should be made *for* the music and emphasize musical and lyrical features to consolidate the song. Therefore the recorded song preexisted the video. The length of the video was determined by the song and the song should not be interrupted. The main goal of the video should be to display characteristics of the song and the artist in order to make profit. (Korsgaard 2017, 33.)

‘None of this definition holds any more,’ says Vernallis (2013, 208). The music videos of the past decade, and most probably even before that, have exceeded the formal traits of their ancestors. Radical technological changes, shifts to online platforms, challenges in popularity, financial difficulties and the confluence with a variety of media, all contributed to a broader interpretation of the music video form (Vernallis 2013, 207.) By summing up these changes Vernallis explores the need for a revision of the music video aesthetics, and comes to the simplifying definition for the music video ‘as a relation of sound and image that we recognize as such’ (Vernallis 2013, 208.) It holds true that indeed this characteristic remains unchanged; the relation between music and image is essential for the music video form. Besides, the emphasis on the role of the viewer acknowledging the relation of sound and image as a music video is defining as well. Because the viewer has expectations based on their experiences and has knowledge of conventions, they are able to recognize the music video form. Regardless, the initial formal traits are still visible in the music video form and can be a useful basis for analyzing documentary music videos.

Especially in analyzing music videos, the importance of the interrelations between music, sound and image for creating meaning can not be denied. According to Gabrieli, the images have a certain duty towards music. This means that the images should interpret the song, lyrically and musically, in such a way that the music video creates a deeper understanding and conforms to the song’s creative expression. The images create a certain atmosphere and can synchronize visually with elements of the song. In turn, the song functions to tie the images together and dictate the choice and order of the images (Gabrieli 2010, 99.) This dual addressing of senses causes a different level of

sensory experience. Korsgaard describes this as follows: ‘In the combination of music and image, a third synesthetic substance arguably arises, one that resides neither in the image nor in the music but in their very interrelation.’ This means that the experience of a music video is something different from other audiovisual forms because of the strong connection between music and image. Subsequently he states that ‘no single element is ever fully subordinate to another since meaning comes into being through a synesthetic interference, a transposition of a quality from one sensory modality to another.’ (Korsgaard 2017, 70) This means that besides the visualization of music also the opposite takes place, namely the musicalisation of images. Therefore it is important to understand how we recognize the music video experience through an interrelation between music and image.

#### **2.4 Combining Documentary with Music Video**

When we perceive the music video as a relation between music and image, it would be understandable to expect that the music dominates the soundtrack of the video. This challenges the integration of documentary conventions into the music videos form because commonly it is the music that supports the images in documentary film and not the other way around as is the case in music videos. Especially in the early days of documentary filmmaking but for some still today ‘[i]t is feared that music may contradict the apparent spontaneity and naturalism of the documentary aesthetic.’ (Rogers 2014, 2) This means that from the documentary filmmaking point of view the intention is to let the images speak for themselves.

Similarly there have also been concerns about documenting and visualizing popular music, for example when the music documentary arose in the 1960’s, as well as when music videos started to appear in the 1970’s. Although these new visual forms of music and images were an interesting development in the audiovisual field, the argument from the popular music point of view was that the images could affect the purity of music and damage its authenticity. (Halligan et al 2013, 6) In other words for documentary film the images are acknowledged to be most real as opposed to music videos where the music is

considered to be most authentic. Despite these concerns about the combination of (documentary) images and music, or maybe precisely because of this disruption, possibilities are created to experiment with the documentalization of music and the musicalization of documentary elements.

This results in another complication of the representation of reality in a music video. The concern expressed above proves that there is a certain connotation of how we experience music and image and that their combination has consequences for this experience. Because of the recent technological developments and the multiplicity of (online) media in popular culture today, it becomes more challenging to judge whether the images we are watching are real or not. Besides that there are numerous connotations and expectations of the combination of certain music with certain images. This also influences the interpretation of forms such as the documentary music video.

The power of the combination between music and images should be taken seriously because it can manipulate how we perceive what is represented. Gabrielli points out that our experience of music is often more subjective and personal while the experience of images 'are usually more 'objective'' because they leave less room for imagination. (Gabrielli 2010, 94) Especially when the images used in music video have a documentary nature, they can function to create a certain significance. The intention of the combination between the documentary image and the music can affect the viewer and lead to meaningful interpretations.

On the other hand, there are also similarities between the characteristics of documentary film and music videos that facilitate their combination. Both audiovisual forms have thrived from digital developments of technical equipment that made them more compact and affordable. Especially because documentary productions are often on a low budget and also smaller music videos production usually have to be inventive with the budget. In the case of documentary filmmaking the locations can be challenging and often decisions for cinematography have to be made on the spot. Freer camera movements and out of focus shots can be an aesthetic result of this. These aesthetics are not strange to the music video form and are easily accepted as a feature. Korsgaard even points out

that this feature of music videos might have been influenced by movements such as Dogme '95, that aimed for a certain realistic experience of the images. (Korsgaard 2017, 15.)

Another feature of music video is rapid and incoherent editing, often because of the music that directs the pace of the images. This kind of editing can also be seen in the work of Dziga Vertov, a Russian documentary filmmaker from the 1920's, who is known from the Kino-Pravda (translated as film-truth). Vertov's films try to be as true as possible by organizing fragments documented in the reality, in such a way that their interpretation can lead to an understanding of the complexity of reality. This means the editing was crucial for gaining this form of truth. For both documentary film and music video it holds true that they can create meaning through editing. Even though editing is fragmented and fast, this construction can also add meaning to the images.

## **2.5 Documentary Functions In Music Videos**

We only have a music video when the spectator perceives this text as a whole, as a sum of elements which are perfectly integrated into each other. Going back to the definition offered by Christian Metz, a music video is made to exist only if it is watched and heard. (Gabielli 2010, 91.)

As the statement above suggests and I have argued, the recognition of the relation between music and image is a defining matter. So what happens when documentary elements are added? How do music and image effect each other in documentary music videos? And what functions can these documentary elements serve?

To answer these questions it might be helpful to go back to a categorization Andrew Goodwin made already in the beginning of the 1990's. In his book *Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture* Goodwin introduces the following relations between song and video to identify how they function: illustration, amplification and disjunction. Goodwin starts from the assumption that images are

added to the song. This means that illustration is seen when a video adds nothing specifically new to the song but merely illustrates it in a visual form. The images create a certain visual atmosphere for the song's meanings. Alternatively amplification happens when the video adds its own visual level of meaning to the song but does so in line with the meanings of the song. Therefore the video intensifies the existing meanings by presenting a visual interpretation. And lastly, disjunction occurs when the video adds a different meaning to the song through contradiction and conflict. There could either be no direct relation between the song and the images at all, which creates new meaning or the images show a clear contrast with the song that can provoke different meanings. (Goodwin 1992, 86–88.)

This categorization by Goodwin is a useful starting point for thinking about the relations between the song and the video. In order to determine the functions of the documentary music video I would like to propose an expansion of his categorization that will allow these videos to conform to this division. The first category, illustration, will be discharged because when documentary elements are involved in music videos it is difficult to argue that the images do not add any meanings. The terms I would like to use to categorize the functions of the relation between music and image in documentary music videos are: **amplification, resonance and distortion.**

The two added terms can be understood as follows. Videos that are categorized as resonance add their own meanings to the song. The inspiration for these meanings can be based on something from the song or artist but take their own shape in the video. In other words, the meanings relate to the song but resonate their own values that can be different from the song. Distortion is similar to Goodwin's disjunction, only I want to put emphasis on the misleading and convincing power of images and their meanings. Distortion therefore means that the images add meanings that can trick the viewer and play with conventions and expectations.

To show how added documentary elements function in music videos I selected examples that conform to the categories proposed above. All the examples are part of the longlists for the IDFA Fullscreen program of 2016 and 2017 that consists of over 50



videos. (See appendix 1 and 2) To get an idea of the specific documentary conventions that are used and determine what significance they add I will introduce several elements that are often returning in these videos. Bill Nichols lists the following documentary conventions in his book *Introduction to Documentary*: voice-over commentary, interviews, sound recorded on location, cutaways to different shots to present an image of the argument from various angles and a focus on people in their everyday lives. (Nichols 2010, 21) All these elements can be found in documentary music videos and it is indeed often the case that the videos from the longlists are character-driven. For the features that include audio such as voice-over, interviews, and location sound, there are different ways to integrate them in the music video form. For example they can be mixed in with the soundtrack of the song or the interview and voice-over can be read instead of heard on title cards or subtitles. Besides, the observational character of documentary film can suit well to music videos' soundtrack without the necessity of explaining what is presented. By categorizing the documentary music videos it will become clear what functions these documentary elements can serve for the interpretation of these videos.

The first category in this research is amplification, and can be seen in the documentary music videos for the song "BAM" (2017) by Jay-Z featuring Damian Marley and "9 (After Coachella)" (2017) by Cashmere Cat featuring MØ & SOPHIE for example. Both of these videos are based around the artists who made the song. In the videos we get a look behind the scenes, we get to know some background of the song and personal information about the artists. For both songs there is a collaboration with featuring artists who are also present in the videos. In the video for "BAM" (by Rohan Blair-Mangat) we travel with Jay-Z and Damian Marley to Trenchtown, Jamaica where we see them visiting people and places, recording in the studio and hear them conversate about their music and roots. The title "BAM", which relates to a sample used in the song, is explained in the video by means of a short interview with the original singer of the sample. Also in "9 (After Coachella)" (by Jake Schreier and Adam Newport-Berra) the song's title is explained and we get to know some personal information about producer Magnus (aka Cashmere Cat) and singer Karen (aka MØ). The video makes use of subtitles that clarify the meanings of images instead of adding

voice-over and sound. In their own way, both videos explain how the song came about and document this story by following the artists.

These videos claim a certain credit for the artists and their work. By adding documentary images to give information about the background of the artists and the song, these videos could function as proof of the artists' authenticity. The video confirms that the artists created this song and try to comfort the viewer that the song is authentic and performed by the artist. Even though it is a while ago, these intentions seem to relate to the early music videos of rock bands where they showed images of the band performing on stage to let the viewer know that they could actually play live. This can for example be seen in the early music video for the Queen song "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1975). Already then they used the documenting images to claim authenticity for the artists.

By filming Jay-Z and Damian Marley on a trip together and adding the ethical dimension of crediting the original singer for the sample used in the song, the video's function is to show authenticity by simply documenting the artists. Likewise in the video of "9 (After Coachella)" the artists are shown as the people behind their artists names, to connect with the viewer on a personal level. In this way these videos amplify the meanings of the song and use the documentary elements to credit the artists' authenticity. In the category of amplification the director of the video has a submissive role and the video serves to create a truthful image of the artist. This also means that the viewer can easily recognize the meanings that are represented.

The next category is resonance. The documentary elements in the videos that are discussed should echo some meanings of the song with the images they add. This is the case for "Life's What You Make It" (2016) by Placebo (cover of Talk Talk) and "Darkest Hour" (2017) by Lyves. For both songs it holds true that the lyrics are very limited and repetitive but the titles of the songs and their main themes create a space for interpretation and therefor association. For "Life's What You Make It" filmmaker Sacha Rainbow takes us to the workers at Agbogbloshie, one of the world's largest electronic waste dumps in Ghana, who this video is dedicated too. The video sets the call "Life's

what you make it” in a different light by showing what the workers at Agbogbloshie make of life and thereby introduces an ethical issue to the song it accompanies. Similarly director of the video Thomas Ralph, enhances the meanings of the song “Darkest Hour” by interviewing young British kids about their views on Brexit. The clips from the interviews are mixed into the music. Because of these documentary comments, the music video incorporates politically charged meanings.

Videos in the category resonance allow for political, ethical and social issues to be addressed in the music video form by means of documentary elements. With the song as a starting point, the music video director can develop an idea to combine some meanings from the song with images that have similar but often more intense values, which can stimulate their interpretation. This can lead to more significant statements that are added by the documentary elements. In this way the topics that are addressed can be of a more serious kind and foreground something quite different than the artist and the music.

In the case of “Life’s What You Make It” the video focuses on the workers at the electronic waste dump and tries to use the popular form of the music video and the lyrics of the song to make the viewer realize the scale of the issue at Agbogbloshie. For “Darkest Hour” the interviews with the British teenagers are mixed into the song, and combined with the lyrics this empowers the statements of the kids. Moreover the music dramatises the atmosphere of the Brexit topic. In these examples, the director of the music video has an implied role in making meaning for the video. These filmmakers take more ethical responsibility for the subject as well as for themselves because these videos represent actual people and their everyday lives. In other words the subject of these videos has to be treated ethically and also the filmmaker is ethically involved with the subject by making the video. In addition the viewer has to engage more with the music video in order to interpret the meanings.

The last category is distortion. It is often the case in these videos that the images contrast the song’s meanings somehow, in order to make a different statement. This happens when documentary music videos use mocking features that play with the

viewers expectations and give a contradicting meaning to the song and subsequently the video itself. This can be seen in the videos for “Would You Be” (2016) by Willie J. Healey and “I Wanna Prove To You” (2017) by The Lemon Twigs. In the video for “Would You Be”, director Finn Keenan decided to mock the videos that show the authenticity of the artist. Willie J. Healey plays himself and tells the viewer about how he became a “mute-ician”. This video is comical and uses self-mockery to say something about other artist’s videos. In the video for “I Wanna Prove To You” director Nick Roney goes a step further and gets involved in the video himself by taking the band to his grandparents place to *prove* to them what a commitment to love looks like. “And what follows, there is no script, no rehearsals, just the truth as it unfolds.” says Roney in the beginning of the video. Again this video plays with the viewer’s expectations and uses irony to make fun of the situation the director puts himself in. Roney is trying so hard to prove the love of his grandparents that the result is rather opposite and he learns a different lesson himself.

In the examples it becomes clear that documentary elements add a sense of uncertainty to these music videos. Because these videos play with expectations and conventions and deliberately try to mock the viewer, they can be misleading and confusing. In all the documentary music videos discussed above, the question if it is real or not could be asked because of the added uncertainty of reality. But especially in the category of distortion, this question is asked explicitly. Although the answer to this question is not necessarily relevant, it creates an invitation to reflect on the meanings in the song and video. Therefore the meanings that these videos add are often communicated in an ambiguous way. The director has a more explicit role in creating the meanings, and is sometimes even visually present. Hence the viewer also has to actively interpret these manipulative images and make sense out of confusion.

By introducing this altered categorization based on Goodwin’s work, I want to point out that the added documentary elements can serve different purposes and that the combination of music and documentary images has different audiovisual aesthetic possibilities. The next two chapters will discuss exemplary cases of amplification, resonance and distortion and explore the interpretation of the relation between music

and image. "Hidden Wounds" is the first documentary music video that I will analyze, which show how a video can transcend amplification and become resonance. "Wyclef Jean" is the second video, which is an exceptional case of distortion. By looking at these videos by means of the categorisation, I aim to get a better understanding of what meanings documentary elements can add to music videos. Therefore the analyzes for these videos can provide interesting interpretations according to the categorization.

### 3. “Hidden Wounds”: A Resonating Complexity of Reality

Based on the categorization presented in the previous chapter I will now discuss the first case study and conduct a close reading on the song and image relation of the documentary music video I selected. “Hidden Wounds” (2013) by the Belgian indie-rock band dEUS is an example of a music video that exceeds amplification and becomes resonance. Both the song and the video address the same theme, namely Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The video can be watched on YouTube, but on the associated website for the song, the viewer is able to interact with the video and discover more background about the characters that are featured in it (Image 1). Embedded in the website the video is an interactive music documentary created by Prospektor in collaboration with dEUS. The producers at Prospektor describe themselves as ‘a journalistic production agency, which specializes in new forms of documentary storytelling.’ (Hidden Wounds About, 2013) The website they build

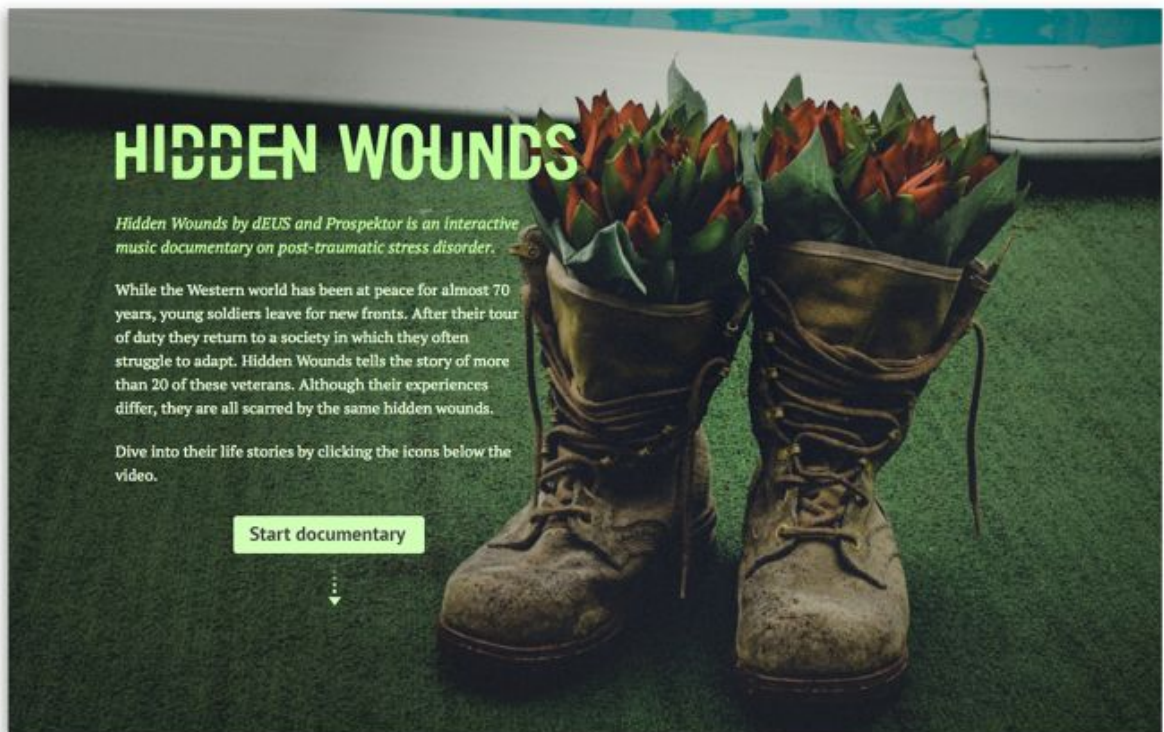


Image 1: The frontpage of the special website built for the “Hidden Wounds” interactive music documentary that introduces the video.

allows the viewer to listen to the stories of war veterans to get to know more about their experience of PTSD. Therefore the music video for this song wants to resonate meanings with the viewer.

On the page of the website about the origin of the project, dEUS frontman Tom Barman, explains in a video that “sometimes you sing about things of your own life, and sometimes you sing about things you read about”. Barman describes in this interview how the music and the lyrics for “Hidden Wounds” came about. When he read the story of war veteran Jimmy Johnson in an article from *The Guardian* and learned about the horror that is caused by PTSD, he was motivated to document this subject matter into a song. He decided to incorporate the testimony of Jimmy Johnson, as quoted in the article, to the verse of the song. This “objective voice”, as Barman calls it, is a direct and true testimony of a veteran that describes the horrible things he has seen. (Hidden Wounds About, 2013) In this context, objective is related to the character of a testimony as opposed to a more subjective and emotional statement. The latter is expressed in the chorus that attempts to articulate the abandoned feelings war veterans describe as a result of PTSD because very few people can relate to them and truly understand their experiences. In these lyrics that Barman wrote, he distinguishes two different voices. The “I voice” that represents the emotional inner thoughts of the war veteran and the “you voice” that speaks to the soldier as a witness of the PTSD. (Hidden Wounds About, 2013)

The way this song came about is important for the analysis of the documentary music video that it became. With the information about the essence of the song, it is possible to have a closer look at the song and image relations in the video. It is clear that the video for “Hidden Wounds” pursued the meanings that Barman wanted to express with the song, because it carries on the same topic. This is the case with videos that I categorized as amplification. However the images do not just document the war veterans that are portrayed in this documentary music video. This complicates the connection between music and image and therefore invites the viewer to actively engage with the video and interpret the images. Moreover, the video is embedded in an

interactive website that encourages the viewer to attend further to the personal stories of the veterans.

By addressing the viewer with documentary content and telling the stories of actual war veterans, the video becomes more about the veterans and the original story in *The Guardian* than about the song by the artist. As I determined, this is characteristic for resonance and allows for political, ethical and social issues to be addressed in the music video form. This results in an explicit statement that the video makes by means of documentary elements. In order to show how the video for “Hidden Wounds” transcends from amplifying the topic of the song to resonating the issue of PTSD with the viewer, I will analyze how the images relate to the song and subsequently look at how they start to resonate specific meanings with the viewer. Throughout the analysis I will point out how documentary elements are used and integrate with the music video form. It will be important to indicate how the viewer is addressed and invited to connect with the video by means of the interactive features of the video on the website. This will give some conclusion about the way in which this video creates awareness of PTSD. I will describe the video in fragments but as chronologically as possible and pay attention to both aural and visual signifiers.

### **3.1 Complexity**

“Hidden Wounds” starts with a title card that has the following quote by the character Colonel Walter E. Kurtz from the film *Apocalypse Now*: “The horror! The horror”. *Apocalypse Now* is a well known fiction film set in the Vietnam War. The quote refers to the death scene of Colonel Kurtz where he expresses how hard it is to understand “the horror” that soldiers go through during the war. Using this quote from a fiction film to begin the video with, already gives an impression of the complex issue it is dealing with. Because the quote is from a fictional character instead of a real person it changes the interpretation. The horror described in the quote is real but it is hard to truly understand this if you have not gone through it yourself. Therefore quoting a fictional character creates a paradox and shows that these feelings of actual war veterans are not



easily understood in reality. This already emphasizes the difficulty of expressing and sharing experiences of PTSD.

In the documentary music video for “Hidden Wounds”, 24 war veterans give their own testimony about PTSD and tell their stories about how it affects their lives. They are different ages, from different backgrounds and have fought in many different wars (see appendix 3 for an overview). Initially this is also what the song wanted to document, an actual story of a war veteran suffering from PTSD. The verses of the song’s lyrics consists of text from *The Guardian* article. In the video these lyrics are replaced by the audio interviews with the war veterans by means of a voice-over. (See appendix 4 for original song lyrics.) Therefore, the song is altered by the documentary content of the video. In addition (location) sounds have been added to the audiotrack. Moreover, the song can be interrupted with short audio clips by means of the interactive features at certain points in the video, to hear more of the interviews with the war veterans.

In addition to the interviews, the images of the video add meanings to the song as well. The complexity of all the elements together create a meaningful atmosphere. For example, already during the title card, a disturbing and ominous sound has started in the background. After the title card, a voice-over interviewee starts to tell what war is like. The images that are shown with this introduction of the topic are chosen to set out the character of the video. In the first shot we see empty military uniforms hanging on the wall, followed by a series of pictures from close up, with memories from the war front (Image 2). In these pictures are innocent faces of soldiers that did not know yet what impact the war could have on the rest of their lives. The voice-over interviewee contradicts these harmless images by stating how death is present during war time as the disturbing sound continues in the background. The images are shaky and sometimes have an effect that makes them appear to have double vision.

This introduction shows the potential of interpreting the relation between sound and images. As Vernallis notes, ‘[m]usic-video image gains from holding back information, confronting the viewer with ambiguous or unclear depictions – if there is a story, it exists only in the dynamic relation between the song and the image as they unfold in

time.’ (Vernallis 2004, 4) Therefore the sound, as well as the words, and the images contribute to the construction of the atmosphere in this video. The voice-over interviewee tells a clear story about the actuality. The sound, on the other hand, creates a more ambiguous atmosphere and is in line with the images that on their turn are open to interpretation. The viewer does not know if the voice-over interviewee is in the pictures we see or owns the uniforms on the wall. The images, however, resonate the memories of the dead that have fallen in the war by presenting lifeless uniforms and still pictures. This shows how the different elements in the video cooperate and communicate with the viewer in a complex way.

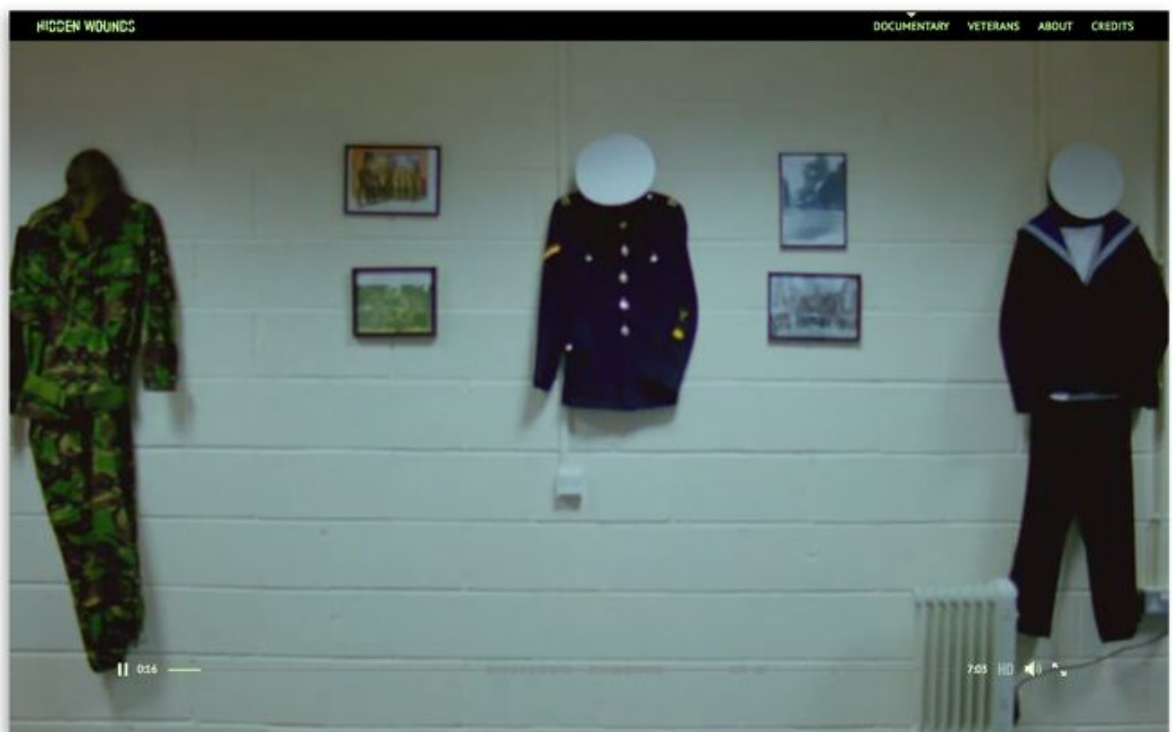


Image 2: The images of the first sequence show uniforms and pictures on the wall that resemble memories from war.

The page of the website with an overview of all the veterans in the video states: ‘You might recognize these problems in someone you know. Listening to these veterans might be a beginning of finding a solution.’ (Hidden Wounds Veterans, 2013) The viewer is addressed directly and encouraged to listen as a way to deal with PTSD. This is interesting because initially it is one of the formal traits for a music video to visually highlight musical and lyrical features to make the viewer listen to the song and make

them aware of the artist. In the case of “Hidden Wounds” this seems paradoxical because if the viewer focuses on listening to the song by the artist, how can they become more aware of PTSD? During the video the viewer is gradually invited to listen to the war veterans instead of the artist. The images have an important role in directing the viewer in this process. By means of the different elements in the song’s lyrics, the images reflect who we are actually listening to.

### **3.2 Visualization of the voices: Who are we listening to?**

As frontman Tom Barman described there are three voices represented in the lyrics of the song. The “objective voice” based on *The Guardian* article, the “I voice” that talks from the perspective of the veteran with PTSD and the “you voice” that speaks as a witness of the problems caused by PTSD. (See appendix 4) These voices are also represented in a visual form during the video. When the song starts after the introduction we first see Barman holding a guitar in front of a brick wall in a long medium shot. The images are glitchy and give an accelerated feeling. Barman is not playing the guitar yet but seems to prepare himself for what he is about to play. This is important to note because the artist is present in the video but does not seem to be part of the documentary content. The title “Hidden Wounds” appears in the next shot and has the undertitle: ‘A documentary inspired by a dEUS song’. The text explicitly emphasizes to the viewer that this video is a documentary.

The next shots are horizontally moving images of different neighborhoods, giving the impression that we are introduced to the different backgrounds of the veterans. We can see children playing outside, dogs barking and people roaming in the neighborhoods. In this sequence several sounds are added to the original music, such as children’s voices, barking dogs, gunshots and other firearm sounds. We also hear the voices of different interviewees telling about how they joined the army, what feelings they had and what experiences they have gone through during war time. They represent the “objective voice” in the lyrics and because in the video there are different testimonies from many veterans, I will call this the “we voice”.

In this sequence the documentary elements integrate seamlessly with the music video aesthetics. The recorded location sound and the voice-over interviews are fitted perfectly into the song's lyrical and musical structure. The experience of these different sound elements together creates an uneasy atmosphere because they intensify the horrible stories that are told by the interviewees. The sounds are sometimes visualized in explicit and inexplicit ways. For example, when we hear the kids playing we also see them playing but when we hear gunshots, we only see the kids pretending to shoot with toy guns. Besides that the movements of the images and the editing fit the rhythm of the music.

Similarly to the opening of the video, the images continue to be suggestive. They are often shot unsteadily, with frequent glitches and light flashes, in and out of focus shots, in a range from close ups to long shots, from different angles and with experimental framing (Image 3 and 4). The people in the images are shown without clearly exposing their faces. Therefore they can not yet be linked to the voice-over interviewees of the documentary music video. The statements by the different veterans that represent the "we voice" are incoherent. They talk about various topics that do not necessarily connect, other than their shared war experiences. In this way the verse sets out the problem that these veterans have with talking about PTSD. It is difficult for the war veterans to express their feelings in words and therefore it is hard for other people to understand what they mean. Their different statements become one, they are a mass with no individual stories or faces.

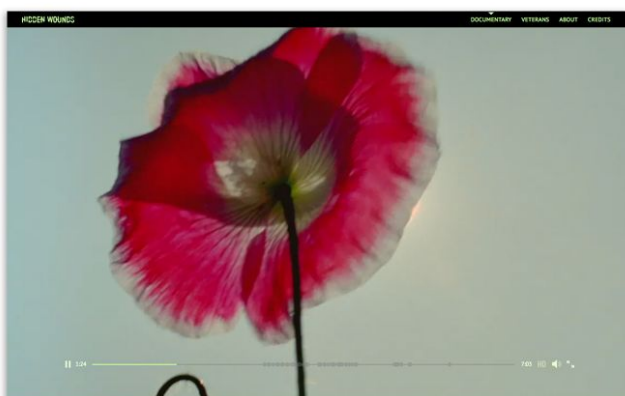


Image 3 and 4: Examples of the experimental shots and imagery used in the "Hidden Wounds" video.

In this first part of the video the interactive features are not active yet. The viewer is introduced to the “we voice”, the voice-over interviewees that try to talk about PTSD, but it is hard to make a coherent story from the different voices. Even though we hear the voices, we do not see who we are listening to. Moreover, the viewer is confused by the added location sounds and images that are distorted by technical features. The sounds and images seem to express a certain mood of experience but the viewer can not make sense yet what meanings are carried out.

### **3.3 Visualization of the voices: I want to be heard.**

When the chorus starts for the first time the images are more directly related to the lyrics that are now audible and sang by Tom Barman. These lyrics are from the perspective of the “I voice”. Shots of booze bottles reflect the words “I'm drinking just to dull the pain” and pictures with memories of war time relate to the sentence “Images won't go away”. Then follow several shots of Barman, framed medium close up while lip syncing the lyrics. Some of the shots with him are in color and others are in black and white. Barman seems to be in his own dimension in the video. He wrote the song as an attempt to understand the experiences of the veterans. At this stage in the video he is still the one embodying the meaning of these lyrics that try to comprehend PTSD.

Just before the second chorus, Barman is seen again in a few shots. He lip syncs the last lines of the bridge: “It breaks my heart today, just to hear you say:” This sentence seems to indicate that Barman will listen to the words of the war veterans. In the next sequence of images during the chorus, various characters lip sync some of the lyrics. In addition there are several shots in a row where the veterans look straight into the camera, which we have not seen before this point. Because there are no voice-over testimonies in this part of the video, the veterans claim their voice and therewith authority by inheriting the “I voice” that Barman created for the song. This is done by using music video conventions. By means of lip syncing and direct looks into the camera the meanings of the song’s lyrics are now the words of the veterans that express their experiences.

It makes sense now that the images during the first chorus literally reflected the lyrics because the images try to reveal the emotional inner thoughts that are so hard to express when dealing with PTSD. This literal representation of the lyrics continues in the last verse that is sung with the “I voice”. The sequence starts with the last shot of Barman lip syncing. Subsequently the verse lyrics are strongly linked with the images that are presented. The words “I'm longing for another spring, a little love a natural thing” are visualized by the only female war veteran in the video, who is expecting a baby. Shots of her pregnant belly and the preparations for the child’s room resonate with the song’s lyrics and shows the actual life of the war veteran. The sequence ends with her lip syncing the lyrics “someone to hold just anything, that's carefree”. Throughout the video, the images aim to give the viewer an authentic representation of the feelings that the war veterans are going through and therefore they complement with the meanings of the “I voice”.

In the third and last chorus, the characters continue to lip sync the lyrics and stare into the camera. At the end of this part there is one final close-up shot of Barman who is not lip syncing anymore. This is important to note for the viewer to understand that he has given the voice to the war veterans featured in the video and we should listen to their message. The video acknowledges that Barman wrote this song and had the intention to raise awareness of PTSD. In this way the video does not only amplify meanings that the artist intended with the song but literally shows that the artist gives room for the meanings to transcend. Therefore the video manages to expand the meanings of the song to resonate complexity of the issue with the viewer by visualizing the veterans’ subjective experience of PTSD.

### **3.4 Visualization of the voices: You choose to listen!**

The viewer becomes even more concerned with the documentary characters of the video when they are invited to actively engage with the veterans’ stories. When the bridge begins the interactive music documentary features are activated. This is the moment in

the lyrics when the “you voice” is speaking. (See appendix 4 for exact indication.) The lyrics are now written from an observing perspective that talks about the war veteran. Before this moment the images did not clearly connect to the people that were presented. Now the characters are deliberately recognized and portrayed as a series of individuals.

The viewer has the option to click on an icon, which appears below the timebar of the player during the shot with a specific war veteran. There is an icon for every separate war veteran that is interviewed. The icon states the veterans’ name, age, country of origin and the countries where they fought in war. Clicking redirects you to a longer audio statement of that particular veteran. The music fades away during this inserted audio clip but after the statement smoothly returns back to the point in the song where it had left. The inserted audio clip is illustrated with still pictures of that specific veteran and portrays personal images of, for example, their homes (Image 5 and 6).

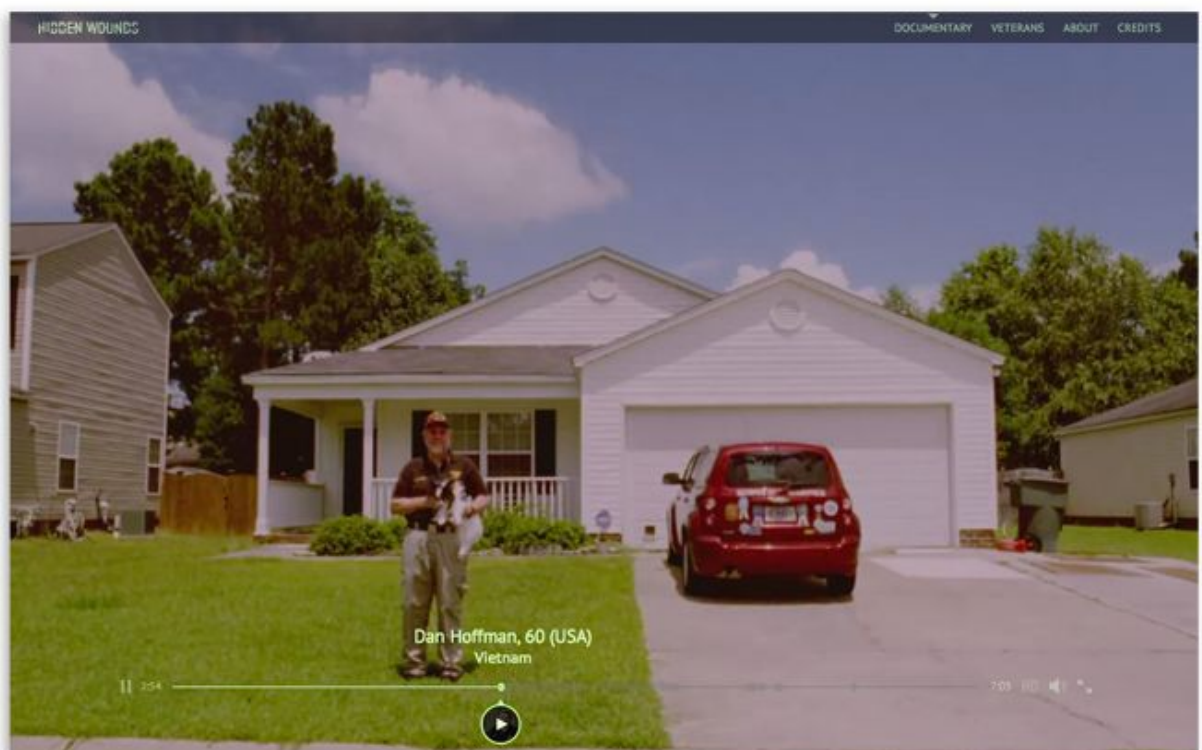


Image 5: The icon that appears below the timebar redirects the viewer to a longer audio statement of a particular veteran. Name, age, country of origin and wars of the particular vereran are also visible.



Image 6: One on the still images during the audio clip.

This feature allows the viewer to get more information about the characters while watching the music video. It is significant that this interactive features start at the same point as the “you voice” is singing. This indicates that the viewer is recognized as a witness of these war veterans with PTSD and is stimulated to listen to their personal stories. In order to do so the viewer has to actively respond to the features that are enabled and choose to click on the icons. Moreover the audio fragments are accompanied by still pictures instead of moving images. This allows the viewer to look at the images for a longer time and to concentrate on listening. Showing still pictures instead of moving images also indicates a more fixed interpretation than the suggestive images during the video. The characters can now be heard individually with their own story and are visually portrayed by the pictures. The viewer gets the chance to get to know each one of the 24 veterans personally during the video.



The interactive features make it possible to interrupt the song and therefore the video exceeds the original length of the song. Again this puts the emphasis on the characters instead of the song. Even though the incisions are made smoothly, they do take the viewer away from the song. The audio clips that the viewer is able to listen to during the video are all around a minute long. On a separate page of the website with an overview of all the veterans, you are able to listen to extra audio material from every character in the video. These audio clips range from 5 minutes up to 20 minutes, again accompanied by still pictures instead of moving images. This means that even after watching the documentary music video the viewer can choose to listen to more stories of the war veterans. This shows the intention of the project to focus on listening and to recognize these veterans as individuals.

The interactive features make clear that each war veteran has their own story. The features allow them to speak for themselves and claim their own voice. On top of that the features ask for active engagement from the viewer, which potentially makes them realize what the importance of listening to veterans with PTSD can be. Korsgaard has recognized the relevance of interactive features as well: ‘The images take on new functions, challenging the usual perceptual hierarchies of audiovisual forms.’ (Korsgaard 2013, 509.) The placement of the interactive features is made significant by connecting them to the “you voice” represented in the lyrics of the song. In this way the viewer becomes a witness of the war veterans that are dealing with PTSD and can choose to listen to their experiences.

### **3.5 Resonate awareness for PTSD**

The song has a long outro and towards the end of the video there are a few more voice-over interview statements. One of the veterans says he used to repeat the following words over and over: “It’s only a movie, it can’t be real”. This brings us back to the paradox that this video has been trying to present. The horrible feelings these war veterans experience are hard to understand but they are real. By means of this

interactive music documentary dEUS and Prospector have attempted to let the viewer resonate with the experience of these feelings instead of just presenting the issue.

In this way the video is not only amplifying the meanings of the song, but the images and sounds gradually take up their own meanings and message about PTSD and intent to resonate with the viewer. The video invites us to start listening to the war veterans instead of the artist, and the interactive features make this literally possible. By producing an interactive music documentary to embed this content, the makers have challenged both the music video and documentary form to transcend their formal traits. As Korsgaard points out: ‘when [interactive features] functions well, a video can provoke a strong symbiosis among music, image, and lyrical content, leading to an enhancement of the music.’ (Korsgaard 2013, 510) I have tried to argue that this video uses the documentary content and conventions in the music video form in order to express its message in the most effective way.

By using the song’s music and lyrics and adding the voice-over interviews, the location sounds and the suggestive images, the video constructs an atmosphere to immerse the viewer in the perception of war veterans. The initial motivation of Tom Barman to document a real story therefore progressed into an audiovisual representation of the reality that these veterans are dealing with. By using music video conventions like lip syncing and connecting the images with the lyrics of the song, the video shows the viewer who we are actually listening to. In this way the video directs the viewer to focus on listening and creates a possibility to get actively involved with the characters. Therefore this video is not just documentary content in a music video form but a hybrid of both that raises awareness for PTSD.

Videos in the category resonance give their own interpretation of political, ethical and social issues. In the case of “Hidden Wounds” the popularity of the artist and the song are used to engage with the reality in order to create a certain understanding. The video ends with a statement from a voice-over interviewee that leaves the viewer with a clear message: ‘Currently we’re losing more veterans to suicide than to enemy action.’ All the elements in the video have worked together to resonate awareness of PTSD with the

viewer and show them an authentic representation of the reality that these veterans live with. Even though we might not understand their reality we can try to listen to them in order to help.

With this case study I have tried to demonstrate that documentary music videos can be a combination of characteristics that are expected of both forms but in conjunction with each other can create different meanings. As Korsgaard has argued: ‘In music video, exactly the interactions, connections, and correlations between its different elements “create form.”’ (Korsgaard 2017, 70) This video shows that the different elements have the potential to create an atmosphere that represents a subjective experience of reality and can voice this to the viewer.

#### 4. “Wyclef Jean”: Distorting the Music Video

In the first case study I analyzed how an urge to document a certain topic resulted in an interactive music documentary. The second analysis will look at a music video that became a reflexive documentation of a failed music video shoot. “Wyclef Jean” (2017) by the American rapper Young Thug serves as an example of a music video in the category of distortion. The video shows the director’s side of the story about how he had to save the video because the artist did not show up at the shoot. Therefore the video gives an insight into the music (video) industry, the role of the artist and the role of the director in music video production. Besides that it puts the viewer in a position to determine whether they are convinced by the story. The construction of this video therefore invites the viewer to think about their own relation to this reality and pushes the boundaries of music video and documentary conventions.



Image 7: The computer generated representation of the key term in the video for “Wyclef Jean”.

The video for “Wyclef Jean” constantly plays with juxtapositions, a key term highlighted in the video itself (Image 7), to confuse the viewer about what is real and what is not. By adding documentary elements the director tries to construct a convincing representation of what happened while making the video. The way in which he applies different elements in the video as evidence for his story creates a possibility to say something about the reality. The ambiguity that the video plays with causes confusion

about the authenticity of the content that is presented. The video deliberately communicates conflicting messages, manipulates the images and misleads the viewer's perception. Together with the impact the video had when it was released online, it makes an interesting case to look at the documentary conventions that are used to enable this confusing effect.

The video adds meanings that conflict with the artist's song, imposing a reflexive comment on the process of making the video and the music (video) industry itself. Moreover the video misleads the viewer and tricks their expectations, which makes them more aware of what they are looking at. Therefore this video can be categorized as distortion. In order to analyze what meanings are added by the video for "Wyclef Jean", I will look at the different elements that are used to construct the director's side of the story. Subsequently I will show how these elements can distort and influence the interpretation of the video by how they cooperate with each other. It will be important to show how the director plays with the music video conventions and applies documentary elements to make his own statement.

#### **4.1 Juxtaposition**

(Card 1) "Hi, this is Ryan Staake. I "co-directed" this video with Young Thug."

(Card 2) "But we never met each other."

These are the words on the first two title cards for the music video of "Wyclef Jean". (See appendix 5) Director Ryan Staake did not have much material to work with for the video, we read later on another card. Even though Young Thug is credited as co-director, he never showed up to any of the shoots and only sent an audio recording with a few ideas plus some self shot video footage. Especially in the case of a music video, the director is normally subservient to the song and the artist. In an interview with *Rolling Stone*, Staake tells that "[i]t's always the production company and director that tends to get blamed. If an artist is late and it fucks up your whole day, tough shit. It's that attitude which is insult to injury at that point. I've been left with a remaining

invoice at the end of projects because the client just walks away.’ (Ducker, 2017) In order to deliver the video for “Wyclef Jean”, Staake decided to speak up as a director and show the viewer what actually happened.

More often than not the artist is featured as the centre of attention in a music video. (Vernallis 2004, 54) So what is a director supposed to do when the artist does not show up? In order to make something out of the material he had, Staake explicitly involves himself in the video by means of title cards. This visual voice-over allows him to comment on the material he presents to prove his story. In this way he can direct how the viewer looks at the material. The title cards guide the viewer’s perception and play with their expectations.

The voice-over is a typical documentary feature and therefore has strong connotations. Especially explicit spoken or written words can be interpreted as a “voice-of-God” that addresses the viewer directly with its point of view. This often has the intent to convince the viewer of that viewpoint. (Nichols 2010 , 74.) These connotations help Staake to claim his voice in the video to communicate his message. He draws on the viewer’s expectations of both documentary and music video features to create his own voice. By presenting many different elements in favor of his story and commenting on them by means of the title cards, Staake constructs a music video that challenges the viewer to decide whether they are convinced by his point of view or not.

The video uses several different kinds of elements to visualize and support Staake’s story. These elements can be divided into four groups, namely: documentary elements, music video elements, technical elements and illustrating elements (see Table 1). The elements in these groups have different functions in the video. The documentary elements are deployed as evidence to convince the viewer of the reliability of the story. The music video elements try to show what the video would have been like if the shoot had gone as planned. Subsequently the technical elements reveal specific productional tools that are used in making music videos. Lastly the illustrating elements highlight certain features by visualizing them with computer generated images.

To show how these elements relate to and affect each other, I will first look at the title cards in detail because they represent the director’s voice and tell his side of the story. Then I will analyze how the other elements are applied to support his view and how they distort the viewer’s perception. Because there are many elements, I will select a few from each group to be discussed and show how they relate to each other. The table below gives an overview of all the elements involved.

Table 1

<p><u>Documentary elements</u></p> <p>Title cards</p> <p>Audio recording Young Thug</p> <p>Video footage Young Thug</p> <p>Behind the scenes shots</p> <p>Storyboard drawings</p> <p>PowerPoint sheets</p> <p>VICE behind-the-scenes reference</p>	<p><u>Music video elements</u></p> <p>The song</p> <p>Video material from the shoot</p> <p>Music video aesthetics: location, editing, slow motion etc.</p>
<p><u>Technical elements</u></p> <p>Opening the audio recording file</p> <p>Title frame Photoshop background</p> <p>Post production tricks (color grading)</p>	<p><u>Illustrating elements</u></p> <p>Subtitles</p> <p>Animated elements: car/go cart, font, arrows and lines</p> <p>Lyric-image synchronization</p>

#### 4.2 The Director’s Voice

In total the video uses 54 title cards with statements from the director. (See appendix 5) Through these title cards Staake can communicate with the viewer during the music video without interrupting the song’s audiotrack. By using title cards, Staake presents himself as the director of this video and addresses the viewer directly and in first person.

Normally the viewer does not get to know the director of a music video. In “Wyclef Jean” however, Staake represents himself by this visual voice-over and even shows up in one of the shots. Therewith he also gives an image of the person speaking to the viewer through the title cards. By revealing himself, Staake creates a certain openness and tries to gain trust from the viewer. He appears to objectively explain what happened and persuades the viewer of his point of view. However, because *he* constructed the video this way, it gets a reflective character. This means that the director can comment on the meanings in the video and raise questions for the viewer to think about.

Even though Staake’s voice is not literally heard, he does communicate with the viewer on a certain tone. Because of the use of title cards, this tone is visually communicated in several ways. First of all, a certain narrative intention can be read in the way they are written. Staake writes in first person which clearly indicates a subjective point of view. This gives him the possibility to distort the viewer’s interpretation. For example, in the first two title cards where he introduces himself there are a few features that stand out. (Appendix 5: Card 1 and 2) Even though the first title card seems introductory and harmless, Staake uses quotation marks around the word co-directed. Naturally the quotation marks could signal a quote, but they are also used to show that the meaning of what is stated, is not fully clear. The viewer can interpret this when the second title card reveals that the directors never met each other. This seems contradictory and already puts the viewer in a confused state. By the way of writing Staake can influence how his story is told and by using the quotation marks he questions Thug’s role and already shows that not everything is what it seems.

By starting sentences with “in fact” and using words as “real” influence the way these title cards are read. For example, when Staake comments on his own video material saying: “It even feels like a real video.” (Appendix 5: Card 14). By emphasizing the difference between what is real and what is not, Staake comments on both the artificiality and the reality of music video production. Again he tries to say the opposite of what is stated. In other words the video looks real even though it is constructed and fake, and by pointing that out it is showing how the video was really made.



Secondly, the timing and order of the title cards also influence the interpretation of the narration. The first two title cards are already an example of that. By placing the first two sentences on one card and the third sentence on the second card, the narration is distributed in such a way that it becomes meaningful. By placing the sentence about the fact that they never met each other on a separate card, the emphasis on that sentence is made stronger and becomes comical. Then close to a minute passes before Staake reveals that Thug never showed up for any of the shoots. Therefore the distribution of the narration also create tension and can excite a desire for the viewer to hear more about the fiasco of making this video. Even the actual timing of the title cards can say something about their intention. When you listen to the beat of the song, the title cards are edited off-beat while other shots for the video are edited on the beat. This signals that Staake is opposing something with his comments because he communicates in the off-beat of the song.

Lastly, the visual style of the text also gives meaning to the communication of the title cards. The title cards have a black background with a white font. There is only one exception to this, which is when Staake states: “Finally, Young Thug rolled up!” (Appendix 5: Card 36). On this title card the background is white and the font is black. Again this feature gives special attention to the statement. Even though we already know that Thug was absent from the shoot, the title card evokes some hope for the opposite. In addition the title cards are always edited with a hard cut except for one card that is faded out. This is when Staake states: “Then, suddenly we heard that Young Thug had driven away.” (Appendix 5: Card 41). This feature could reflect that all hope of having a shoot with Young Thug has now faded away. In other words, the tone of voice that is expressed with the title cards is ironic, misleading, mocking and gushy. Therefore the title cards literally set the tone of the video and influences the viewer’s interpretation.

Although the title cards of the video for “Wyclef Jean” give an innovative impression, they are in fact not the first of their kind. The commentary style with titles is also used in the music video for the song “What They Do” by The Roots that was released in 1996 for example. In this video the titles reveal the deception that many hip hop videos

use, to portray the wealthy life rap artists are living. In the same year VH1 (a sister channel of MTV) launched the TV series *Pop-Up Video*. This program provided pop-up texts to popular music videos, which revealed behind-the-scene facts of the videos' production. Since the internet was not as commonly accessible yet, the program exposed the most recent buzz about the music industry at that time. (Weatherby, 2018) These earlier examples show a critical perspective of the industry that they are part of. "Wyclef Jean" seems to show a similar comment but presents a more conflicting issue between the music video director and the artist.

### 4.3 The Artist's Voice

As I mentioned before, the director of the music video is normally subservient to the artist's song. In the case of "Wyclef Jean" however, the director tries to claim his own voice. The title cards that he uses to communicate his story demand the viewer to read them throughout the video. This can distract the viewer from listening to the song and thereby the artist. When the video begins, there is no sound yet and the viewer only has to focus on reading the text. In this way Staake introduces himself to the viewers before Young Thug is represented in the video and immediately engages them with his perspective on the story. This puts Staake at an advantage because his introduction gets the full attention of the viewer. When you look at the YouTube comments of the video there are many remarks from people that were distracted from listening to the song because they were too preoccupied reading the title cards. For example RasKal Dory who says: 'there's a song too in this video? Didn't hear it' or DailyOoopsies who states: 'I didn't care for the song at all, it was basically just white noise. I enjoyed the video more. Such creativeness!'. KOOLY actually seems to be annoyed by the distraction: 'I cant even enjoy the song wit all this reading' (Wyclef Jean YouTube comments)

Before the song starts, Staake first lets us listen to the audio recording that Young Thug sent to him. This is a documentary element that he uses to demonstrate that he worked with the material Thug provided and gives a voice to the artist in the construction of this video. Staake visualizes the introduction of this element by dragging an audio file onto

the title card, as you would on a computer, and clicks to play it (Image 8). This added technical element creates an experience as if Staake is opening the file at the same time as we are watching the video. This can provoke a feeling of involvement for the viewer with the production process of this video.



Left image 8: The title card showing the audio file.

Right image 9: The title frame with the checkered background.

The audio file is the first sound of the video and voices Thug's ideas for the video. The next shot is the title frame with a checkered background (Image 9). This background is significant because it looks similar to an empty project in Photoshop. This could indicate that Staake just created a new video project on his computer and what will visually happen depends on the ideas we are about to hear in the audio recording. In this way Staake again shows that he is open to the ideas of Young Thug. In addition he involves the viewer with the development of the video by visualizing features of the production process.

Next we hear Thug describing his ideas to his team. This conversation is subtitled to make a clear difference between the people who are speaking, illustrating every voice with a different font and color. Thug tries to explain that he wants to have kiddie toy cars instead of foreign cars in the video to create a contrast. While he is talking, the shot pans down to a street in The Hills where we see an animated foreign car. As soon as Thug says "kiddie cars" the car we see changes into a kiddie toy car. But the people in the team do not understand him yet and someone asks if he means go karts? At this point the kiddie car changes into an animated go kart (Image 10-12). Staake illustrates the conversation by showing the progress of the brainstorming session. Moreover these illustrating elements demonstrate how Staake can generate images and manipulate what

is shown. Once Thug has made himself clear, the kiddie toy car reappears and at the same moment the song starts.



Image 10-12: The image of the 'car' changes according to the conversation that is heard at the same time. Image 13: The illustrating element of the animated line figure indicates where Thug should have been.

By now 30 seconds of the video have passed. At this point Staake has set up the foundation for the construction of the video. By starting the video with the title cards he makes the first contact with the viewer and guides them through the technical elements of the production process. The music video idea is explained by Thug's voice in the audio recording and Staake has prepared the shoot according to that. This, however, is where the shoot failed because Thug did not show up (Image 13). Therefore Staake has to continue making the video without the artist present at the shoot.

This is when Staake introduces the next documentary element as evidence, the video material Young Thug made and sent to him. This material is shown with a smaller frame size, which creates a black border around the image to make a clear difference between the sent material and Staake's shoot. In addition the comments on the material have a more sarcastic tone now: "I wish it was my idea for him to eat Cheetos, but it was all him." Especially in the context of the video, this comment could be intended to ridicule Thug. The ironic tone of the title cards resonates with the video as a whole. Staake is constantly saying something but meaning the opposite. The sequence only

uses 5 shots from the material and then states “Those were the best moments.” The comments and the choice of frame size seem to literally belittle Thug’s material. Staake only uses it to prove to the viewer that he cannot make a video out of it. This sequence is just before the title card where Staake tells the viewer that he will “just explain how this video fell apart.”. The artist’s voice and image are influenced and manipulated by the construction of the video and the comments of the director. The director deliberately distracts the viewer to focus on the visual part of the video and therefore tries to convince them of his side of the story.

#### **4.4 Director versus Artist**

The confusion about Staake’s story is caused by the contradiction between the role of the artist and the viewer’s knowledge about the music (video) industry. Because this is the official music video for the song “Wyclef Jean”, Young Thug and his team must have approved this video. Would it therefore be possible that this whole set up for the video is planned this way in order to create confusion and therewith attention? Gabrielli raises an interesting point about a video that shows a different interpretation of the song:

We shall keep in mind that such a perceptive confusion can be seen as negative from the point of view of a merely efficiency-orientated audio-visual communication, but from the promotional/commercial point of view it might be seen as a positive element for the song. (Gabrielli 2010, 93.)

This means that even though a video does not necessarily support the song, the confusing meanings in the video can create a certain interest in the song. In the case of “Wyclef Jean”, the video went viral when it was released online. The contrast between the song and the video create confusing meanings that provoke curiosity in the video and therewith the song is promoted.

Because the video reveals the making of a failed music video it gives the viewer an insight into the music (video) industry. Conventionally a music video serves to promote

the artist and their song and focuses on reinforcing musical and lyrical features. The music video for “Wyclef Jean” however seems to separate the song from the video and focus the attention on the visual. The video positions Young Thug’s voice against Staake’s words and images. The viewer is stuck between listening to the song and reading the title cards. Staake deliberately tries to distract the viewer by manipulating the images and distort the viewer’s interpretation by constantly juxtaposing everything that is shown and said. In this way he comments on the relation between the director and the artist and uses the popularity of Young Thug to reflect on the reality of the music (video) industry.

By mocking such a popular artist the statement about the music (video) industry becomes stronger. Because “Wyclef Jean” is an American hip hop song there are distinct connotations of the music videos in this genre and the role of the rap artist. For example the location in The Hills, the cars and even the artist not showing up are common for this genre. In this way the video needs a song like “Wyclef Jean” in order to function effectively. The video relies heavily on the expectations of the viewer and can distort them by invalidating them. Therefore the video does relate to the song but does not explicitly use musical and lyrical features to create the video. Instead the video defies the song’s connotations and thereby reveals the reality of the industry the song is part of.

Because Staake was thwarted by Young Thug in making this video he gives the viewer a similar experience by distracting them from listening to the song. By choosing the title cards to tell his side of the story, Staake emphasizes that he normally cannot be heard as a director, and has to use this visual tool to communicate his message. He expresses this frustration by commenting on the production process of the video and showing the viewer how music videos can be constructed. With the technical and illustrating elements and his comments on the title cards Staake can mock Thug’s ideas and material. In this way he reveals how music videos are made and shows how we are often tricked by the images. Therefore he distorts the viewer’s perception by showing how the images are distorted.

To make his message even more explicit Staake states on a title card close to the end that “[t]his video cost over \$100,000 and the artist never showed up.” (Appendix 5: Card 46) He also expresses how ironic it is that his initial idea for the video was to burn the budget for the video and he presents the PowerPoint sheets of this idea as documentary evidence. This means that Staake not only wants the viewer to know what effort it costs to make a music video for an artist like Young Thug but also reveals the actual costs of the video even though the artist did not perform in it. This exact information about the budget makes his point even more concrete and puts it in a broader perspective of the music (video) industry.

In this video Young Thug does not get the chance to give his defence for what happened at the shoot. But the fact that he allowed this video to be released does say something about his role. Based on the authority we have seen from Thug in the video, we can be sure that if he did not want this video to be out, it would not be online. The interview with Staake for *Rolling Stone* confirms that he did not know if the video would be released or not. (Ducker, 2017) Therefore this video shows that the relationship between the music video director and the artist is challenging. Because the form this story is represented in is an official music video, the viewer is confused about the role of the artist and at the same time this is determining for the effect of the video.

#### **4.5 Director versus Viewer: This Is Not a Music Video**

The documentary elements that Staake uses add confusion about the reality that is presented. As I have argued, one of documentary’s characteristics is the added uncertainty of the reality that is discussed. This is an important feature of videos that I categorize as distortion and the video for “Wyclef Jean” explicitly puts the viewer in the position to judge whether the story that is told is true. Not only does the video deliberately shape the viewer’s perception but also attempts to criticise this perception. This could be better understood by the effect of the famous painting “Ceci n’est pas une pipe” by René Magritte. In this painting an image of a pipe is accompanied by the

caption “This is not a pipe”. This form of representation provokes the viewer to think about what they are actually looking at.

Staake creates a similar confusion for the viewer by the way he combines the images with his comments. In the title cards he states that he did not have enough material to make a video and instead will have to explain what went wrong. In other words he says, “This is not the music video”, but at the same time we are watching one. This causes confusion and raises the question if what is seen is reliable. This confusion is visible, for example, in the scene where Staake comments on some girls and kids dressed up as police, who are demolishing a police car with bats. When the frame freezes, an animated line indicates that the bat looks bent and Staake asks the viewer: “Did you know wood bends like this in slow motion?” In the next card he points out the treachery of the images by revealing that some of the bats were rubber and therefore look bent. On the one hand, Staake comforts the viewer by confirming what is actually seen in the images but on the other hand, he also distorts the viewer’s perception because he demonstrates how videos can be constructed. This means that the viewer becomes aware of this construction and the convincing power that the video can have. Because Staake constantly changes between what is real and what is fake, the viewer is challenged to decide what to believe.

In addition Staake refers to a VICE crew that was filming a behind-the-scenes video on set. Indeed there was a 4 minute video released on YouTube by VICE two days after the release of the music video. (VICE YouTube video) This video takes the making-of concept even further and complicates the perception of the viewer even more. Because the VICE behind-the-scenes video gives a verification of Staake’s story the viewer could be more convinced of its reliability, but at the same time, the story becomes even more absurd. The behind-the-scenes video gives some more details about what is happening on set and interviews people that are involved in the production but also shows the waiting and ignorance about what is going to happen. Therefore the video also adds to the confusion and reinforces the uncertainty about the construction of the music video.



Thus by creating this ambiguous atmosphere about what is real, the uncertainty of reality is literally presented to the viewer. This can cause the viewer to also think about the convincing power of the images and the influence of the director. The question also arises: Why have we become so skeptical towards reality? Especially considering the video in the context of the era it is made in, it can be hard to make convincing claims about the truth because the viewer is so used to unreliable information and doubts have become omnipresent. (Steyerl 2011.) Staake uses this to his advantage. As Steyerl points out: ‘The constant doubt about whether what we see is consistent with reality is not a shameful lack, which has to be disavowed, but on the contrary is the decisive quality of contemporary documentary forms.’ (Steyerl 2011) In this way the video invites the viewer to question their own relationship to this reality.

There are several specific moments in the video when the viewer is provoked to think about the situation that is presented. For example when Staake shows the storyboard drawings of how they planned to set up the scene, if Thug would arrive (Images 14 and 15). On the title card he states that “I was told to change it because of *“impressionable children”*”. The next moment emphasizes a connection between music and lyrics to create an ironic effect. The title cards states “Listen, kids:” and subsequently a ball bounces on the lyrics we hear, known as lyric-image synchronization from sing-along videos. These lyrics would very likely be identified as impressionable for children and therewith Staake again points out the ambiguity of the situation. Through this simple illustrating element the video makes the viewer aware of reality and the bouncing ball indicates the viewer’s involvement in the construction of reality.

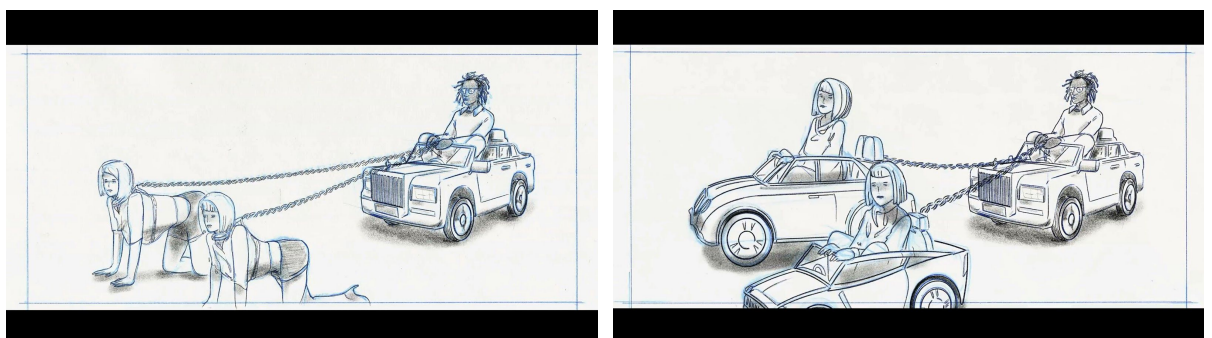


Image 14 and 15: Staake showing his storyboard drawings as evidence for the argument his ideas created.

It is important that the viewer is addressed directly in the video for “Wyclef Jean” and becomes involved with the issues that are discussed because in this way Staake does not only make a general statement about the music (video) industry but also provokes an individual realization about this matter. The video can make the viewer realize that they are part of the construction because they are the ones judging the reliability of the reality. This realisation is more important than the truth itself.

#### **4.6 “None of this matters.”**

At the end of the video when Staake is concluding about the production, he wonders what Young Thug would have thought about the shoot they set up for him. But he decides: “In fact, maybe that’s the moral of the story: None of this matters.” This also captures the result of the analysis of this video in a nutshell. By making a music video about (not) making a music video Staake contradicts the expectations and conventions we have of music videos and plays with the viewer’s judgement of the reliability of what is shown. In this way he can comment on the music video industry itself and make the viewer think about the reality of this business. Involving the viewer in the construction of the video creates the possibility to make the viewer realize their own relation to this reality.

Because the artist is missing in this music video, the director plays a leading role. To communicate his story the director created voice-over title cards to give a commentary during the video. The role of the title cards is important and affects how the other elements can be interpreted. In this way the director can practically direct the viewer how to look at the video while they are watching it. The documentary elements are used as evidence to prove the director’s side of the story. All the elements I indicated work together to create the video. By addressing the viewers directly, they become part of this construction. This also means that the viewer has to concentrate on reading. In this way the video conflicts with the formal traits of music videos and distracts the viewer from listening to the song. However this distraction is meaningful in the context of the video because the director was also thwarted by the artist while making the video.

On the other hand the video needs a popular song and artist to create discrepancy. There is a reason why juxtaposition is highlighted explicitly. In every possible way this video opposes itself to create reflection and to question what is real. The answer to that question is not necessarily relevant. By asking that question and confronting the viewer with it, the video reveals the illusion of reality. Not only does the music video show how images can manipulate what we see but also that reality itself is always constructed and we only have a certain perspective on it. That is why “Wyclef Jean” is more than just a music video with documentary elements. The music video form is essential to show this perspective on reality. Hence, none of this matters.

With this case study I tried to demonstrate that reality can be represented in different ways and that even by showing what is not real the viewer can realize something about reality. The construction of this video is important for the convincing effect that it has. In this study I focussed on the documentary elements but more research could be done on the role of irony in this video. By using contradictions and confusion, the video can distort the viewer’s expectations and invalidates them. Therefore this video is an exemplary case of the category distortion. This video shows that documentary elements can have the potential to both convince and confuse the viewer, which can make them aware of their own relation to reality.

## 5. Conclusion

Music videos are a form that can express much more than just a visualization of the music. In this study, I have argued that music videos can voice a representation of reality by using documentary elements. The combination of documentary elements with the music video form leads to an integration of different characteristics of both forms that become a hybrid, which functions as a documentary music video. This term, that I chose to use for this research, is defined as a form that is recognized as a combination of music and images and adds documentary elements to give an authentic representation of the reality. This definition is not optimal, as the concepts of music video and documentary are considerably slippery terms that both can be defined in many ways. For this study I have tried to distill the characteristics that I recognized in the documentary music videos and that were useful for analyzing this hybrid form.

The relation between music and image in audiovisual media, has a long history that has shaped our understanding of the combination. The connotations and expectations that we have of music videos and documentary elements influence our experience of their confluence. This can both challenge and enhance the synergy between music video and documentary, which makes the expression complex. In order to function in an effective way the documentary elements and music video characteristics have to find a condition where they content with and concur each other. The heterogeneity of both concepts stimulates their integration to find a form that expresses reality in an authentic way. For some music videos the added documentary elements will simply give a reference to reality but for others the documentary elements create a representation of reality that is unique to the documentary music video. Hence documentary music videos have their own voice to express their perspective on reality.

To get an understanding of how documentary elements can function in combination with the music video form, I categorized several kinds of videos according to the documentary message as a result of the interpretation. Building on work by Andrew Goodwin I proposed an expansion to his categorization and determined that documentary elements can firstly add similar meaning to the song by amplification,

which can be informative and authoritative. Secondly documentary elements can add related meanings to the song that start to resonate political, social and/or ethical issues. And thirdly documentary elements can add opposing meanings to the song that create distortion, which can provoke a different understanding of reality. This categorization is helpful to get an idea of the potential of the assimilation between documentary elements and music video but it is not comprehensive. The innovative nature of music videos will always challenge any kind of classification, which is exactly what makes the form so interesting. Moreover there might also be other documentary functions that are added to music videos. As long as new documentary music videos will be made, there will be different kinds of realities to be expressed.

To give an example of the potential of the documentary music video I selected two case studies. These two videos represented different documentary functions that can be added to music videos according to my categorization. The videos differed in several ways. The first video “Hidden Wounds” is made in Europe. The video is part of an interactive music documentary that can be explored on a specific website. The idea for the video originated from documentary content and found its expression in the music video form. The images connect to the song and create an atmosphere to empathize with the topic of the video. The second video “Wyclef Jean” is made in the USA. The video went viral when it was released and has over 35 million views on YouTube. The idea for the video started as a normal music video shoot but became a making of a failed shoot because the artist did not show up. The images contradict the expectations and distract the attention from the song. This creates confusion and makes room for reflection on the topic of the video.

The analysis of these videos showed that documentary music videos can give voice to reality in effective ways. “Hidden Wounds” uses the music video form to raise awareness for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) by encouraging the viewer to listen to the war veterans who are featured in the video. By using the song’s lyrics and combining characteristics such as voice-over interviews and lip-syncing, the video truly creates a synergy between music video and documentary elements and uses the form to the advantage of the expression of reality. This also applies to the video for “Wyclef

Jean”. By using the connotations and expectations we have of music videos and adding the documentary elements as evidence, the video tries to convince the viewer of the perspective of the director. The video challenges the viewer to judge the reliability of the reality that is presented and provokes us to think about the convincing power of the form. This means that besides the documentary content, the form that these documentary elements are represented in also contributes to the experience of the authenticity of reality.

Both music videos used this form in their own way and to their own advantage. It was revealing to conclude that the video for “Hidden Wounds” found a way to focus the attention of the viewer on listening to the characters in the documentary music video as opposed to the video for “Wyclef Jean”, which distracted the viewer from listening. For each video this connection to listening enabled a connection to the reality that they were expressing. The music video characteristic of emphasizing the audio through the visual is used by these documentary music videos to find a way to give voice to reality.

This study has attempted to demonstrate the hybridity of the documentary music video and recognize the potential of this combination. The focus of this research has been on the audiovisual relations in these videos. I chose to put the emphasis of the analysis on the visual part because I was interested in the functions that the images could add to the music. I feel that the focus on the visual aspects has been a good choice for this study because most often the soundtrack of the documentary music video is occupied by the song and the viewer is challenged by the images. This form challenges the filmmakers to have a creative approach and give reality a different voice. Nevertheless, a musicological approach could give more insight into the music-image relations of the documentary music video in further research.

Besides that the size of this master’s thesis did not allow me to go deeper into the content of the videos. More research on the context in which these videos were made and the background of the topics could show different perspectives on the videos than the ones discussed in this research. Also extensive interviews with music video directors about their role could shape a better categorization of the documentary music video and

help understand how the integration of documentary elements is executed. In addition the platforms that these videos are on could be studied more thoroughly with attention to the audience involvement by means of YouTube comments and the interactive features that influence the experience of the documentary music video.

For this research I limited the material to the longlists of the Fullscreen program at IDFA 2016 and 2017 to define a specific peak in the release of documentary music videos. The program did not continue in 2018 due to financial constraints. Instead I introduced the form at Oulu Music Video Festival that same year with a screening and presentation on the music video and documentary combination. It could be interesting to look at the historical context of these videos. Could it be that this era calls for more representations of reality? And why are there so many documentary music videos made now? Besides that I also got interested in the experience of reality and how can audiovisual media simulate this experience? These are questions that could be studied further.

This thesis has tried to contribute to music video studies as well as documentary studies. I have argued that especially because both terms are flexible and hard to define, they have found a form in which to exist simultaneously. In previous research it has been recognized that music video and documentary are flexible terms but few studies have discussed the combination of these forms. With this research I hope to raise interest in this particular combination and its importance in popular culture of music video and documentary in general. The aim of this research was to show the potential of the combination between music videos and documentary elements and I found that these videos serve different functions and can have meaningful interpretations.

I don't claim that everyone would recognize these videos as an authentic representation of reality but I have tried to show that the construction of these videos *can* voice a representation of reality. In the case of documentary music videos, popular culture can be a platform for representing the absurdity of our reality in order to make sense of it.

Our reality is constantly changing and therefore the ways we express our reality will also develop in different forms. These different forms can create different representations of reality that can be interesting topics for further research. In my approach I tried to have a flexible understanding of documentary that allows an alliance between reality and fiction. Because the question is not if these videos are true but if they voice reality in a meaningful way and therewith represent an authentic perspective on reality.



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9 (After Coachella) (2017) by Cashmere Cat featuring MØ & SOPHIE. Director Jake Schreier & Adam Newport-Berra.

BAM (2017) by Jay-Z featuring Damian Marley. Director Rohan Blair-Mangat.

Bohemian Rhapsody (1975) by Queen. Director Bruce Gowers.

Darkest Hour (2017) by Lyves. Director Thomas Ralph.

Hidden Wounds (2013) by dEUS. Director Tomas Kaan. Producer Arnold van Bruggen. Website Sara Kolster & Thomas Lievestro. [www.hiddenwounds.be](http://www.hiddenwounds.be)

I Wanna Prove To You (2017) by The Lemon Twigs. Director Nick Roney.

Life's What You Make It (2016) by Placebo (cover of Talk Talk). Director Sacha Rainbow.

Would You Be (2016) by Willie J. Healey. Director Finn Keenan.

Wyclef Jean (2017) by Young Thug. Director Ryan Staake.

## 7. Appendix

### 1. Longlist Fullscreen Program at IDFA 2016

Music artist	Song	Video artist
PJ Harvey	The Community of Hope	Seamus Murphy
PJ Harvey	The Orange Monkey	Seamus Murphy
Augustines	When Things Fall Apart	Jack Lightfoot
SG Lewis f/ Gallant	Holding Back	
DEUS	Hidden Wounds	Tomas Kaan (Arnold van Bruggen)
GENER8ION + M.I.A.	The New International Sound Pt. II	Inigo Westmeier
Drengé	Running Wild	Ed Lovelace
Moby	The Last Day	Erik Anders Lang
Major Lazer	Light It Up	Sam Pilling
Odezenne	Novembre	Jérôme Clément-Wilz
Odezenne	Chimpanzé	Arthur Muller
Elbow	Charge	Mark Thomas
Elbow	Real Life (Angel)	Mark Thomas
Elbow	My Sad Captains	Mark Thomas
Elbow	New York Morning	Mark Thomas and Mat Norman
Stepherd & Skinto	Kind	Steven Kuijs
Gold Panda	In My Car	Rob Brandon
The Maccabees	Feel To Follow	
Subculture Sage	Gold	Ricky Patel
Cazadores	Shadowboxing	Eilif Bremer Landsend

SoulCircuit	Rolling With Me (I Got Love)	Dan Henshaw
Thylacine	Mountains	Cyprien Clément-Delmas
RP Boo	Bangin' on King Drive	Wills Glasspiegel

## 2. Longlist Fullscreen Program at IDFA 2017

Music artist	Song	Video artist
Placebo	Life's What You Make It	Sacha Rainbow
Everytime I Die	Map Change	Kyle Thrash
Wild Beasts	Alpha Female	Sacha Rainbow
Sue the Night	Mind Dear	Thessa Meijer
East of my Mouth	Stronger	Erlendur Sveinsson
Young Thug	Wyclef Jean	Ryan Staake
Lyves	Darkest Hour	Thomas Ralph
Cass McCombs	Run Sister Run	Rachael Pony Cassells
Cass McCombs	Medusa's Outhouse	Aaron Brown
The Great Escape	Let Me Go Wild	Mischa Meyer
The Great Escape	I Can't Resist	Martin Weisz
Foreign Field	Hope Inside the Fire	Bennett Johnson
Odezenne	Matin	Jérôme Clément-Wilz
Jay Z	Bam	Rohan Blair-Mangat
Jay Z	4:44	Elissa Blount-Moorhead
Jay Z	Dream. On.	
Cri	Rush	Didier Charette
Oh Wonder	All We Do	Mike Lee Thomas
Jeff the Brotherhood	Punishment	en Uman and Grant Davis

Kvelertak	Bronsegud	Stian Andersen and Erik Triemann
Claire	End up Here	FIREAPPLE
Dead Cross	Obedience School	Dennis Bersales
Geoffroy	Sleeping on my Own	Didier Charette
Geoffroy	Raised By Wolves	Didier Charette
Jack Garratt	Surprise Yourself	Tom Clarkson
S O U L S	I Wait for You	
S O U L S	I Go On	
S O U L S	Satisfied	
S O U L S	Bad Girl	
Baya	A Call to Say Hello	Andreas Bjørseth
Elbow	It's All Disco	
Dayme Arocena	La Rumba Me Llamo Yo	Savanah Leaf
Cashmere Cat		Jake Schreier, Adam 9 Newport-Berra
The Lemon Twigs	I Wanna Prove to You	Nick Roney
Gaika	#Untaggable	Kibwe Tavares, Jonathan Gales
Charlotte Day Wilson	Work	Fantavious Fritz
Willie J Healey	Would You Be	Finn Keenan
Mount Kimbie	Blue Train Lines	Raf Fellner & Tegen Williams
Tristan C. Anderson	Change	Tristan C. Anderson
Tristan C. Anderson	Spine	Tristan C. Anderson
Tristan C. Anderson	Minerals	Tristan C. Anderson
Tristan C. Anderson	The Corner	Tristan C. Anderson
Tristan C. Anderson	Conversations	Tristan C. Anderson

Tristan C. Anderson	Untitled Future	Tristan C. Anderson
Tristan C. Anderson	Broken Sea	Tristan C. Anderson
Tristan C. Anderson	Shadow of a Man	Tristan C. Anderson



### 3. Hidden Wounds - The Veterans

NAME, AGE (Country of origin) - Wars

Anke Dorpmanns, 29 (NL) – Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq

Dan Hoffman, 60 (USA) – Vietnam

Dave Adams, 50 (UK) – Northern Ireland, Iraq, Bosnia, Iraq

David de Bats, 40 (BE) – Somalia

Gary Phillips, 69 (USA) – Vietnam

Harry Flusher, 89 (UK) – World War II

Jean Limbourg, 53 (NL) – Cambodia, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Johan Bruurmijn 43 (NL) – Kosovo

Johan de Jonge, 39 (NL) – Bosnia-Herzegovina

Jos Gelissen, 56 (NL) – Bosnia-Herzegovina

Jos Remmen, 54 (NL) – Lebanon

Justin Holt, 26 (USA) – Iraq

Kent Reilly, 67 (USA) – Vietnam

Leo Hartog, 51 (NL) – Lebanon

Martin Armstrong (UK) – Northern-Ireland

Nigel Green Rowe (UK) – Bosnia-Herzegovina

Reinier Pol, 36, (NL) – Bosnia-Herzegovina

Roy Kolmer, 35 (NL) – Bosnia-Herzegovina

Scott Casimiro (USA) – Afghanistan

Simon Buckden, 41 (UK) – Bosnia, Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Iraq, Rwanda

Steven Diaz, 28 (USA) – Iraq

Tony Hayes, 60 (UK) – Northern-Ireland

Tony Richards (UK) – Northern-Ireland

William Roberts, 47 (USA) – Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Haiti, Afghanistan

#### 4. Song Lyrics “Hidden Wounds”

In **red** the “objective voice” (these lyrics are not used for the video but replaced by the interview voice-overs)

In **blue** the “I voice”

In **green** the “you voice”

---

(What’s that sound?)

The woman looked like a large rag doll smashed to pieces: The incident that affected him most profoundly occurred while he was leading a mobile patrol. It was 1972.

(What’s that sound?)

A massive explosion a hundred yards in front of Johnson's vehicle brought the patrol to a halt. A bomb had been detonated in an underground toilet.

(What’s that sound?)

Johnson saw people scattering through swirling clouds of thick black smoke. Within minutes he had cordoned off the area and mounted guards to provide cover against snipers in case it was a set-up.

(What’s that sound?)

Raised voices caught his attention. A man was screaming at a policeman and pointing at the toilet. "He was shouting, 'My wife's in there!'" Johnson raced towards the man.

(What’s that sound?)

Redemption isn't coming soon

I'm stuck here with these hidden wounds  
All the things they made me do  
They haunt me

(What's that sound?)

I'm drinking just to dull the pain  
Images won't go away  
They count the dead now why don't they just count me

(What's that sound?)

I was about to give the order when one of my men found a woman's shoe  
Then I found her. She looked like a large rag doll smashed to pieces.

All that was left of her clothing was a piece of rag around her neck; other parts of her  
just had been blown off. Even her toes were missing. I covered her with my combat  
jacket and carried her out to an ambulance.

[From this moment onwards the interactive features are active in the video.]

---

On the first day of the year  
You had a grip on all the fear  
You were a diamond

But then gradually untold  
It got a hold on to your soul  
Your bones are crying

All the wonders of the world to stop and letting know  
What you were going through  
And no one understands the pain they thought you were just playing games

It breaks my heart today

Just to hear you say

[From this moment onwards the characters look into the camera and lip sync the lyrics of the song.]

---

Redemption isn't coming soon

I'm stuck here with these hidden wounds

All the things they made me do

They haunt me

I'm drinking just to dull the pain

Images won't go away

They count the dead now why don't they just count me

(What's that sound)

And I see the days go by

But I'm just feeling numb is no one here to come over

Cause they hate to see me cry

They think I've gone insane

These hidden wounds will stay open

I was taught to love and not to hate

As fire rates becomes my fate

I'm like a bomb I detonate

It scares me

(What's that sound)

I'm longing for another spring  
A little love a natural thing  
Someone to hold, just anything  
That's carefree

And I've seen the days go by  
But I'm just feeling numb  
There is no one here to come over  
Cause they hate to see me cry  
They think I've gone insane  
These hidden wounds will stay open

## 5. Title cards “Wyclef Jean”

The cards that are marked **bold** deviate from the standard black background and white font. Some words are underlined that directly refer to “the real”.

### Card 1

Hi, this is Ryan Staake. I “co-directed” this video with Young Thug.

### Card 2

But we never met each other.

### Card 3

I was initially send a recording of him explaining his idea for the video to his team:

### Card 4

Young Thug didn’t show up in time for that shot.

### Card 5

In fact, he never showed up for any of our shots.

### Card 6

But 2 months later he sent me some footage he shot:

### Card 7

I wish it was my idea for him to eat Cheetos, but it was all him.

### Card 8

Those were the best moments.

### Card 9

I don’t have anything close to what I’d planned to film.

Card 10

So, I'll just explain how this video fell apart.

Card 11

This scene was supposed to feature Thugger driving.

Card 12

But he wasn't there so we filmed more girls & B-roll.

Card 13

This scene actually worked out pretty well.

Card 14

It even feels like a real video.

**Card 15**

Did you know wood bends like this in slow motion?

Card 16

It doesn't.

Some of the bats are rubber.

Card 17

When the windshield cracked, the real cops we had on set made us stop.

**Card 18**

But thanks to the magic of editing, the party can rage on.

**Card 19**

Thug flew this kid in from Mississippi.

Card 20

Real cops watching us destroying a police car:

Card 21

Remember them.

They'll be back later.

Card 22

The label reps told us that Young Thug was minutes away, and demanded that we immediately prepare for him.

**Card 23**

They wanted her to change into a red swimsuit.

**Card 24**

I said I'd fix it in post.

Card 25

This was our first performance set up:

Card 26

I was told to change it because of "*impressionable children*".

Card 27 - lyric-image synchronization

Listen, kids:

Card 28

Thug still wasn't there yet, so we improvised with the models.

Card 29

Lawyers made me remove a reference to a certain movie scene in which a man says "ass to ass"



Card 30

...perhaps commenters will guess what it was.

Card 31

By the way,  
we paid them extra for that shot.

Card 32

Also, Vice had a behind-the-scenes crew there.  
Here's what they filmed:

Card 33

About ten hours after he was supposed to arrive, we were told that Young Thug was nearby.

**Card 34**

We had enough time left for one performance with the car.

Card 35

I was going to put him here:

**Card 36** - (White background)

Finally, Young Thug rolled up!

**Card 37**

Then my producer came over and told me that Thug wouldn't get out of the car.

**Card 38**

Apparently, his Instagram had been hacked, and he found out just as he arrived.

Card 39

Also, his bodyguard had already begun arguing with the cops, and they'd threatened to "*shut this whole shoot down.*"

Card 40

We waited as label reps & management tried to convince him to get out of the car.

**Card 41** - (Fade out)

Then, suddenly we heard that Young Thug had driven away.

Card 42

Ironically, my first idea for this video was for Young Thug to light the budget on fire.

Card 43

On my way home, I wondered if Young Thug would've liked the shoot we put together for him.

Card 44

But I guess none of that matters now.

Card 45

In fact, maybe that's the moral of the story:

None of this matters.

Card 46

This video cost over \$100,000 and the artist never showed up.

Card 47

But you're still watching...

Card 48

...even though the song just ended.

Card 49

So I guess the video actually worked.

Card 50

The End.

Card 51

Oh wait, they wanted logos:

Card 52

[logo1]

(somehow allowed this to happen)

Card 53

[logo2]

(always on time)

Card 54

[logo3]

(actually made this video)