Chapter 7
Digital Poetry Reading: Podpoesi.nu and @detlillarum's #digtfix

On YouTube there is a clip of John Ashbery from 2016.[1] He is reading his poems as part of an event at Pioneer Works in New York. Ashbery is old; he is sitting on a chair, his body is a little sunken, he is breathing heavily. He begins by telling a joke that makes the audience laugh. The mood is set. Ashbery has established a relationship with the audience: he has engaged the audience and diminished a potential feeling of distance between the poet and the audience, opening a space where one feels welcome and part of a community. Ashbery's joke concerns himself, which makes him even more a man of flesh and blood, rather than an "unreachable" poet distant from the world and the audience. He is not untouched by time: "Old people always told me: 'Don't get old.' Unfortunately I did not pay attention." The joke has nothing to do with the poems that he is about to read from the chair on the stage, but it explains why Ashbery is sitting in a chair while he is reading. It takes one minute and 23 seconds from the time he sits down and gives his greetings to the person who introduced him until he starts reading. Ashbery spends the first 28 seconds on the joke, then 32 seconds where he does not say anything, flipping back and forth to find the pages with the poems that he is going to read. "I am going to read from this book," he says, and connects the print poems in the book with the poems he is about to read. Then after another 23 seconds, during which he explains the content and context of the book, he finally starts reading the first poem.

Most poetry readings have a prologue, an introductory paratext that is not part of the poem that is performed but which is nevertheless part of the poetry reading as an event (see Novak 2012, 376–377; Mønster, Rustad and Schmith 2022, 58–62). This paratext can be verbal or non-verbal. The example from Ashbery's reading above is both verbal (he talks to the audience) and non-verbal (he refers to the situation that he is sitting and includes this in the introduction). This chapter is not specifically dealing with prologues in poetry readings online, but it is worth noticing that those who published this reading on YouTube chose to include Ashbery's prologue. In digital poetry reading the inclusion of a prologue, or the absence of one, reflects a certain view of what a poetry reading is or could be, whether it should be cleaned of discourses other than the poet's reading of poems or include a mixture of discourses that feed the experience of the poetry reading. Moreover, just like most poetry readings that are performed on a stage, digital poetry readings

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1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FptzpDSV4Ow (5 December 2022).

also convey a desire to create an immediate contact between the events on the screen and those watching. The prologue might serve as part of a strategy of "immediacy," which creates a sense of authenticity. Here, immediacy is used in the tradition from Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin and denotes the strategy of remediation in which one tries to make the process of mediation invisible (or inaudible), as opposed to one of "hypermediacy" in which the processes of mediation are emphasized (Bolter and Grusin 1999). The latter also involves highlighting the (new) media's specific characteristics and, thus, defending both the newness of a medium and the remediation. Bolter and Grusin emphasize that the two logics are not counterparts and refer to what can be perceived as a paradox in Western (digital) culture: "Our culture wants both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them." (Bolter and Grusin 1999, 5)

Poetry reading is an aesthetic practice that has found its place in digital media, be it on separate websites, as podcasts or on social media such as YouTube and Instagram. It is an art form and a practice that has been remediated. Like other poetic practices, poetry reading travels in and between digital cultures where it exists in parallel with and in order to complement non-digital poetry readings, be it poetry read live from a stage or old recordings of poetry readings. It contributes in making poetry accessible in a different way than many other genres and practices that I have explored so far in this book. In addition, digital poetry reading is interesting because the digital situation changes how a poetry reading can look and sound. For instance, there is a difference between poetry readings on a publisher's website, poetry readings on podcasts and poetry readings on social media platforms, whether they are distributed as prerecorded readings or as live streams of an event. It goes without saying that both the number of poetry readings and the variety of such readings have increased dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic (2019–). They are all digital poetry readings, but they are different due to the poets' choice of style, the media of distribution and the way media are used. As I will discuss in what follows, these differences help to identify the significance of poetry readings and the functions they might have in the computational network environment.

Digital poetry reading

Poetry reading is a performance where poetry is read aloud. It could be the poet reading her own poetry, or it could be someone reading another person's poems. Poetry reading involves the voice and body of the one who reads, as well as the place where the reading takes place (Serup 2017; Mønster, Rustad and Schmidt

2022). Just like many other poetic practices, poetry reading has evolved. During the twentieth century, several paths in the development of the modern form of poetry reading can be identified. One is avant-garde experimentation in Europe and Russia from the 1910s. Another is the poetic development within the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s, with poets like Langston Hughes bringing poetry closer to other performative art forms and strengthening its commitment to political activism. A third is the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s, with Sonia Sanchez and Amiri Baraka as prominent poets. A fourth is marked by the changes to the poetic scene with the rise of the Beat Generation. Poets like Dylan Thomas, Gary Snyder, Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti were central figures in the development of modern poetry reading. These and other poets read more performatively, writing poems that came close to oral language and oral performance situations. We need only think of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's poem "Populist Manifesto" from 1975, in which Ferlinghetti juxtaposes a conservative and less performative kind of poetry reading with a modern, interactive and performative poetry reading: "We have seen the best minds of our generation / destroyed by boredom at poetry readings." (Ferlinghetti 2001, 17) With a recognizable reference to Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* (1956), the speaker appeals to fellow poets and asks them to perform. In the first stanza of the poem, it famously says: "Poets, come out of your closets." (Ferlinghetti 2001, 17)

Still, in the modern form of poetry reading we might distinguish between a more text-centered form of reading and a more performative form of reading (Mønster, Rustad and Schmidt 2022). The former is what Frederick C. Stern calls a formal poetry reading, which he explains as "poetry readings in which the emphasis by the poet is less on acting and displaying than it is on reading, that is, on the text as voiced, events to which the audience comes to see the poet and hear her/him read but at which it does not expect acting, spectacle, 'performance.'" (Stern 1991, 73) In a performative poetry reading, the poet includes her body to a greater extent, creating an event that is more than "just" a reading of poems. In this respect, the body is regarded as a significant conceptual dimension of the reading, reminiscent of how the body entered art and performances in the 1970s (Bernstein 1998, 168). The distinction between a text-centered and a performance-oriented reading is by no means definitive. Rather, the two should be positioned on either side of a continuum between which a poetry reading swings like a pendulum. For instance, even though it is fair to say that the Ashbery reading that I referred to in the introduction is primarily text-centered, Ashbery does engage his body by making a point that he will be reading in a sitting position. Further on, the fact that we can see Ashbery on the screen, strengthen the necessity of including his sitting position in the analysis of the performance. In a non-visual

poetry reading online, other voice-related aspects, which I will return to later, must be engaged in order to define a reading as performative.

The literary and artistic movements mentioned above revolutionized the form of poetry readings, transforming it from a genre subordinate to print poems into a self-governing art form. In other words, poetry reading was liberated from print and made into an independent poetic-performative event. On the one hand, this liberation of the poetry reading from print occurs more or less simultaneously with a change in the history of poetry, during which it partly developed in a more performative, gregarious style. On the other hand, modern poetry reading was accompanied by the expansion of sites where poetry could be performed, such as the Six Gallery in San Francisco and the Poetry Center in New York. These places made it possible for poetry reading to unfold and evolve. In short, there is, historically, an interdependence and synergy between new places, new forms of poetry reading and new forms of poetry.

It should not come as a surprise that a similar reciprocal interaction takes place between the invention of new digital media platforms and developments in poetry readings. Digital media technology both facilitates and helps to shape online poetry readings. Reading of poetry online is determined both by media-specific characteristics and by aesthetic and functional choices made by the poet or web curator. In this respect, poetry reading might involve at least five aspects: the poet, the poem, the audience, web curators and the media involved. These aspects interact with eachother and will most often be of relevance in a poetry reading, regardless of which media – digital or analog – it is performed in. The term "poet" comprises the poet's voice and body. Both are vehicles for the poem and are of semantic and aesthetic significance. How the poet uses her voice, how she reads and how she moves, stands, uses her arms etc. all matter in the poetry reading. Even though a curator is not present in the poetry reading, she is an important agent in the selection of poets (and perhaps poems) for the reading and in considerations concerning the number of poems to be read, the length of each reading and how the reading are presented and distributed online.

By "Audience", I mean the extent to which the poetry reading, whether live-streamed or recorded in the form of videos or sound clips, includes an audience that is present. In the example from Ashbery's reading, the video focuses on the poet but includes responses from the audience. We can hear the audience laughing, confirming that Ashbery's joke was well received. Further, the sound of an audience underlines the interaction between Ashbery's reading of his poems and the reaction from the audience, which, in turn, fuels Ashbery's reading. Or to put it more simply, if an audience had not been present, then Ashbery would probably not have told the joke. Moreover, without the sound of the audience, it would have been hard to tell whether he made a connection with the audience. Additionally,

the "audience" here includes how a media platform facilitates connections between readers and viewers through likes, comments and hashtags that customize, as José van Dijck and Thomas Poell write, "social networks and communities." (van Dijck and Poell 2013, 8)

Digital poetry reading as a poetic art form demonstrates the role of remediation for contemporary poetry in the computational network environment. In addition to refashioning and changing the art form, remediation of poetry readings proves that there is not a question of competition between old and new media or digital and non-digital poetry reading. Rather, the goal is to reach readers and viewers and to make poetry readings appear in different situations. Concerning remediation, Bolter and Grusin write:

> The goal is not to replace the earlier forms, to which the company may own the rights but rather to spread the content over as many markets as possible. Each of those forms takes part of its meaning from the other products in a process of honorific remediation and at the same time makes a tacit claim to offer an experience that the other forms cannot. Together these products constitute a hypermediated environment in which the repurposed content is available to all the senses at once, a kind of mock Gesamtkunstwerk. (Bolter and Grusin 1999, 68)

In this respect, remediation becomes a two-way movement, directed at once backward towards poetry reading in older media and forward towards poetry reading woven into the digital media environments. Rather than competition, it is a matter of availability, speadability and complementarity. A computational network environment might include a hypermediated environment. This is an environment in which digital poetry readings, in a substantial way, have increased in number, vary in forms and are more available – in terms of period, genre and language – than ever before.

In addition to describing poetry readings in terms of remediation and as an event of interaction between media through the two strategies of immediacy and hypermediacy, digital poetry reading can be grasped as a poetic and aesthetic practice that varies between imitating a physical poetry reading and intensifying the digital poetry reading as something different from non-digital poetry reading. N. Katherine Hayles introduces imitation and intensification as two complementary strategies involved in the transition of print literature into digital literature (Hayles 2008, 162). The two strategies can also be applied to literature in other genres that wander between media platforms. Imitation and intensification refer to how digital texts imitate media, material and literary conventions and simultaneously intensify media, material and literary properties that are specific to the texts in the digital environment in which they are included. Therefore, imitation and intensification refer to a play between continuation and deviation of conventions and affordances. Intensification of the affordances of certain media platforms for the production

and distribution of poetry readings, turns digital poetry readings into a media-specific practice. Still, digital poetry readings do not only differ from analog poetry readings. Because of the role played by media platforms, poetry readings will vary from one digital media platform to another and, consequently, might represent different functions and forms of aesthetic expression. Digital poetry readings will vary in degrees of imitation and intensification: it is always a result of an interplay of choices made by the poet, and sometimes a curator, and the possibilities offered by media technologies and the poem in question.

Digital poetry readings might be born digitally or digitalized, as in the example of Ashbery's reading. The obvious difference between non-digital poetry readings and digital poetry readings is that the latter is based on binary codes. As discussed in Chapter 2, Adalaide Morris highlights this crucial difference between poetry in digital and analog media: "What makes digital poetry different from poetry that takes place in the air or on the page is the coding used by the poet and / or her collaborator to prepare information for display on networked and programmable machines." (Morris 2006, 8) The digital or digitalization process inscribes poetry reading in the environment of programmable and network media. Accordingly, it becomes part of a different logic of distribution and a subject for algorithms. Mark B. Hansen recalls the role of algorithms when he points out the novelties of twenty-first-century media: "The principle governing the images' selection is not the aesthetics of the human audiovisual flux (as is the case with cinema and all previous audiovisual media) but rather the capacities embedded in the computational algorithms themselves." (Hansen 2010, 182) The selection process is partly transferred from human to machine. This means that for some of the social platforms for which poetry readings are produced to be distributed, the poetry readings are selected, organized and recommended for users by preprogrammed or self-learning algorithms. Thus, users can become acquainted with readings and types of readings that they would not otherwise see and hear. Furthermore, Hansen writes: "What does become interesting, however, is the way in which the work mediates for the human perceivers the technical logic of computational networks." (Hansen 2010, 183) Digital poetry readings are part of a network of electronically interconnected media such as computers, tablets and mobile phones. Moreover, poetry readings are not isolated online events but included in an ecology of other poetry readings as well as other types of aesthetic and non-aesthetic practices and texts. Therefore, the media ecology of poetry reading involves all the processes and actors involved in production, distribution and reception. These aspects of digital poetry reading come into play whether or not one consciously chooses to watch and listen to poetry reading online or one happens to come across a poetry reading recommended in a feed. I will not include the many contextual factors for digital poetry readings here; instead, I will

leave these factors in the background until I look at a small selection of poetry readings in Scandinavia later in this chapter. As we will see, the choice of media platform is significant for the type of digital poetry reading offered to viewers.

Close and hyper listening

In the computational network environment, videos and live streamed poetry readings flourish. Nevertheless, there are many monomodal poetry readings: they seem to represent an alternative to multimedia performances that are live streamed or recorded as videos. One example of such a poetry reading that only includes the poet's voice are podcast readings, a form of digital poetry reading reminiscent of readings played on the radio. These readings appear "purified". The only basic medium that is distributed and stored is sound. With the poet's voice as the only medium for the reading, the attention is amplified towards the voice, which alone is significant for the reading. In this respect, it is fair to call poetry readings on podcasts text-centered. They are stripped-down forms of poetry reading and connote a return to poetry reading precisely as poetry *reading*.

Podcast readings and other forms of poetry readings comprised solely by the sound of the poet's voice comes close to what Charles Bernstein calls "audio text". Audio texts contribute with "sound to meaning" and, according to Bernstein, make the audience aware of themselves as listeners (Bernstein 1998, 5). The fact that, in the age of digital media, there has been a turn towards intensifying and giving presence to the sound of the poem and the poet's voice can be read as a reaction to hypermedia and the dominance and possibilities of digital multimedia. It is a turn that is both liberal and conservative. On the one hand, digital media technology enables and simplifies the archiving and distribution of monomodal poetry readings. On the other hand, the prominent visual media culture finds its counterpart in the emphasis on poetry reading as a phonetic practice that facilitates contemplative close listening in an environment that cultivates a hyper-attention. Still, rather than "close reading" and "hyper reading," both developed by Hayles, it would be more accurate to approach the situation of podcast readings and the role of audio texts in the computational network environment from the standpoint of "close listening" and "hyper listening." "Close listening" is a concept developed by Bernstein. He writes that it is a method developed for the reading situation, where one deeply concentrates on listening to the audio text. Thus, Bernstein establishes an approach to poetry reading that embraces the entirety of the audible event, that is, the reading as a meaningful oral and audio performance: "Close listening may contradict 'reading' of poems that are based exclusively on the printed text and that ignore the poet's own performances, the

'total' sound of the work, and the relation of sound to semantics." (Bernstein 1998, 4) The "total sound of the work" implies that the reading exceeds the written poem and its semantic meaning and sensory qualities and involves how the poet uses her voice, including the speed of her reading (Bernstein 1998, 6). With the attention solely on the poet's voice and the conceptualization of poetry reading as an oral and audio performance, the concept of close listening stands in opposition to the situation of a multi-sensory poetry reading in which the reading includes both visual and aural qualities and in which the audience is both listening and viewing. Hence, it is a situation for poetry reading which is closer to but not identical with reading poetry live from a stage, one in which the attention of the audience is flexible and alternates between different information streams.

Of course, this does not mean that pure audio poetry readings are new. Gramophone recordings of recitations of poems have a long history. The online magazine PennSound and its archive, facilitated by Charles Bernstein among others, is only one out of many examples of websites that offer a huge collection of voice recordings from poetry readings in public or semi-public spaces. We need only think of BBC radio's "Poems for Thought," The Poetry Programme on the Irish radio station RTÉ Radio 1, which also includes Twitter,[2] "Tämän runon haluaisin kuulla" ("This is the poem I would like to hear"), a program that has been running on the Finnish national broadcaster YLE's Radio 1 since 1967, or in Norway, "Dagens dikt" ("Poem of today") on NRK radio. Podcast readings can be regarded as the remediation of this form of poetry reading on radio. As I will show in what follows, podcast readings are closer to an imitation of a poetry reading on radio than they are to an intensification of the poetry reading as a digital poetry reading. Using the Swedish website and online archive Podpoesi as an example, I will emphasize close listening. Here, it is the poet's voice that alone comprises the poetry reading and not her body performance (the way she moves, what she is wearing, etc.), the place where she reads or the audience and community.

Pod*reading* on Podpoesi

The Swedish website and archive Podpoesi is one example of how podcasts function as a digital platform for poetry reading.[3] The Swedish publisher Podpoesi Press, a small publishing house that mainly publishes new Swedish poetry in chapbook format, established Podpoesi in 2010. The website has a collection of

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2 https://twitter.com/PoetryProgRTE (5 December 2022).

3 www.podpoesi.nu.

poetry readings by more than 100 poets, mostly Swedish but also poets who have been translated into Swedish. Among those who are represented, we find such well-known and celebrated poets as Tua Forsström and Johan Jönson and Roman classics like Horace, as well as newer poetic voices like David Zimmerman and Iman Mohammed. In addition, there is a section with a collection of readings by Swedish newcomers. With the exception of the newcomers, the poets are represented on the website with a photograph and a link to their respective readings. The photographs are organized into four columns. However, the organization of the poetry reading does not seem to be of significance other than that the latest published readings are at the top of the page. In other words, the order of the photographs with links is not related to theme, style, genre, generation or other parameters. The length of the reading ranges from a few minutes to 10 minutes. They readings can also differ in style.

The Fenno-Swedish poet Tua Forsström is included with two poems. Forsström is a much-celebrated poet, the recipient of the Nordic Council Literature Prize in 1998 and the author of 12 collections of poems, of which *Anteckningar* (*Notes*) from 2018 is the latest. The poems that Forsström reads are titled with the Roman numerals "I" and "IV", are both are from *Anteckningar*. The two readings are fairly long at 8:53 and 4:44 minutes, respectively, and are suited to being heard on a digital device. The duration of the readings corresponds to what is common at live poetry readings at poetry festivals, usually lasting between 8 to 20 minutes.

Forsström reads slowly and thoughtfully, with a calm voice. Her pronunciation is clear, and she uses pauses to highlight certain words and phrases. In print, the poem "I" starts like this:

> Minns du ännu när du var ett barn
> och gick med oss samma väg dag efter dag?
> Det var en liten fors som brusade så
> starkt, och berget stupade i vattnet
> (Forsström 2018, 9)

Translated into English, this stanza reads:

> Do you still remember when you were a child
> and you walked with us, day by day, the same road?
> It was a little waterfall that roared
> so strong, and the crag dived into the water[4]

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4 My translation from Swedish to English.

In her reading, Forsström uses pauses in a way that differs from the enjambments in the print poem:

> Minns du | ännu när du var | ett barn | och gick med oss | samma väg | dag efter dag? ||
> Det var | en liten fors som brusade så starkt | och berget stupade i vattnet[5]

This is how Forsström typically reads her poem. It is a way of reading that fits well with the text- and voice-centered poetry reading that calls for a mode of close listening. Forsström's voice carries the poem and offers to the listeners a contemplative connection between them and the poet. She reads in a way that makes all other semiotic and aesthetic resources, including the body and place, superfluous. We are left with the sound of her voice and the images that her words evoke. Her reading is introverted, wherein her voice alone leads us into the words, sounds and rhythms of the poems and their meditative world(s). Forsström's way of reading correlates to her poems that are contemplative and apostrophic, calling upon a "you" that is absent. In the poem that I quoted above, the image of the crag, that plunges into the abyss, interrupts the innocence and harmonic event of the everyday activity of walking together along a road. This sequence demands a gentle and careful reading. A rough reading would be redundant and theatrical, and it would most likely have deafened the silence that occurs in the present, in the nowness of the poem, and that is strengthen by the awareness in the speaker's imagination of the crag that dived into water.

The silence from the absent you is further reinforced by the shift from present tense in the first line to the past tense in the rest of the poem, a shift that not only underscores that the speaker is looking back in time at something that has been and no longer is, but that a devastating change has occurred and left the speaker with this silence. The images evoked by the poem are dramatic, but the speaker's mourning is silent and, because of the absent you, meditative. In Forström's reading, the words do not need to be further reinforced. The memory of the little child, who roared like a little waterfall before it was interrupted, destroyed by the mountain that fell, is self-sufficient.

The tenderness in Forsström's reading underlines the meditative aspect and silent mourning embedded in the poem. As such, and somewhat boldly, we might say that Forsström's reading is appropriate for the podcast medium, which cultivates sound and voice and offers a pure and single modality for listeners to experience the physical properties of language.

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5 In accordance with quotation techniques for oral poetry, pauses between words or phrases are marked with the sign "|", not "/" as when quoting from print poems.

Other readings on Podpoesi differ from Forsström's way of reading. Anna Arvidsson, who is one of the poets who is presented as newcomer, reads the poem "Ikväll kramade jag min förövare" ("Tonight I hugged my perpetrator"). The reading is in style close to spoken word performances. She alternates in tempo and rhythm, between a soft, insecure voice and a more confident, performance-oriented voice, which, along with variations in tempo, intonation and voice inflections, presents the embodied experiences of the speaker.

The poem begins with the lines "Ikväll | kramade jag min förövare. | Vi skulle på konsert | och jag var der med en vänn som hadde en vänn som hadde en vänn och han skrek 'hej, fan, hvad lenge sen' och dom kramade honom och gjorde ryggdunkningen" ("Tonight | I hugged my perpetrator. | We were going to a concert | and I was there with a friend who had a friend who had a friend and he shouted 'hello, hell, how long ago' and they hugged him and did the back banging.")[6] Arvidsson starts by reading calmly and hesitates when she says the word "konsert" ("concert"), extending the sound "n." Meanwhile, in the more explicitly performative reading, in a spoken word style, there is the potential for the repetition and rhythm of the sequence of friends, "en vänn som hadde en vänn som hadde en vänn." This alternation in style and tempo structures the poem and Arvidsson's reading. Moreover, it underlines the paradox in the combination of "hugged" and "my perpetrator" and the relational structure in the poem between the speaker and her friend's friends. The speaker is not immediately part of this chain of connections, and, in the sequence of hugs, she becomes more and more marginalized.

Arvidsson's way of reading is reminiscent of slam poetry, a form of poetry reading that is close to the spoken word tradition and one in which the performance of the body is crucial for the experience of the reading. What is special about sound recordings, such as the poetry readings on Podpoesi, is that the body is not visually present but only present through the voice of the poet. Still, in some readings we can imagine the poet's body, whether we have seen it or not. This is due to the style of the poetry reading and the way the poet uses her voice. In fact, some parts of Arvidsson's reading evoke an intermedial dimension and the presence of a body. Through her voice, she makes a body present. Moreover, she even manages to give the body, which of course is not visually present, a function. It is as if we can perceive the poet's performative body, even though it is not part of the visual expression of the reading. The body works through the voice in a reciprocal interaction. The voice originates (obviously) from her body, but just as much as the body sets the voice in motion, the voice sets the body in

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6 My translation from Swedish to English.

motion to the extent that we can imagine the poet's body moving to the rhythm of the words.

Thus, Podpoesi is an example of a media platform that provides access to an archive. Further, it is a distribution channel and a platform for experiencing "pure" poetry readings, where this purity provides access to synesthetic experiences. Still, as the examples from Forsström and Arvidsson demonstrate, the poetry readings on Podpoesi are not uniform but include a number of different voices, forms, genres and traditions. Nevertheless, Podpoesi mainly contains poetry readings that are less dependent on the use of video, photography, dance or other forms of visual expressions.

Podcasts as a platform for distributing and experiencing poetry readings thus operate with aspects that imitate rather than intensify reading events in other media. Still, because the media platform is part of a network of other platforms, the readings are given a framework that also makes the experience different from the poetry reading that they imitate. In the written introduction to Arvidsson, for example, one can follow the link to her Facebook profile. Additionally, the reader can easily share a reading on other social media platforms through links such as "Share the poem on Facebook" and "Share the poem on Twitter." This implies that Podpoesi is part of a larger media-ecological collaboration with other media platforms for the distribution and experience of poetry readings. In other words, poetry reading on another website or on a different social media platform is just a keystroke, an electronic link, a hashtag or an algorithmic calculation away.

Poetry readings born on social media

While all the poetry readings on Podpoesi appear as formal and edited and with high quality sound, poetry readings on Instagram, for instance, often appear as if they are recorded spontaneously; indeed, many of the poetry readings are recorded without professional equipment. Again, we are dealing with a great variety of poetry readings on social media, which include both video recordings and live streams. Still, what interests me here is how some of the poetry readings on Instagram, both with regard to technical standards and aesthetic strategies, adapt to a social media culture. Social media culture constitutes notion of "liveness", adding immediacy and intensity to the rhetorical power of words (van Dijck and Poell 2013, 4) and giving an impression of immediate communication (Leaver et al. 2020, 9). Rather than trying to imitate a poetry reading on a stage, which would often be the case for poetry readings that are live streamed, many recorded poetry readings on platforms such as Instagram intensify the immediacy and the quotidian quality of the platform.

Many of the poetry readings that are published and distributed on Instagram were born on social media, that is, they are performed and recorded in order to be published on a social media platform. This does not imply that the video recordings would lose semiotic and aesthetic features if they were removed from their social media platform. Rather, to be born on social media implies that the aesthetic expressions of the video recordings are adapted to the culture of social media, that is, social media has put its mark on the recorded poetry readings.

One example of Scandinavian poetry readings on Instagram is to be found on the Danish Instagram profile Det lilla rum (The pink room). Det lilla rum, the name of which can be read as a comment on Virgina Woolf's novel *A Room of One's Own* (1929), is both a bookstore and a café in Copenhagen. In addition, it serves as an arena for publishing and distributing poetry readings on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. In their presentation on Facebook, they stress their feminist profile:

> DET LILLA RUM is a sustainable feminist book café, primarily run by volunteers and the love for literature. DET LILLA RUM was founded in the hope creating a free space, a liminal space, between many other busy spaces and everyday life, where you can enter and enjoy one of the many books from the bookshelf and drink an organic coffee / tea. A space where you can join in on various literary and creative happenings: events, poetry readings, presentations, talks and keep up with your own little reading club. A kind of literary salon and little literary breathing space. (see: https://www.facebook.com/detlillarum/)[7]

As a modern bookstore and café, Det lilla rum offers many activities that extend far beyond the concept of being a café, activities that encompass poetry, which once again emphasizes how poetry flows more or less seamlessly between different sites and media for its distribution. With readings of literature, including poems, novels and short stories, and with other literary activities on social media, Det lilla rum has established a variety of places for poetry and alternative means of communication outside of their physical location in Copenhagen. This demonstrates the media ecology of our contemporary world in which events and initiatives take place on several media platforms, digital and non-digital, more or less simultaneously. This is also the situation for poetry readings on social media,

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[7] "DET LILLA RUM er en bæredygtig feministisk bogcafé, der først og fremmest er drevet af frivillige kræfter og kærlighed til litteratur. DET LILLA RUM er skabt i håbet om at kunne skabe et frirum, et mellemrum, mellem mange andre hurtige rum og en travl hverdag, hvor man kan gå ind og nyde en af de mange bøger fra reolen og drikke en økologisk kaffe/te. Et rum, hvor man kan komme og være med til forskellige litterære og kreative arrangementer: events, digtoplæsninger, oplæg, talks og holde til med sin egen lille læseklub. En slags litteratursalon og et lille litterært åndehul." (My translation from Danish to English).

where the preconditions for connectivity, community building and confirmation are part of the logic of media, as defined by van Dijck and Poell (see Chapter 5).

During the Corona pandemic, Det lilla rum was like many cafés and cultural institutions forced to close temporarily. In this context, they established alternative digital arenas for literature and poetry. Det lilla rum created the Instagram service and hashtag #digtfix, where they published readings of poetry. The poetry readings are tagged with the poet's name, the title of the poem read and the topic of the poems, and they range from more topical and time-limited hashtags such as #coronalockdown and #stayhome to haghtags containing more general or political keywords such as #literature, #støtforfatteren (#supportauthors), #støtmikroforlagene (#supportmicropublishers) and, of course, their own hashtag #digtfix. The first poetry reading was published on 1 April 2020, featuring the Danish poet Tina Paludan who reads "Hvidvin" ("White Wine") from her collection of poetry *Skyskraber* (2018; *Skyscraper*).

Det lilla rum's #digtfix serves as a good example of the diversity of recorded poetry readings on Instagram. Their poetry readings are aesthetically and stylistically heterogeneous. There is no music accompanying the readings, but a dark monotonous sound is added to the readings and is played in the background, as a leitmotif, a coherence marker that is similar for all the readings, regardless of the poem that is read and the mood that the reading otherwise creates. The poetry readings are short, compared to the readings on Podpoesi and to what is usually the length of a poetry reading. On Podpoesi the length of reading runs between 5 to 10 minutes, whereas at a festival a poet's reading would as mentioned typically last between approximately 8 and 20 minutes. Most of the poetry readings on Det lilla rum are less than one minute, implying that the length of the reading is also adapted to the platform.

Reading Instagram readings

Many of the poetry readings on Det lilla rum's Instagram profile appear to be instantaneous. The technical standard is not high, many readings appear "amateurish", and the videos are obviously comprised of raw footage. One example of this type of reading is by Mette Moestrup, which is also distributed on YouTube and on Det lilla rum's Facebook page (see Fig. 13). For more than two decades, Moestrup has been one of the most important poets in Scandinavia. She has a strong voice and an intense and engaging presence, both in print and in her performances. She made her debut with *Tatoveringer* (*Tattoos*) in 1998, followed by *Golden Delicious* (2002), *Kingsize* (2006), the novel-collage *Demolished* (2009), *Dø, løgn, dø* (2012; *Die, Lie, Die*) and *Til den smukkeste* (2019, *To the Most Beautiful*). Her poems are at once immediately accessible and challenging. They are also performative, a dimension

that is strengthened in the poem by how Moestrup uses her voice and body in her performance-centered reading.

In the video on Det lilla rum, Moestrup reads Eileen Myles' poem "Peanut Butter" from the collection *Not Me* (1991), which was translated into Danish in 2017 by Moestrup herself and which in Danish is titled *Ikke mig*. There is no prologue. Neither is there any introduction to the collection of poems that Moestrup reads from. The information that is given in the comment field below the video includes a short presentation of Moestrup that is mixed with information about different activities on Det lilla rum.

Moestrup's reading begins immediately. She reads the title of the poem, "Peanut Butter" and then continues to read the poem in Danish. The camera angle is fixed during the reading. The upper part of the book is shown in the lower left corner of the video, while the video image is otherwise close to Moestrup's face, which is filmed halfway from below. She is standing somewhat restless, and her gaze changes between focusing on the book and the camera.

Fig. 13: The Danish poet Mette Moestrup reads at Det lilla rum's #digtfix.

Myles' poem is fairly long. It contains short lines, each one comprised of two to five words. In total, it consists of 139 lines. In the video, though, Moestrup only reads 49 of them. The video ends abruptly with the lines: "Tilfældigvis læste jeg alle Prousts værker. | Det var sommer. | Jeg var der, | det var han også" ("Accidentally I read all the works of Proust |It was summer | I was there | so was he"). The reading takes less than one minute. From a poetic perspective, there is no particular reason why the video stops where it does. In this sense, it seems accidental, leaving one with the feeling that the poetry reading is unfinished. Nevertheless, it is more likely that the length of the reading is determined by technological affordances and established conventions on Instagram. A video of nearly one minute is considered to be a long video on Instagram, but as a poetry reading one minute is not particularly long. Therefore,

based on the lack of convergence in conventions between Instagram videos and poetry readings, it seems fair to claim that Instagram's media constraints are given priority over the poem and the art form poetry reading.

Moestrup reads the poem by following her own breath, and she pays no attention to the many enjambments in the poem. For instance, she reads "Jeg er altid sulten, og har altid lyst til sex. | Sådan er det bare" ("I am always hungry and wanting to have sex. |This is a fact"). In the original, there are line breaks after "sulten", "sex" and "bare". Rather than marking the line breaks with a short pause at the end of the line, she pauses after "sex" and before "Sådan." Most of the time, her reading follows the punctuation. In a few places she hesitates or repeats a word, but this does not affect her reading, nor does she interrupt the recording in order to start over.

The reading is professional, but the video recording seems unprofessional. It gives the impression of being immediate, recorded in one take and without either a professional director or an editing process. Indeed, not even the reading appears to be well prepared but is rather instant. Still, with a few exceptions, because Moestrup is a well-trained reader and performer, the reading flows. It does not seem to matter that, in some places, she hesitates or unintentionally stops reading for a brief moment. The poetry reading has a rawness and immediacy to it. It is an event, and it becomes what it becomes in that situation, there and then, in that take.

A similar aesthetic for poetry readings on social media is partly visible in another reading on Det lilla rum. Nanna Storr, a young Danish poet who has thus far published three collections of poems, reads from her book *Spektakel* (2017; *Spectacle*).[8] The reading takes 46 seconds. Storr faces the camera; there is a background that seems to have been chosen randomly, giving the impression that she is reading from a private place – perhaps her apartment, perhaps her office. A cupboard and a door with a shelf with books on it are included in the camera frame. She reads the poem with variations in tone and with a rhythmic variation that also settles in her body.

Unlike the reading by Moestrup, which was recorded in one take, Storr's reading contains three takes that are stitched together in a way that does not hide the sutures. The first cut appears after 19 seconds. Something falls from a table in front of Storr, interrupting the reading. A new cut then appears after another two seconds. Moestrup's seemingly unedited reading and Storr's slightly edited reading both represent an aesthetic for social media in which the videos appear to be as sincere as possible, emphasizing the presence of media and the situation of the

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8 *Spektakel* is Storr's debut. She later published three more books of poems: *Mimosa* in 2018, *Lyngtarm (Ling gut)* in 2019 and *Bøgetid (Subatlantic)* in 2022.

poets as they read. Both recorded readings represent a kind of unfinished aesthetic (see Chapter 6) and the reading as a performance, giving the impression of a certain nowness. Moestrup's reading is unfinished in the sense that the video includes only one third of the poem before it is suddenly interrupted. Both Moestrup and Storr's reading reveal, in a sense, how they could have been different and how they likely will be different in another take. Further, these readings resonate with David Foster Wallace's trust in the return of sincerity in contemporary society, reflecting a more general tendency in the aesthetic of contemporary culture in which authenticity and sincerity are emphasized as cultural dominants (Kirby 2009; Bourriaud 2015). In Alan Kirby's concept of digimodernism, haphazardness and evanescence are two defining features (Kirby 2009, 155; see also Chapter 2). These recorded poetry readings both include unexpected events and appear to be made for the moment, the occasion and the media platform rather than being produced so as to be archived for eternity.

In contrast to these poetry readings that appear as if they were instant recordings, are those poets on Instagram who perform a formal and stylistic way of reading. These recordings tend to be of higher technical standards in terms of video image quality, camera framing, sound, light and cut. Maja Lee Langvad's reading on Det lilla rum's #digtfix is one of the readings that appears more planned, complete and finished. Langvad is another significant Danish poet, who since her debut in 2006 with *Find Holger Danske* (*Find Ogier the Dane*), has questioned identity, nationality and issues of language and translation. In 2019, Langvad published her most recent book, *Madalfabet* (*Food alphabet*) together with Kristina Nye Glaffey.

Langvad reads from the manuscript of the poetry book, *Tolk* (*Interpreter*), which at the time of the performance (28 April 2020) was still in the publication process. Langvad sits behind a desk. There is a bookshelf in the background. Her face is turned towards the camera. As with Moestrup and Storr, Langvad's gaze alternates between looking down at the manuscript that she holds in her hand and staring into the camera. The reading is structured according to the poem's logic. The poem alters between two subject positions, the "I" of the poem and a translator. While Langvad lends her voice to the "I," whereas there is silence when the translator speaks. "Jeg sier: Opp gjennom min oppvekst har jeg lært at amerikanerne var de gode og kommunisterne de onde (. . .)" ("I say: Throughout my childhood I have learned that the Americans were the good ones and the Communists the bad ones (. . .)." Then Langvad reads "min tolk sier" ("my translator says"). The sentence is followed by a silence of about 12 seconds. Langvad's gaze is also turned towards the manuscript in these parts of the reading, a gesture that denotes that she is reading the blank spaces on the paper. The phonetics correspond with the semantics. The absence of Langvad's voice represents the absence

of words in this part of the poem. Both the absence of sound in the reading and the absence of words in the printed poem coincide with the speaker's lack of understanding of what the translator says, as he translates from a language that she does not know. Langvad's reading of the lack of words is also a reading. It is not a pause or a break but an indexical sign, a trace of the absence of meaning for the speaker. Langvad uses her gaze performatively, as she looks down even when there are no words to read. In this respect, Langvad utilizes a dimension of the visual part of the reading. Obviously, this would not have been possible in a podcast or in other audiotexts.

The examples I have drawn from above demonstrate how Instagram, like other social media platforms, constitutes a culture of poetry readings that are heterogeneous and where media at least partly have an impact on the art form. At the same time, the videos of poetry readings show how these constitute an alternative to other digital poetry in terms of user participation and interactivity. The platform with the videos of the poetry readings does not give the listener an opportunity to pause or rewind. One can either watch and listen to the poetry reading as it is being played or stop the reading and start it all over again. On the one hand, this can be interpreted as a paradox in the computational network environment where digital media often offer a high degree of interactivity. Actually, many have discussed interactivity as one of the main defining features of digital media and its literature (Aarseth 1997; Manovich 2001; Rettberg 2019). Further on, according to Henry Jenkins among others, digital culture is a participatory culture in which one feels that one participates in what takes place on the screen (Jenkins 2019, 13–20). On the other hand, poetry reading is most often not an art form that invites participation from listeners. This will of course vary. For slam poetry, for instance, the participatory culture is a crucial part of the genre where the readings are fueled by the feedback loop from the audience (Mønster, Rustad and Schmidt 2022, 176–184). Still, for the type of digital poetry readings that I have looked at in this chapter, there is little, if any, interaction between the poet and the listener. Thus, Instagram seems to be a media platform that is well adapted to the traditional poetry reading, text-centered or performance-centered, the purpose of which is to conjure a contemplative state in the audience. This, together with the way the readings are presented and organized, can be said to be part of Instagram's media-specificity.

Nonetheless, other media-specific elements, such as likes, comments, regramming, archiving and hashtags, do invite some interactivity. Let us not forget, this interactivity might well establish or support an imagined community. On Det lilla rum's #digtfix, the number of likes varies between the poetry readings from about 30 to about 200 likes, though there are rarely any comments. "Likes" are traces left by other listeners and can thus create a sense of community. Likewise,

regramming establishes a form of participatory culture in which listeners feel that they contribute by sharing readings with others. In so doing, they feel that they are engaging in something that matters, an engagement that is included in Jenkins' participatory culture (Jenkins 2019). Still, it is interesting to observe the absence of comments, which might indicate that this kind of poetry reading barely constitutes communities.[9] Rather, the comment field is mainly used by the owners of the Instagram account to provide information about the poets in question. Additionally, the comment field includes information about other activities provided by Det lilla rum, such as the reopening of the café and cultural events that will take place off- and online after the prolonged closure following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Admittedly, the responses from viewers seem to concern Det lilla rum's initiative #digtfix in general, more than specific readings. The number of likes varies; still, there seem to be more likes for the first poetry readings that were posted, while recent ones seem to have fewer likes. I am confident that this reduction in the number of likes has little to do with the poetry readings in question. It is more likely that the higher number of likes in the beginning of the project expresses support for and appreciation of these kind of events in the digital media environment when societies were closed down.

Poetry reading on demand and archived

We are (most likely) still in the beginning of the digital area. Nonetheless, we can already recognize significant transformations in the concept and practices of archiving (see e.g. Røsaak 2010). Wolfgang Ernst identifies a shift in the function of archiving from traditional storage media to networked media. He writes that the twenty-first century

> will increasingly be an epoch that exceeds the archive. With data-streaming and network-based communication, the perspective shifts: the privileged status accorded in Western civilization to 'permanent' cultural values and tradition [. . .] is increasingly giving way to a dynamic exchange, a permanent transfer in the most literal sense. (Ernst 2010, 58; see also Hansen 2015, 41)

Ernst argues that with the intensification of networked media, we will experience a change in the practice of archives, from what he calls archives to anarchives.

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9 In the study *Digtoplæsning. Former og fællesskab* (2022; *Poetry Reading: Forms and Communities*), Louise Mønster, Michael Schmith and I provide a similar argument and show that this is different for poetry readings at physical bookshop cafés and slam poetry, where the communities have a strong presence (see Mønster, Rustad and Schmith 2022).

This shift can already be observed in poetry in the computational network environment and is exemplified by digital poetry reading. Rather than archives of poetry readings that support long-term storage, social media reflect contemporary dynamic processes where cultural expressions including digital poetry readings are distributed for short-term purposes. They are to be experienced in the here and now.

It seems obvious by now that Podpoesi follows strategies for performance and archiving that fit with a more traditional way of thinking about archives. Actually, Podpoesi appears, in every meaning of the word, as a digital archive for poetry reading. The poets represented are – or are about to be – canonized. Those poets who are not, are organized under the heading "debutanter" ("newcomers"), but they are still included. Therefore, even in its contemporariness, the archive is oriented towards a past, present and possible future canon. Furthermore, the poet reads in a way that does not challenge the traditional poetry reading. The readings are not tied to a specific time or place. Rather, they are suitable for any occasion beyond the current website for which they were made and are presented on. In addition, the organization of the poetry readings on Podpoesi reflects that the website functions both as site for poetry readings and as an archive. This does not apply to the same extent to social media platforms, where many poetry readings are organized according to popularity or the latest published readings, both of which make the videos appear at the top of the feed as the most "relevant".

The immediacy and short-term temporality of the readings on #digtfix do not only reflect the fact that they were events initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with Ernst, we might say that poetry reading on social media indicates "a shift of emphasis to real time or immediate storage processing, to fast feedback," which have replaced the traditional archive function (Ernst 2010, 67). Poetry reading appears immediately on the feed of social media platforms, where immediacy does not generate the feeling that the readings are stored somewhere in advance but that they take place more or less at the same time as you see and listen to them. They are part of what Jacob Lund has referred to more generally as a contemporary culture or as an aesthetics of the contemporary, a culture "on demand" (Lund 2016, 110). Poetry readings on social media reflect an "on demand" culture, in which the viewers can experience immediate access to a poetry reading, when they want and where they want. This experience challenges the distinction between the notion of something as archived from the past and the impression of a nowness and immediacy. As I have shown, the poetry readings on social media primarily reflect such immediacy in style. Several of the recordings seem to have been made by the poets themselves, as if they were in a private home with their private camera or mobile phone. In other words, the readings are more time-bound, more colored by the here and now in the time of the performance

than the archived recordings on Podpoesi, which serve as a traditional digital archive for poetry readings.

The argument made above does not indicate that social media platforms cannot function as archives. By entering a profile, say for instance Det lilla rum on Instagram, all the readings are of course stored and available. The point is rather that digital media alter our conception and practice of archiving. This alternation does not only concern social media but is also relevant for traditional websites. If, during the summer of 2022, one followed the link www.podpoesi.nu, one would have been met with the message that Podpoesi.nu has been closed down: "The project has been closed down and is no longer available for the public. We offer our gratitude to all the readers and listeners who visited us during these years. / the team behind podpoesi.nu"[10] In fact, this is the situation of much poetry in the computational network environment. Due to institutional structures, made for and adapted to poetry in a different era, poetry – and, in this case, poetry reading – in digital media is an event under constant threat of becoming homeless, of disappearing and of no longer being available for the public. The situation is well known for digital and electronic literature. Here, the number of archives is impressive. In this regard, the ELO collection, volumes 1–3, and ELMCIP are two out of several important places to go to discover old and new work.[11] Likewise, there is the invaluable restoration and reconstruction work done by a team of researchers at Electronic Literature Lab, led by Dene Grigar. They have pursued the aim of preserving and making available digitally born work.[12] Still, we must ask towards what end does one preserve and archive poetry in digital media? Archived in national libraries, one might assume that poetry is archived for as long as there is hardware and software available to run the poems. Alternatively, at a minimum, individual works including poetry readings should be available long enough to make sure that they are properly documented for the future. This is a goal, similar to the aim for the Electronic Literature Lab work. Grigar writes that her group's aim is not to secure individual works for eternity but rather until the works can "be properly documented for posterity." (Grigar 2021, 244) The diversity of poetry readings, as well as critical readings of and the variety of voices in the encounter with digital poetry reading, is threatened by shutdowns of archives. Even though Grigar's pragmatic argument is understandable, the question still remains who should decide when a work no longer should be available or when a work is properly documented for future generations.

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10 My translation from Swedish to English: "Projektet har avslutats och är inte längre tillgängligt för allmänheten. Vi tackar er alla som besökt oss under åren. /teamet bakom podpoesi.nu".

11 https://directory.eliterature.org/; https://elmcip.net/ (13 December 2022).

12 http://dtc-wsuv.org/wp/ell/author/denegrigar/ (5 December 2022).

Between imitation and intensification

In an early phase of digital media history, digital poetry readings were mainly digitalizations and remediations of poetry reading conducted in an analog media, i.e. digitalization of sound clips stored on a gramophone record or on tape. Today, poetry readings exist in a variety of formats and forms, and they travel across different media platforms.

As this chapter has shown, poetry reading can be regarded as an art form that differs in terms of imitation and intensification. Some digital poetry readings are close to poetry reading practices in analog media. These are poetry readings that only in modest ways utilize the opportunities provided by digital media to create new forms and practices of and contextual frameworks for poetry reading. They imitate more than they intensify and appear as less media-specific. Even in length, some types of poetry readings are closer to non-digital poetry readings, as if they insist on not being touched by the aesthetic and culture of digital media. Other digital poetry readings are adapted to the media technology and culture. This is the case for many poetry readings on Instagram, where the readings are video recordings that appear as if instantly recorded. They contribute to the development of new forms of poetry readings, that is, poetry readings that would not have even taken place if it had not been for social media and its culture. On the one hand, one can argue that the readings performed by Moestrup and Storr are exactly the kind of poetry readings that we would experience in a physical room, at a café or on a stage at a poetry festival. They are situated; the place and the atmosphere that surrounds the poets are included as part of the experience of the readings. Indeed, the place and the atmosphere will most often have an impact on a particular reading. The two readings, Moestrup, who reads with a few minor hesitations and Storr, who is interrupted by a sound in the room, could just as well have been events on a stage with an audience. They are authentic in the situation, there and then. On the other hand, both of the readings also differ from poetry readings in physical places. They are short in length. Moestrup's reading is not complete, or, to be more precise, the reading does not include the whole poem. Storr's video is vaguely edited, as if both the unfinished aesthetic and the sutures, as acts of hypermediacy, are part of the aesthetic of the digital poetry reading in social media.

Digital poetry reading on Instagram is in the process of finding its form, where it both imitates older forms of poetry reading and creates new aesthetic expressions through intensification. Differences in the play between imitation and intensification coincide in the examples that I have given, reflecting fundamental differences in the readings on web-based media platforms, such as Podpoesi, and on social media platforms, such as Det lilla rum's digtfix. In the

former, the platform appears as an archive and a place where one can closely and deeply listen to poetry readings. In the latter, one can listen to and see poetry readings on an app, give feedback and feel that one is part of the network and community of the respective project and that one is engaged in a poet's reading as if it takes place in the present. On Instagram, many of the readings reflect an aesthetic that implies that it could always have been different and where the mediation process is highlighted. Actually, the readings by Moestrup and Storr tell us that they are just two of many readings of the same poems, that they are two performances in the poems' ecologies.

Regarding prologues, we have entered a point where most of the material in this chapter coincides. Unlike what we saw with the video of Ashbery at Pioneer Works, neither of the two sites, the recorded readings on Det lilla rum and on Podpoesi, include a verbal prologue, which in most cases would have been part of poetry readings at physical locations. The lack of a prologue might reflect that there is no room or time for this kind of information in either of the two, or it could be that because paratextual information is provided on the websites or in the field for comments on Instagram, it would be redundant to repeat it in the actual performance. Furthermore, the material demonstrates that while YouTube serves mainly as a place for distribution, Instagram is also about connectivity, in addition to popularity and datafication, as claimed by van Dijck and Poell (see Chapter 5).

Moreover, while poetry readings from a stage in a physical room are unique performances, events that happen only once, digital poetry readings can, like other recordings, be archived for the future and thus be viewed and listened to repeatedly. With respect to the question of performance and archiving, there is a striking difference between the kind of reading conducted by Moestrup and Storr and the kind of reading presented on Podpoesi and represented by Langvad on Det lilla rum's Instagram profile. The unfinished and apparently unedited videos by Moestrup and Storr carry traces of their time, place and situation in a different way than Langvad and the readings on Podpoesi. Langvad's reading is similar to Podpoesi in the sense that it reflects a finished aesthetics. The readings on Podpoesi are taken out of time and place, and the situation of the reading is played down as if they are recordings for eternity. They appear more timeless and placeless than Moestrup and Storr's videos, where the place for the recordings and the site for distribution are of significance for the experience of the readings. The place where Langvad situates herself is also significant, but her surroundings are more formal. Therefore, the place along with the finished aesthetics seem to reflect that her reading is recorded for a more stable archive and can be reused in the future in almost any situation.

These differences between unfinished and finished, contextualized and non-contextualized readings, readings that are situated and readings that are abstracted from their original situation and location can be regarded as results of a poetics of poetry reading, as they are choices made by the poets themselves, a curator and/or a director. In addition, these changes reflect the notion of archives in the computational network environment.