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IN SILENCE:
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IN HANIBAL (NBC 2013-2015)**

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TV shows are an unquestionable part of our modern life. We watch them compulsively, discuss them, love some of them, hate others. More and more frequently, they are becoming the subject of theoretical analysis, mainly due to the ever-changing form, poetics or the issues dealt with. The purpose of this modest paper is to analyse the possible ways of aesthetization of the fictional universe in the popular TV series *Hannibal* (NBC 2013-2015). My goal is to answer not only the question of which of the aesthetization models, i.e. the theatricalization of life or the aesthetics of everyday life is better suited for the conceptualization of Hannibal, but also to determine the conceptual relationships between these two aesthetic phenomena.

The essay has the following structure. In §1, I will analyse and clarify the definition of the concept of a *performance*. Then, in §2, I will describe the concept of *theatrical work*, in particular, I will analyse its constitutive properties. In §3, I will characterise the phenomena of aesthetization of life through its theatricalization and I will indicate the links which exist between aesthetic properties and dramatic properties. At the end of the text, in §4, I will explore the possibility of treating the theatricalization of life as a form of everyday aesthetics using storylines taken from *Hannibal*.

1. The concept of *performance*

The analysis of the phenomenon of theatricalization of life should be, in my opinion, preceded by a detailed explication of the concept of the *theatre* (*resp.* a theatrical work) and its relationship to the broader category of the concept of *performance*.

We can accept without much controversy that all performances are actions in the strict sense.¹² However, this relationship does not occur in the opposite direction, i.e., not all actions are performances. To visualise this, let's analyse a simple example. Imagine that a girl dresses up, dances and sings in her room. This event is accompanied by appropriate intention of the girl, making this an action.³ This action may take the following course: (1) the girl is alone in her room, or (2) the girl is watched by her mother (also: the girl is aware of this). The case (2) differs from (1) due to the fact that the girl not only performs the action in accordance with her intention, but *also* does so to gain someone's attention and - perhaps - to be praised by her mother. According to certain intuitions, (2) is a description of some type of performance, and (1) is only an action. A performance can therefore be described as an action, the goal of which is to perform a certain activity while exposed to the evaluation of others.⁴ This corresponds with Richard Schechner's concept of "preserved behaviour", i.e. such an action, which is intended to make an impression [on the audience] as if you were someone else.⁵

According to what I have suggested above, I would now like to formulate the following definition - technical to a certain degree - of the term "performance":

Def. 1 x is a performance if and only if: (i) person A performs action b over time t and in place p ; (ii) action b is performed by A with the intention of being the subject of evaluation of others; (iii) person B watches/listens to the result of action b performed by A ; (iv) person B is in the same time t and place p ; (v) person A is aware that B is watching/listening to the result of their action.

To be fully informative, the above definition requires precise terminological clarification. By saying that person B is present in the same time t and place p , I mean that B is a witness of the performance of action b . The place p should not be taken too literally here, because it is impossible for A and B to remain in exactly the same time and place (adoption of such a thesis would mean recognising that two objects of the same kind can collocate spatio-temporally). Rather, the point here is that A and B "share" some place (*resp.* space) p , where action b is performed. Referring to the above example, the girl's room is such a place. This condition is necessary if we want to distinguish between being a witness to a certain action (in this case: performance) and watching/listening to its recording⁶.

However, question of how to interpret the condition (iii), i.e. the fact that the "person B is watching/listening to a result of an action performed by A " remains completely valid. This condition explicitly assumes that the result of action b is watched/listened to by a real person B (only such a person can meet the condition (iv) discussed in the paragraph above). One might

assume, however, that person *B* is not the actual, but the *intentional* viewer/listener of the result *b*. In other words, for something to be a performance, it does not have to be viewed or listened to by actual audience (where the term "audience" is satisfied by at least one person), but it must be done in such a way *as if* it were viewed/listened to by an audience. This intuition seems justified by the fact that dancing or playing a musical instrument can be carried out without any audience and it would be highly unintuitive to say that these are not performances in the strict sense. Accordingly, I propose to modify the definition of the concept of "performance" provided above. Its modified form looks as follows:

Def. 2 *x* is a performance if and only if: (i) person *A* performs action *b* during time *t* and in place *p*; (ii) action *b* is performed by *A* with the intention of being the subject of evaluation of other people; (iii) effect of action *b* is the result *y* (iv) actual or intentional person *B* watches/ listens to the result *y* of action *b* performed by *A*; (v) the actual or intentional person *B* is in the same time *t* and place *p*; (vi) person *A* is aware that *B* is watching/listening to result *y* of their action.

According to this definition, the conditions (v) and (vi) should be understood in the suitably modified manner. Firstly, in the case of an intentional person *B*, person *A* behaves as *if* they shared the space and time of the performance with person *B*. Secondly, person *A* is convinced that if there was a real person *B*, they would be watching/listening to the result *y* of action *p*.

However, the fact that not every performance assumes an actual audience (i.e. a definitional "person *B*") does not mean that there are no such varieties of performances, which must *necessity* be perceived by an actual audience. Theatrical performances are a variation of such performances.

2. The concept a *theatrical work*

In this section, I will make a short description of the general nature of theatrical works. For this purpose, I will use the conceptual framework proposed by Erika Fischer-Lichte. She specifies two properties, which are essential in understanding this art form. These are the concept of *performance* and the concept of *liveness*.

Performance, according to Fischer-Lichte, is the guiding ontological category, to which a theatrical work should be referred to.⁷ This boils down, among other things, to the hypothesis that the "art" in a theatrical work is not the literary work (especially dramatic work) presented, but the mere act of performing, i.e. a certain "happening". This view results in assigning primacy to the event taking place on stage itself in comparison to the relation, which exists

between this event and the independently existing literary work. A key aspect of a performance is the bodily presence of actors and spectators. Fischer-Lichte says:

The bodily co-presence of actors and spectators enables and constitutes performance. For a performance to occur, actors and spectators must assemble to interact in a specific place for a certain period of time.⁸

The physicality understood in this manner creates a specific relationship between the actors and the audience of the performance. Both groups are an essential element of its existence, and this in turn results in the fact that they are equal participants of the performance. New meanings crystallize in an performance, which are based on physical co-presence of performers and spectators:

The actor brings forth his corporeality with the potential to affect the audience directly and, at the same time, allows for the generation of new meaning. [...] Previously the actor's movements were designed to translate meaning laid down in the literary text. Now they served as a stimulus to induce excitement in the spectators and/or motivate them to generate new meaning themselves. While the first enlisted performativity in the service of expressivity, it was now seen to possess an energetic, affective potential.⁹

It can be said, therefore, that the proper matter (or: medium) for a theatrical performance is interaction (and thus: action) between the individuals involved in it. It is also worth noting that in this model of a performance, the spectators respond not only to actors, but also to other spectators.

Another important concept relating to a theatrical work is its *liveness*. Fischer-Lichte notes that, up to a certain point there was no need to emphasise this aspect of a theatrical work, as all shows took place "live", i.e. they are happening at the same time and in the same place for actors and spectators.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the past century has brought such significant technological changes that proved severe to our perception of theatre performances, especially those available in popular culture. In particular, I'm talking about the phenomenon of transmitting or recording theatre performances (or generally different kinds of cultural performances). Fischer-Lichte cites, among others, the following excerpt from the work by Philip Auslander (1999: 36):

The ubiquity of reproductions of performances of all kinds in our culture has led to the depreciation of live presence, which can only be compensated for by making the perceptual experience of the live as much as possible like that of the mediatized, even in cases where the live event provides its own brand of proximity.¹¹

Fischer-Lichte opposes this view, claiming that a quintessential property of a theatrical spectacle (*resp.* work) is experiencing it live. It is understood here in quite a rigorous manner, i.e. it must be experienced by the audience and actors at the same time and in the same space (2008: 73-74). Such a view is a direct consequence of the concept of a performance outlined above. If it achieves its fragile materiality thanks to the bodily co-presence of performers and spectators, it must - sort of by definition - be a live performance.

In short: A theatrical work is the kind of artistic performance, which not only implies the existence of a potential audience, but requires its real presence.

3. Aesthetization of life through its theatricalization

I would like to begin the analysis of the phenomenon of theatricalization with a simple statement that it consists of daily activities adopting the characteristics of theatrical art. Moreover, the phenomenon which is subject to theatricalization is problematized in the conceptual framework similar to that in which we describe theatrical works. In my opinion, the phenomenon of theatricalization was described most accurately by Erwin Goffman.¹²

He starts his considerations with a simple, but extremely important statement that a theatrical work differs from the phenomena of theatricalization by its internal structure.¹³ The first one, occurring most frequently on a theatre's stage (or another designated space), includes three basic elements, i.e. (1) the player, who acts as the character played by him; (2) such an actor interacts with other actors who are also "disguised" as the characters they play, and (3) the audience which is watching the interactions between them. The main objective of theatrical work understood in this manner is the make-believe of the audience that the whole situation acted out is really happening. In contrast, in everyday life we 're dealing with only two elements, i.e. (1) a persons acting out a particular role interacts with other people who act out their roles, and (2) at the same time these people constitute the audience. This phenomenon can be described as *theatricalization* . According to Goffman, this phenomenon concerns "real things" and not, as in the case of theatre, only fictional ones.

Goffman argues that a fundamental trait that everyday life events adopt from theatre is their dramatization. It is manifested by the person through something that Goffman calls a front: „Front, then, is the expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance.”¹⁴ It has two "parts".¹⁵ The first is a setting, i.e. the stage aspects of the front. They consist of, for example, the place where the performance takes place, but also the decorations, furnishings or clothing. The second "part" consists of the personal qualities of the person involved in the performance, i.e. age, sex, body

posture, tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures, etc. In this personal "part" of the front, we can distinguish appearance and behaviour.¹⁶ Appearance should be understood as something that is a stimulus to making a judgement regarding the social position of the performer, their work, leisurely activities, circles of interest, etc. On the other hand, behaviour refers to what direction - according to the persons forming the audience of the performance - the performer adopts during their performance, i.e. do they want to subjugate the audience, cause its admiration, pity, etc. According to Goffman, a front understood in this way forms the overall presentation of a person who performs in everyday life.¹⁷ The performance itself is accompanied by a certain idealization, that is, it often happens that the performer tries to make an impression that they are more involved in the audience's reaction than they really are. We're talking about, of course, various forms of engagement - e.g. emotional engagement, or a common purpose allegedly shared with the audience.¹⁸

This superficial, however more than sufficient for the purposes of this paper, reconstruction of Goffman's position demands a certain important clarification. Therefore, I propose to distinguish two basic meanings (or senses) of the term "theatralization", i.e. the broad sense and the strict sense. Theatralization in the broad sense refers to the phenomenon in which we ascribe traits characteristic to theatre to a certain event. This happens, for example, when we observe a child and its mother issuing commands to the child. We could say that the child is the "actor", the mother the "director" and the place in which they are present - a kind of "stage". We also speak of theatralization in this sense when someone assigns the "dramatization" of a certain event, e.g. something that was said or a manner or gesturing, to a specific person. (In this sense, theatralization is most often understood as something negative, i.e. as a kind of artificiality)¹⁹. In contrast, theatralization in the strict sense involves entry into certain specific forms of social institutions in order to achieve a particular effect, for example, a didactic or political effect. For example, this is true in the case of certain professions (teacher, politician, priest). Such theatralization is usually a conscious effort, i.e. purposefully taking on a role. Important here is the fact that both the person playing a "role" and their "audience" are at least partially aware of the relationships forming between them. (This is to some extent due to the fact that - according to the definition of performance given above - the person entering into a given role is exposed to the evaluation of others).

Of course, the distinction proposed is merely a conceptual clarification and in everyday life both forms of theatralization are blurred. (We could say that two - to some extent extreme - models of theatralization exist). There is a certain important difference between them, which I define as the explanatory difference. It consists of the level of information we receive

interpreting the given phenomena in the conceptual framework of a theatrical performance. In the case of theatralization in the broad sense, we learn relatively little about the actual relationships between those involved in the phenomenon. In the case of theatralization in the strict sense, we learn much more, because it provides important information to understand the occurring phenomena, e.g. a performance of political power or a religious performance (*resp.* a ritual). To better visualise the understanding of the explanatory role adopted here, I will refer to an example. Note that - and there is basically no doubt about it - in some cases we describe certain objects in the categories of works of art. (And it is not necessary to determine whether the object is *indeed* a work of art). This description can contribute a lot to the experience and understanding of these objects. There are also objects which when described in terms of art do not cause us to experience and/or understand them in a deeper sense, but - as is sometimes - causes some embarrassment. For example, describing the culinary dishes prepared by Ferran Adrià causes their better experiencing and understanding, however, a similar relationship does not occur in the case of the daily student lunch. Similarly, some objects and phenomena interpreted in terms of a theatrical work are richer and better understood, while others are not. In this text I refer only to the notion of theatralization in the strict sense.

Moving on to a description of the issue of aesthetization of everyday life through its theatralization, I suggest the following conceptualisation:

(1) In the first place we must mention the obvious fact that not every theatralization of x means an aesthetization of x . For we can easily imagine a situation in which a certain x is theatralized, but it does not result in the exemplification by x of any aesthetic properties.

(2) We should distinguish between aesthetization in everyday life and aesthetization of everyday life. The first stems from the fact that in the stream of everyday experiences we encounter phenomena, processes or objects that exemplify aesthetic properties. Aesthetization understood in this manner means that aesthetic objects that can "interfere" in the unaesthetic sequence of events that happen to us in life. The accompanying aesthetic experience usually has a significant and unique character. While the aesthetization of everyday life should be understood as a phenomenon of assigning aesthetic properties to everyday life (*resp.* its components), i.e. everyday life itself provides an impetus to the aesthetic experience. By "everyday life" I mean the total of events which are routine, common (from the perspective of the person or group) and regular.²⁰

(3) Aesthetization of life by its theatralization may be characterised by two different time aspect. In the first case, aesthetization of life is "temporary", i.e. limited to strictly designated time interval. This interval is generally quite short. In the second case, aesthetization

of life (*resp.* respective fragments thereof) takes a "permanent" form, i.e. theatricalization of life is a permanent form of existence for the person or group

(4) The relationship of the aesthetization of life to its theatricalization could manifest in two ways, i.e. aesthetization may manifest somewhat *along with* theatricalization or aesthetization is *caused by* (*resp.* is a derivative of) the theatricalization of life (or at least strongly associated with it). The first case refers to a situation where a certain *x* exemplifies²¹ aesthetic properties, regardless of the fact that it is also being theatricalized, and - what's more - the aesthetic properties of *x* do not affect the theatricalization of *x* in any significant way. The second case refers to a situation in which *x* takes on aesthetic qualities thanks to being subjected to a process of theatricalization or the aesthetic qualities of *x* constitute an important element of its theatricalization. In other words, in the second case, the aesthetic properties are related via a direct reference to the conceptual framework of theatre. For example, this can mean certain properties associated with a dramatisation of a certain situation, a place in which it takes place, the relationships occurring between the participants of the performance, etc. For example, festive clothing (e.g. a full suit) of a person participating in the procession on the occasion of the Solemnity of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (known colloquially as Corpus Christi in Poland) exemplifies certain aesthetic properties (for example, in this case neatness or orderliness²²) regardless of whether its owner participates in the religious ritual or not. On the other hand, the ceremonial robes of the priest seems to exemplify the aesthetic properties through a process of very formal theatricalization (*resp.* ritualization).

(5) Since theatricalization is possible thanks to the front used by the person, we could say that this front is subject to aesthetization. First of all, objects and spaces (i.e. the stage "ingredients" of the front) are subject to it. With their appearance and manner of functioning, they can resemble theatrical objects and spaces, they can have a sort of "artificiality" or "exaggeration"²³. Secondly, the personal element of the front, i.e. age, sex, manner of gesturing, timbre of voice, etc., is subject to aestheticization. These elements can be modulated or changed depending on the needs. For example, someone using various means (stage "ingredients") may emphasise or downplay their sexuality, age, social role, etc. Aestheticization of the elements of the front is associated with theatricalization, i.e. aestheticized elements are to serve the role played, and also thanks to the theatricalization itself they may "expand" certain aesthetic properties. For example, in the opinion of the audience, which is witnessing some theatricalized event, it was harmonious, sublime, beautiful, consistent, gentle, etc. Aestheticisation of the front is therefore closely linked with the theatricalization in a strict sense.

4. The relationship of the theatricalization of life and the aesthetics of everyday life

Returning now to the two different time aspects of the theatricalization of life, i.e. the temporary aspect and the permanent aspect, we could ask whether aestheticisation through theatricalization - in the case of the permanent aspect - is not a *form of* aesthetics of everyday life, where the "aesthetics of everyday life" should be understood a subdiscipline of aesthetics, the scope of research of which includes, as defined by Thomas Leddy, all those objects that "are not art or nature".²⁴ Of course, this approach to the aesthetics of everyday life results in a threat of a definitional error, i.e. the fact that the definition is too broad. This is because if we would strictly define the range of aesthetics of everyday life as non-art and non-nature, its range could include such issues as for example the beauty of mathematical objects or angels (which after all do not belong to everyday life). For this reason, I propose to limit somewhat the conceptual and objective range of aesthetics of everyday life. In doing this I found help in the list of major traits by Kevin Melchionne:

(a) *Ongoing* i.e. the fact that the phenomena, objects and processes making up the aesthetics of everyday life are somehow constant (*resp.* routine) for our lives, e.g. a daily walk in the park can be a phenomenon categorised within the scope of aestheticization of everyday life, as opposed to a holiday trip which is a rare event.

(b) *Common* i.e. the fact that the phenomenon and of object of aesthetics of everyday life are substantially simple, easily available and widely practised.

(c) *Activity*, which consists in the fact that the aesthetics of everyday life is defined rather by some type of practice than the object itself. In other words, everyday objects are not automatically objects forming the aesthetics of everyday life. What sets them apart is a certain practice associated with them, for example, routine preparation of coffee in the morning, etc. What matters more is our relationship with the objects than the objects themselves.

(d) *Typically but not necessarily aesthetic*, consisting in the fact that the activity or object exemplifies an aesthetic property, but does not do so out of necessity, for example, going out for a walk is not in itself an aesthetic activity but may of course be so.²⁵

According to Melchionne, aesthetics of everyday life is essentially narrowed to phenomena that are routine, practical and most often widely shared. The researcher lists five areas of such phenomena, which form the backbone of aesthetics of everyday life: food, clothing, housing, social life and mobility.

Melchionne's definition, however, requires commenting on, if it is to fully help us in the understanding of practices characteristic of the aesthetics of everyday life. Namely, I am talking about the postulated *universality* of objects/activities that fall under the aesthetics of everyday life. I would like to note, that universality, i.e. the intensity of occurrence of certain phenomena, and our relationship to them (e.g. lack of uniqueness), is closely dependent on our everyday life. And what we call "everyday life" is very heterogeneous. I am sympathetic at this point with the perspective of Ossi Naukkarinen, who describes "everyday life" as follows:

My everyday consists of certain *objects, activities, and events*, as well as certain *attitudes and relations* to them. Everyday objects, activities, and events, for me and for others, are those with which we spend lots of time, regularly and repeatedly. Most often this means objects and events related to our *work, home, and hobbies*.²⁶

The point is that everyone has their *own* everyday life. It is a truism to say that people differ from each other in many ways, e.g. education, political views, affluence, the climate in which they live, etc. The differences between individual entities cause that the "ingredients" of their everyday life can be radically different, for example, the lifestyle of a Catholic nun in Kazakhstan and a feminist activist from Berlin.

There are two opposing positions regarding the methodology of the aesthetics of everyday life, i.e. a strong and weak position²⁷.

A follower of first option is mainly Yuriko Saito, who argues for methodological distinctiveness of the aesthetics of everyday life from the aesthetics of art and nature. Saito shows that the objects and practices of everyday life, in contrast to the works of art, do not have a clear identity, borders, require no special attitude, extensive knowledge, are perceived primarily by the so-called lower senses (taste, smell, touch), and their aesthetic property is impermanent and contingent.²⁸ What's more, according to Saito, an aesthetic experience of everyday life is characterised by a kind of ordinariness and linkage with other values, especially ethical values.²⁹ The aesthetics of everyday life should therefore seek their own research methods, which will enable them to adequately capture their subject.

Supporters of the second position include Christopher Dowling and Dan Eugen Ratiu. They argue that the concept of aesthetics, characteristic for art and nature, can be suitably extended to include the everyday phenomena.³⁰ The main motive in favour of this state of affairs is maintaining a normative status of aesthetics and that which is aesthetic. According to these researchers, the greatest threat to the aesthetics of everyday life is the loss of the meaning

of the predicate "aesthetic." For if anything can be aesthetic, the term itself seems to be losing meaning. A potential way out from this undesirable state of affairs is to adapt the conceptual framework of art to analyse the phenomena of everyday life. Then we would be able, at least by definition, to maintain a kind of normativity of aesthetic judgements about everyday life (or at least their intersubjective communicativeness).³¹

We can now consider the relationship of aesthetization through theatricalization to the aesthetics of everyday life. The hypothesis that theatricalization of life (in its aesthetic dimension) is a form of aesthetics of everyday life, boils down to the assertion that the theatricalization of life is an interesting interpretative key for understanding the practices of everyday life (of course, so far as we consider their aesthetic dimension). It should be immediately clarified that we're not talking about a strong position - in terms of methodology - in the aesthetics of everyday life, because by definition it distances itself from the conceptual framework of art. (The phenomenon of theatricalization, as has already been stated, depends heavily on the conceptual framework characteristic of a theatrical performance). A promising prospect seems to be accepting the assumptions of the weak version of aesthetics of everyday life, which intends to describe everyday life with the help of the conceptual framework of art. In other words, there is a possibility that the theatricalization of life is, in certain cases, *a form of* aesthetics of everyday life.

5. Theatricalization of everyday life and the aesthetics of everyday life: *Hannibal*

I propose to illustrate the relationship between theatricalization of everyday life and aesthetics of everyday life using the television series *Hannibal* (directed by Bryan Fuller).

Such effort is motivated in two ways. First, in *Hannibal* we are dealing with some kind of maximisation of experiences and aesthetic properties. Their qualitative and quantitative intensity, certainly partly exaggerated, allows us to accurately grasp the relationship between the phenomena of interest to me. Secondly, it is interesting to what extent the phenomena discussed may serve as a tool to interpret the storyline and the visual layer of *Hannibal*.

Hannibal series is part of the so-called Hannibal universe, i.e. it is loosely based on the characters from the book *Red Dragon* (1981) by Thomas Harris. The plot of the series - simplifying - focuses on the specific relationship of Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Mads Mikkelsen) and FBI Special Agent Will Graham (Hugh Dancy)³². Graham is a profiler that helps the FBI to recreate the motivations, emotions and actions of serial killers. Unfortunately, work does not remain neutral to Graham's health, resulting in the gradual loss of mental health. Dr. Hannibal Lecter is allocated to him as medical assistance. It is a respected psychiatrist, an epicure, connoisseur of art and - of course - a serial killer. Over the last three seasons of the series,

which consist of 39 episodes, we become familiar with the complicated relationship of Dr. Lecter with Graham. They solve criminal cases together, eat, cook, and have ongoing discussions about art and morality (usually in a therapy session in which Dr. Lecter plays the role of a psychiatrist). Naturally, the viewer is aware of the true nature of Dr. Lecter from the first episode. He is undoubtedly a very intelligent person, with a refined taste and culinary skills, a skilled anatomist and surgeon, expert and student of several art forms, moreover, a person who has a very specific taste with regard to their clothing. It is also a schemer, a liar and a ruthless murderer. Dr. Lecter uses his incredible skills to manipulate Graham, and the whole FBI (in particular Jack Crawford, Graham's superior, played by Laurence Fishburne).

Hannibal series seems like ideal material for analysing the relationship between the theatricalization everyday life and aesthetics of everyday life mainly due to the character of Dr. Hannibal Lecter, his interactions with other characters and the manner of presenting his surroundings. I wish to point out here that my analysis of *Hannibal* regards *only* the fictional universe, i.e. I am interested in the relationships between the characters "inside" the series, not the relationship of the audience (*resp.* viewer) with the series or formal issues related to film aesthetics.

Referring to the aforementioned aesthetization of life through its theatricalization, it must be said that Dr. Lecter attaches great importance to the aesthetic aspect of the stage-like elements of his front (after Goffman), which include, in particular attire and culinary dishes. Regarding the former, it must be emphasised that we usually see him in a tailor-made suit, with carefully chosen shirt, tie and other elements. If he puts on a different outfit, which is extremely rare, it is a high-quality cashmere sweater and shirt. Attire is one of the ways through which Hannibal creates his image to others. He looks not only professional, but also wealthy and having a sophisticated taste. In addition, what seems a bit surprising, Dr. Lecter has an incredible consistency. During the many murders he had committed, he does not take off the suit - which would seem a very practical (*sic!*) move - but puts on special protective clothes. It is a transparent coverall made of plastic. This can be interpreted as follows: Hannibal is extremely attached to his clothing and is not able to make any greater concessions in this regard. Not without significance is the fact that the coverall itself is *transparent*. It therefore protects the impeccable image of Dr. Lecter, while maintaining its aesthetic values. The fact that it is so difficult for Hannibal to get rid of his front (i.e. suit) is evidence not only of the fact that he attaches great importance to attire, but also the fact that the very act of murder does not require a radically different front.³³ It is, one might say, an act which to some extent is mundane for him.

Another stage aspect of the front is the culinary dishes and how they are prepared and/or consumed. As already mentioned, Dr. Lecter is a real epicure and a practised student

of culinary arts, making him an amateur of gourmet dishes. In the series we see how he prepares them with great skill, but at the same time we get the impression that it is not a complicated or unusual act for him. An equally important element, in addition to the process of cooking, is also their purely visual aspect. This applies both to simple dishes, like vegetable salad, or sophisticated *foie gras*. Dishes prepared by Dr. Lecter resemble works of art rather than the actual "things" to be eaten. It is worth mentioning that Hannibal very often uses human flesh for culinary dishes. (This is also one of the main storylines in this series). However, it is not a rare "product" in his kitchen. Dr. Lecter has a special refrigerator and pantry where he stores human flesh he uses for cooking. It is worth noting that - unlike other cannibals shown in the series - he does not treat the human body with a special anointing, but simply as "meat". Nevertheless, he attaches great importance to the way of eating. Often besides the food there is a decanter of wine, delicate china and silver cutlery on the table. Importantly, scenes featuring food are always shown in the same way in *Hannibal*, i.e. regardless of whether Hannibal has guests or not. They are always accompanied, on the one hand, by sophistication, exaggeration, on the other hand naturalness and Dr. Lecter's pure joy from eating food.

The stage aspect of the front is not the only notable. The personal part of Hannibal's front is also interesting. It creates the impression that he is a friend of Jack Crawford and Will Graham, while in fact he is their most devoted enemy³⁴. He often incites them against each other, sensing and playing on their greatest weaknesses. What's more, there are people in regard to whom Hannibal does not play any game, for example, other killers who know his identity, but they also become his victims (literally). Dr. Lecter is presented as a very slick, psychopathic manipulator, who in his actions is mainly driven by pure curiosity and culinary preferences.

In the first place it should be stated that there is no doubt that Dr. Hannibal Lecter is a person subordinating all his choices and actions to a predetermined goal. In the short-term dimension, the goal is the killing of a person, getting the meat needed to cook a meal or misleading FBI agents. On the other hand, his long-term goal, which - from the perspective of the whole series - all the minor goals serve *ideally*, is to make friends with Will Graham, and convince him to commit a crime. Therefore, Dr. Lecter seems as a person completely faithful to his character. Throughout the whole series, Dr. Lecter does not seem to undergo the slightest change - at least in terms of his intentions and behaviour. He is also a person who is never torn by doubts or remorse in relation to the acts committed.

What is interesting is the role played by the aesthetic dimension of Hannibal's existence in relation to "maintaining" his *identity* - in particular: clothing and food. As already mentioned, the character of Dr. Lecter is extremely tied to the visual side of his being. This is mani-

fested in the love of the perfectly tailored suits and sophisticated food. The incredible consistency of dress, tastes and manners is by no means accidental, because it is clothing and culinary dishes (as well as his books, journals, sketches, etc.), which are a constituent element of his identity. This explains, among other things, the already mentioned Hannibal's transparent coverall. The suit is a part of Dr. Lecter's identity, therefore he does not remove it, but only puts a protective coverall on top. Its transparency suggests that Hannibal wants to preserve the integrity of his personality for himself. One of the main characters in the series, Dr. Alana Bloom (played by Caroline Dhavernas) is acutely aware of this. She is a professor of psychiatry, former student and lover of Dr. Lecter. In the third season, she imprisons Dr. Lecter in her estate (with the consent of the FBI). His cell is designed to duplicate Hannibal's office as close as possible. Dr. Lecter has his books and drawings. However, he is dressed in a prison uniform. Dr. Bloom, trying to get the psychopath to cooperate, threatens him, saying, "I will take away your beloved books, drawings and toilet. Then you'll stop being yourself." Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that aesthetics is the armour for Hannibal's personality.

The visual aspect of the aesthetic elements making up the identity of Dr. Hannibal Lecter can be expressed using the category of camp. They are over-aestheticised, exaggerated and sometimes also somewhat artificial. This concerns not only the individual scenes or objects, but also their total intensity over the entire series. I am here thinking in particular of interior decorations, table settings, arrangements of culinary dishes and clothes. Susan Sontag writes that:

Clothes, furniture, all the elements of visual decor, for instance, make up a large part of Camp. For Camp art is often decorative art, emphasising texture, sensuous surface, and style at the expense of content.³⁵

We're surely dealing with unconscious (*resp.* pure) manifestations of camp here, as Hannibal treats the visual element of his existence very seriously. At the same time, it allows us to realize the exaggeration, but also experience a certain pleasure from watching the strongly aestheticised fictional universe. (A good example of this type of pleasure is the dinners at Hannibal's place or having drinks together - this is particularly true of Jack Crawford). Camp is a good way of describing the aesthetic of the fictional universe in *Hannibal*, also since Dr. Lecter seems to be a model example of a narcissistic dandy.³⁶ On the one hand he has a far-reaching sensitivity to beauty, style, taste, on the other hand, however, he judges others by the way they dress and behave. All this means that characters encountering Dr. Lecter are often intimidated by him.

These analyses allow us to conclude that the aesthetic dimension of *Hannibal's* fictional universe allows us to treat the characters and the situations occurring in the series in terms of theatricalization of life. For there are many elements that gain significance if interpreted as part of a broader element of performance. This applies particularly to the character of Dr. Hannibal Lecter himself, which can be seen as a director and the main player in the intrigue viewed on the television screen. Even the filmmakers themselves seem to treat *Hannibal* in theatrical categories, as many promotional materials have a "stage" arrangement.

I have the impression that the above interpretation of *Hannibal* - despite a hefty dose of intuitiveness and persuasiveness - is, however, incorrect. I see the causes of this fact in the structure of the theatrical phenomenon. Let us note that theatricalization, just like a theatrical performance itself, presupposes the existence of at least one person who is watching the performance. In the case of *Hannibal*, it's no doubt that there are many scenes that can be treated in this way. Moreover, Dr. Lecter is a person with a narcissistic disposition, which manifests itself in the fact that he likes to do a lot of things for the show (and be praised for it). The key, however, is how Dr. Lecter behaves in both cases, i.e. when he is watched by others and when he is not - essentially *in the same* way. Attire, mannerisms, method of preparing dishes, their appearance, arrangement of the table remain unchanged. The interpretation of *Hannibal* in the theatrical conceptual framework would be focused on clarifying the relationship which exists between Dr. Hannibal Lecter and other characters, in particular, with Will Graham. However, it would be important *only* if *Hannibal* changed his attitude depending on whether someone is a witness of his actions or not. This is related to the fact that the person using a specific "front" modifies it and "puts it on" precisely to get the desired effect in contacts with other people. In other words, for the interpretation of *Hannibal* in theatrical terms to make sense, it would have to satisfy two conditions: (1) The implementation of a single action x type p (e.g. eating, way of dressing) has at least one viewer, and (2) the method of implementation of x differs from other type p actions $\{y, z\}$ when Dr. Lecter carried them out without any viewer. However, this is not because the way he acts is essentially unchanged.

I would now like to formulate and dismiss two possible counter-arguments to the above line of reasoning, which I define as: *Argument from the Internal Viewer* and *Argument from the External Viewer*.

The Argument from the Internal Viewer says that Hannibal Lecter carries out his actions in a manner assuming the existence of an intentional viewer, i.e. carries them out "as if" somebody was looking at him and judging him. The consequence of this can be a conclusion that the actions of Dr. Lecter have *a viewer* regardless of whether someone is present with him

(another character from the series) or not. In my opinion, this argument can be invalidated. Note that, from the fact that Hannibal's actions are always performed in the "presence" of the internal viewer, we cannot directly deduce that they are theatricalized. Not every viewer is a viewer corresponding to the structure of a theatrical performance or theatricalization. It appears also that Dr. Lecter to some extent is an ideal character: he is not torn by any conflicting emotions. If there's any passion in him, he satisfies it and never feels guilt about it.

The Argument from the External Viewer comes down to the conclusion that we (i.e. viewers sitting in front of TV) are witnessing all the actions of Dr. Hannibal Lecter. In other words, the actions performed by him are theatricalized because of us as viewers of the series. This counter-argument, however, in my view, can be satisfactorily dismissed. Firstly, it should be noted that this theatricalization would not take place in Hannibal's fictional universe, but in the real world, i.e. space, which assumes the existence of not only the story of the series, but also ourselves, television sets, etc. But this is not the way to describe the relations between the characters involved in a plot (i.e. taking place in a fictional universe), but it is a description of the relationship which exists between us and the television series. In other words, this approach to the problem does not provide us with any relevant information in relation to what relationships occur between characters which interest us (thus in fact we do not interpret the series itself, but our attitude towards it). Secondly, the plot of *Hannibal* lacks themes that indicate that the title character (not to mention other characters) is aware of our presence (*resp.* the fact that we are watching him). This remark may seem a little absurd at first glance, but keep in mind that there are television productions with plots based on this type of interaction. An example of such a series is *House of Cards* (Netflix 2013-), in which the main character Francis Underwood (Kevin Spacey) often addresses the television audience *explicitly*, commenting on his action.

Therefore, it seems more fruitful to interpret *Hannibal* in terms of the aesthetics of everyday life. This is due to the following reasons:

(1) Actions performed by Dr. Lecter are - from his perspective - constant and commonplace. This applies to both murders, cooking using human flesh and sophisticated attire. These actions are mechanical to some extent. We can see that the main character has already performed them countless times. The fact that Dr. Lecter behaves essentially in the same way regardless of whether or no there are witnesses to his actions, highlights, in my opinion, the internal consistency of the character presented. He does not modify his behaviour to others, but others are witnesses of his everyday life.

(2) Perceiving Dr. Hannibal Lecter through the aesthetics of everyday life allows us to better understand his psychopathic nature. Indeed, if Dr. Lecter would change his attitude depending on whether someone is a witness of his actions, we could talk about his social "game" (and thus theatricalization). Meanwhile, what we see on the screen is a representation of *everyday life* of a psychopathic killer. His everyday life is extremely different from our everyday life. Only the aesthetics of everyday life are able to enhance the overwhelming "otherness" of Dr. Lecter. They make it possible to capture the dissimilarity of Dr. Lecter from other characters and, as a result, helps to understand why the FBI agents throughout the lion's share of the series are not able to understand his actions.

Using the series *Hannibal* as an example, I attempted to show that the aesthetization of life through its theatricalization - even when it has a constant time aspect - cannot be seen as a form of (*resp.* manifestation, *resp.* variant) of the aesthetics of everyday life. This is not only in the case of the so-called strong representation of the aesthetics of everyday life, which *explicitly* rejects the terminology characteristic of works of art, but also in the case of the so-called weak representation of the aesthetics of everyday life. I see the causes of this in the fact that theatricalization has a different structure than the aesthetics of everyday life, i.e. in the case of the aesthetics of everyday life, person performing a certain action (of an aesthetic nature) may be its sole recipient. Going a bit further, we might be tempted to state that the actions fitting within the domain of aesthetics of everyday life are not necessarily performances. This is because most of aesthetic actions in everyday life is performed not because of some imaginary (*resp.* intentional) viewer, but because of the person performing the action³⁷. It may be that the lack of awareness of being watched by others will have the effect of "losing oneself" in the action being performed. Such activity at the time of its performance may be less self-reflexive, but more sensual and carnal. This kind of situation does not occur, however, in the case of aesthetization of life by theatricalization, because it assumes the existence of at least one (real) viewer. I would like to express the dependences presented in this paper as follows:

Def. 3 *Theatricalization of everyday life*: (i) Person *A* performs action *x*; (ii) *x* exemplifies the aesthetic property of *p*; (iii) person *B* is a witness/viewer of action *x*; (iv) person *A* performs it intentionally, i.e. with an intention for *B* to "read" *x* as an action associated (loose) with the conceptual framework of the theatre; (v) person *B* reads the intentions of *A* in regard to *x*; (vi) person *A* is not the recipient of action *x*.

Def. 4 *Aesthetization of everyday life*: (i) person *A* performs action *x*; (ii) *x* exemplifies the aesthetic property of *p*; (iii) person *A* is the recipient of action *x*; (iv) person *B* may also be a recipient of action *x*.

The differences between these two phenomena have been shown by me on the basis of a conceptual analysis. As an illustration and a heuristic strengthening of the analyses performed, the results can be translated directly into an interpretation of the *Hannibal* series: aesthetics of everyday life is a better explanatory tool, as it allows us to understand more scenes in this series, i.e. those in which Dr. Lecter is with others, and those in which he is alone. It also allows us to maintain consistency of interpretation between them. Theatralization allows us to understand only the first group, i.e. scenes in which Dr. Lecter acts in the presence of other characters.

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² See Schechner 1977, 1985; McKenzie 2001

³ Davidson 1980: 45-46.

⁴ Davies, 2011: 6; Woodruff 2008:18.

⁵ Schechner 1985: 35-116.

⁶ Woodruff 2008: 43.

⁷ Fischer-Lichte 2008: 29-37.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹¹ Auslander 1999: 36.

¹² Goffman 1956.

¹³ *Ibid.*, i.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁹ This "artificiality" can be both on the side of the observer (metaphorically speaking, in the eye of the beholder) and on the side of the person performing the action observed.

²⁰ See Naukkarinen 2013.

²¹ Meaning that it exemplifies as a result of the phenomenon of aesthetization.

²² See Leddy 1995; 1997.

²³ This is also sometimes so in the case of theatralization in the broad sense.

²⁴ Leddy 2012: 8-9.

²⁵ Melchionne 2013.

²⁶ Naukkarinen 2013: §2.

²⁷ See Dowling 2010; Ratiu 2013.

²⁸ Saito 2008: 40-42, 50-53.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 238-241.

³⁰ Dowling 2010: 241

³¹ Ratiu 2013: 15-23

³² From the point of view of this chapter, an overall presentation of the narrative arc of *Hannibal* is not required.

³³ Again, I stress the fact that the coverall is transparent. Visually, Hannibal Lecter remains in the same clothes (here: a suit) at before committing the crime.

³⁴ The relationship of Dr. Hannibal Lecter and Will Graham is actually much more complex. Certainly we can say that (especially in season 3) a kind of friendship has formed between them. See Casey 2015.

³⁵ Sontag, 1964: 278.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 289.

³⁷ This underlines the relative lack of a need for critical discourse in relation to the aesthetic phenomena of everyday life postulated by Melchionne.

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