



Excursion among the Countries, Documentary, and Essay: Layered Narratives and Self-Representation in *A Dog Called Money*

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Abstract

The film elements, especially in documentary or essay films, carry the director's point of view more prominently. *A Dog Called Money* (2019) is a film with essayistic and documentary features by photographer Seamus Murphy about the creation process of English musician PJ Harvey's album, *The Hope Six Demolition Project*. The film focuses on the artists' journey in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Washington, DC, and the album's production process, which takes place in a live museum exhibition. Murphy uses visual narrative, while Harvey takes on the textual and auditory narrator role with voice-over, text, and music. Therefore, this study analyses the textual and audio-visual features of the documentary film that reflect the self-representation of both artists. The representation form created by the multiple narrators that the film's narrative varies between the essay and the documentary genre is interpreted in the context of image, sound, and text..

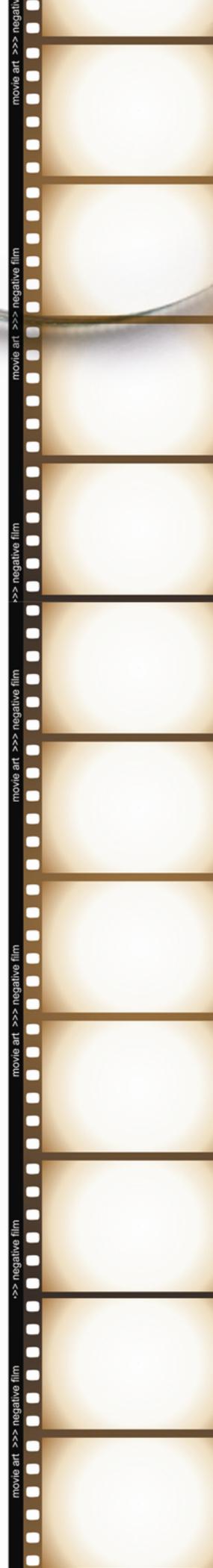
Keywords: documentary; essayistic excursion; narration; *A Dog Called Money*; self-representation



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Excursion among the Countries, Documentary, and Essay: Layered Narratives and Self-Representation in *A Dog Called Money*

Özgür Çalışkan

Introduction

Seamus Murphy, the director of *A Dog Called Money* [ADCM] (2019), is a photographer and recipient of seven World Press Photo awards. Polly Jean Harvey (PJ Harvey) is an English musician known in the indie music scene since the early 1990s; she won various awards in her 30-year career due to her constantly changing artistic style. *ADCM* is about the travels of these two artists through Kosovo, the USA, and Afghanistan. The film also includes the recording process in front of an audience as an exhibition of PJ Harvey's songs influenced by these trips. As a result, the film captures, with the help of Murphy's camera, the conception, writing, production, and recording process of PJ Harvey's music album, *The Hope Six Demolition Project* (2016). Thus, the film highlights the coming together of two artists, representing themselves in their artistic fields and interacting with a medium outside their areas. For this reason, the film creates a narrative structure and staging by bringing together different media. In particular, Murphy's camera reflects its documentary features, while Harvey's music, lyrics, creation, and recording process are more essayistic. Therefore, in this article, visual, auditory, and verbal expressions are examined within the scope of the characteristics of the essay film genre, in the context of the artists' self-representations.

The film is multi-narrated because the artists come from different visual, auditory, and literary fields and because the resulting work combines these three areas. The film takes on a multi-surface essay film nature with the addition of the excursion element that works in the background of the film narrative. The multiple structures also contain different messages about how both artists,

especially PJ Harvey, the film's subject, transformed what they experienced during the excursion into an art form. Therefore, to understand how artists create a representation by combining different mediums, it may be more helpful to look at the film from the middle of a triangle, related to the concepts of essayistic documentary film, sound/words, and self-representation in cinema.

Reflectivity Through Different Narratives

A work of art is not independent of the culture, time, and place in which it is produced. Most importantly, it bears the traces of the owner of the work. The artist can direct these traces as they wish. On the one hand, although the artist sometimes does not want to create a context related to the artifact, this is directly or indirectly associated with that work because it emanates from the creator, who is situated in time and space in a given circumstance. On the other hand, the first thing that the viewer encounters is not the artist but the artwork; therefore, the meaning that the viewer derives from the artwork is more important for the representation, even if this representation is about the work or the artist. In representational works of art, meaning combines what is assumed and what is gained (Barnett, 2008, p. 44). If, as Barnett suggests, meaning is a combination of the assumed and the acquired, then *ADCM* can be thought of as the assumption that Harvey and Murphy might meet on their travels, the film itself, and Harvey's album as the acquisition of these travels. The artists acquire this meaning.

On the other hand, when the film is considered, the meaning gained by the audience changes according to their assumptions. Each viewer's thoughts about the artifact and the artist's production process are also subjective. In the subjectivity phase, the subject is fragmented within the medium, and if the subject is the artist, a transition occurs between the private and public worlds, encompassing both the self and splitting between 'image-sound, subject-object, past-

present' (Pucill, 2015, pp. 84–85). In *ADCM*, it is especially Harvey as the visible subject and the artist herself who is fragmented within the medium because Harvey is present in the image, she exists as a voice, she finds himself as a subject within the object of the film, and she transmits the experience of the present from her artistic past.

Thumim (2012, p. 6) uses the term 'self-representation' to distinguish between conscious and mediated representations of selves found in media types, and she states that the main difference in the media where this situation is found is that when self-representation is produced, it turns into a text with the potential for participation. Stating that self-representation includes general conventions and focal elements such as ordinary people, experience, personal history, journey, inner worlds, and emotions, Thumim (2012, pp. 163-167) emphasizes that it can be useful when looking at self-representation with a tacit understanding. Murphy and Harvey's purpose in the film can be considered as an attempt to transfer the experiential representations of their selves to the audience and to create a text describing an experiential journey of both inner and outer worlds in which they can participate as witnesses. In addition, Dobson (2015, p. 9) argues that text and images represent oneself through the media, which may require a higher degree of self-consciousness and reflectivity than the traditional face-to-face presentation of the self. For the artist, the media points to a different form; with this form, the artist reflects their consciousness. Representation analysis has been the foundation of qualitative visual and popular culture approaches from Barthes to Hall (Gardner, 2016, p. 69). Further, representation in the field of art is open to interpretation. It is usually on the side of the beholder and rarely on the side of the seen (Phelan, 1993, p. 26). Where representation occurs, the work of art is connected to the outside world, creating a mutually introverted relationship between the artist and the viewer (Morawski, 1974, p. 38). However, it should be noted that something being an artwork and being a representation are different things: the state of being a representation is someone's intentional

activity and may not necessarily require the activity of doing it (Currie, 2010, p. 5). In some cases, it can be both intentional and an act. In this context, *ADCM* is both a work of art and a representation of Murphy and especially of Harvey because from the beginning to the end of the film, even the journey with its preliminaries, considering that it is a documentary, the production of Harvey, the recording of the album, and even the voice-overs all point to a deliberate production process. On the other hand, it is not possible to talk directly about an act and staging, except perhaps Harvey's voice-overs. Obviously, the film has gone through a process of editing, but the majority of the images reflect the immediate experience and what is lived, which is why the artists do not step outside their own identities. Gregory Currie (2010, p. 19) suggests that further progress could be made by considering any photograph, image, or film to represent something different according to its origin or use. In order to make sense of the form, meaning, and perception of the representation, the reflexive content of the examined object can be observed. Therefore, the real journey witnessed in the *ADCM*, but fictionalized in front of the camera, and the ways in which both artists represent themselves; one through the film, the other through the lyrics and music; change and layer to form different representations.

In the artifact, the reflexivity between the artist, the work, and the audience can provide information about whether the artists represent themselves and, if so, under what conditions. This self-representation can be termed with the concept of reflexivity as a type that may include mental states that depict the representing subject itself, and in reflexivity, every depiction belonging to the representing system is an instance of self-representation (Pöhlmann, 2017, p. 30). In line with this idea, Harvey and Murphy's self-representations are filtered across the three countries. The artists represent themselves in the film, but these self-representations are constructed during their travels in Kosovo, Afghanistan, and the United States. In addition to these representations, as a director,

Murphy can represent himself through the film, while Harvey is represented through his music. Therefore, Harvey and Murphy gain self-representation through the reflexivity and depiction of their situation.

In addition, a self-reflexive approach to representation includes concepts such as 'imageability, (in)visibility, traceability, and indicability' (Avezzu and Fidotta, 2019, p. 102). In the context of these concepts, the representation's form and how it is formed in terms of self-reflection can be understood. Moreover, for a representation to be called self-representation, it can be assumed that what concerns the person representing is intuitively meaningful (Pöhlmann, 2017, p. 34). In this context, *ADCM*, while fulfilling the notions of imageability and indicability related to artist self-representation, is unified by a point of interest that gives meaning to these notions and whose realization seems meaningful to the artists from the very beginning. Therefore, it is essential to understand the form of self-representation, what to examine, how it takes place, and what the object is. Here is where the relationship between cinema and representation converges. This is because people, things, events, situations, and processes that make up the stories are represented through narratives (Currie, 2010, p. 27). The narrative is an indispensable element of almost all forms of art, especially literature, and cinema, is considered; the fact that there are visual, auditory, and literary narratives diversifies the subject of representation and self-representation. In addition, since there are different narrative elements in cinema, the narrative structure is essential, like all forms of cinematic representation, whether documentary or drama, are constructions (Birtwistle, 2017, p. 176). Thus, by examining these constructions, the type of representation can be further distinguished. Regarding cinematic narrative and artist representation, *ADCM* stands at the midpoint of fiction and documentary film and creates a layered form of representation and narrative, especially by adding Harvey's voice-overs with essayistic film features. It is due to these characteristics that an approach to essay film is also necessary for

a better understanding of this situation because the essay film emerges right in the middle of this diversity of narrative, construction, reflexivity, and representation.

Barnett (2008, p. 37) states that due to the success of the window used by the film screen, the same audio-visual spectrum-like experience is shared, the language and culture related to the film are realized, and finally, cinematic grammar is encountered. The use of film grammar differs depending on the genre of the film. While traditional cinema uses a resembling grammar, the avant-garde and experimental cinema, on which the essay film is usually based, is not suited to a particular grammar due to its nature. In this context, it may be necessary to interpret film grammar in other ways to understand such films. Lebow (2012, pp. 2-3) uses film grammar especially to understand first-person films, emphasizing that such films may be singular or plural in structure, and when talking about the subject, as in language, they will include the self and their surroundings that affect the self. Therefore, such films may be about a neighborhood, community, phenomenon, event, or journey, not necessarily about the director (Lebow, 2012, p. 1). For this reason, although Murphy is the director of *ADCM*, Harvey's essayistic contribution and the film itself belong to both artists narratively. In this context, the film should be defined as a first-person essayistic excursion film.

Between Essay and Documentary Representation

The essayist style of the film is hybrid and fragmented; therefore, it tends to combine representational styles and strategies in fiction, documentary, and avant-garde films (Montero, 2012, p. 26). It loses functionality if an avant-garde work reproduces the dominant ideological positions of meaning, truth, beauty, pleasure, gaze, or representation (Gidal, 2015, p. 22). For this reason, the essay film and the movements it inspires are more prone to using different grammar

due to the difference in the subjects they have acquired. In early examples of experimental films, such as features blending fact and fiction, a comparison of art and documentary film forms, highlighting the personal or subjective aspects, public life, and dramatic tension between auditory and visual discourses are observed (Alter and Corrigan, 2017, p. 3). Further, experimental films push the boundaries of representation, prioritizing aesthetic and formal pursuits, and do not conform to the conventions of linear narrative practices (Kerner, 2011, p. 243). Although cinema has developed as a realistic art capable of creating representational clarity of the world as it is, experimental cinema has drawn the representation of reality towards sensations, textures, and surfaces (Knowles, 2020, pp. 47–54). The essay film is closest to the experimental film in this respect.

The relationship between reflexivity and representation becomes even more vital in an essay film. Because the process of reflection in essay films is expressed through images, reflection, and representation, they work together (Montero, 2012, p. 61). An essay film problematizes modulation and representation categories by positioning itself in a separate but related place with other film genres (Alter, 2018, p. 6). Significantly, Burch argues that reflexivity forms the center of the essay film, as the subject is a form that underlies the intellectual structure (as cited in Canet, 2019, p. 39). While subjectivity and reflexivity help to distinguish the essay film from other non-fictional genres, answers are sought for questions about how the subjectivity is fully expressed; issues such as audience appeal, self-reflective focus on images, critique status, and the role of dialogue and exchange can assist in finding answers (Montero, 2012, p. 21). In addition, the author's own writing can make the artist an object of self-reflective research in essay films (Sayad, 2010, pp. 135–136). However, some critical questions about the essay film are whether it is beyond verbal language. Whether subjective-reflective discourse can be formulated in words alone? What role does the montage play in movies? Whether visual criticism can only be made with the use of

images? (Montero, 2012, p. 39). However, essayistic experimentation includes form and ideas developed by image, sound, word, or combination (Papazian and Eades, 2016, p. 4). For this reason, this study tries to understand the importance of verbal language and music, sound, and image for the genre and its relationship with self-representation.

The essay often uses artistic languages such as painting, photography, and music to connect images, discourse, and representational styles (Montero, 2012, p. 133). Alter (2018, p. 26) emphasizes that dealing with the acoustic dimensions of the essay film can open new layers of meaning for the perception of the part outside the text and the image and that sound and non-diegetic acoustics have an essential function in some cases, by serving more functions than visual representation. The use of voice-over, music, visual effects and images in the essay film expands the scope of the form, transforms the genre itself, and draws the audience into this transformation (Montero, 2012, p. 44). Notably, the superimposed layers of essayistic signification consist of images and sounds of varying quality and status (Rascaroli, 2016, p. 303). Thus, the essay film encourages free play between the poles of representation without purporting to produce fact or fiction (Alter, 2018, p. 100). Corrigan (2016, p. 15) states that essay films are theoretical organizational structures, and through assimilation, the structure and perspective of the essay replace other representational organizations. Due to its malleable form, the essay film adapts to new environments, contexts, and aspects of challenges of seeing and understanding by denaturalizing events, representations, and problems in the context of its genre (Alter, 2018, p. 13). Significantly, essays are ideologically validated through first-person discourse as they are 'assimilated, accentuated, appropriated, and represented' to the audience (Montero, 2012, p. 47). The emphasis, assimilation, and representation in *ADCM* result from the collaborated excursion of Harvey and Murphy.

Corrigan (2011, p. 112) adds cinematic excursions as a category to essay films and states that these films are more incoherent than travelogues or journey films; they do not have a stable narrator, they concentrate on the movement rather than the final destination and alter and destabilize the traveling subject. In some cases, excursive travellers' experience 'physical, linguistic and emotional stress' due to excursion, and as a subject, they may turn into a broken body (Corrigan, 2011, p. 120). In Corrigan's (2011, p. 121) examples, he highlights empty spaces, unnecessary streets, unsettling borders, inhumane deserts, forests, fragile surfaces, complex labyrinths, and alien areas; this situation pushes the traveller to think constantly and helps them to reach a scaffolding where they can rethink themselves as a subject at the end of the journey. In this case, it is possible to call Harvey and Murphy excursive essayists regarding places visited, home returned to, and feelings felt.

Experiencing Excursion with Music

The relationship between music and cinema is highlighted in silent cinema; silent films are staged with live music. While the written texts in silent films constitute a literary dimension, the narrative of silent films becomes auditory with classical music. As cinema developed over time, the role of music increased. Music was generally seen as a 'subordinate element' to film genres, and although the film music literature had an inevitable accumulation over time, it tended to emphasize the visual over the musical (Goldmark et al., 2007, p. 2). On the other hand, considering the film *ADCM*, it is possible to say that music is the main element, as it focuses on Harvey's music production phase. In this context, the music in the film is both the main element and the focus of the narrative. Therefore, the reflections of music in a film are essential for the artist's representation. For this reason, looking at the effect of the music heard in the movie is beneficial in examining it. Goldmark et al. (2007, pp. 6-7) propose three categories for the representation of

film music: the first is the meaning of the music in the film, which encompasses social position, discourse construction, as well as the intertext between 'performance, tradition, allusion, citation, and history'; secondly, to approach it as an object of interpretation in the representation of music is to think of it as an essential agency rather than its functionality, by considering it as an active force in the established world; thirdly, music is a representation of itself, as music is not an action in a movie, it is a sense of hearing, and so it gains identity by representing itself through cinematic-imagery-dramatic context path and inner difference.

Gorbman (1987, pp. 13-14) emphasizes that music is constantly struggling with narrative representation in an aesthetic and existential context, and although it has its internal logic, it is related to the visible. Considering that every film genre has its narrative, whether it is fiction, a documentary, or an essay film, it can be said that the music used in the film is an element that supports the narrative structure. However, music is an element that does more than just support, even in the musical genre of fiction or in nonfiction films that focus on music. Rogers (2015, pp. 1-3) points out that while questioning the role of music in a world where images beyond the camera are presented as real, questions about 'authenticity, authorship, audibility, and reception' come to the fore; furthermore, Rogers argues that music has become an attractive medium for many nonfiction filmmakers in terms of emotions, historical references, and rhythmic persuasion. There are also fictional moments in a nonfiction narrative that involve creative intervention related to the representation of the world of the film; those moments involve character building, poetic language, and the use of music (Renov, 1993, p. 2). In addition, for nonfiction films, the music generally resonates with what is spoken in audio commentary and dialogue (Nichols, 1991, p. 22). Music can hold everything together, tell the story, guide the audience, and help transform the visual representation into a personal vision (Rogers, 2015, p. 9). Since music is an essential element of

aestheticization, it can accommodate ideas between aesthetics and knowledge in genres such as documentary (Corner, 2015, p. 123). The first of the two approaches to music and its meaning is the material realization of the social forces attributed to the text and the subject read, while the second is the view that the text is rewritten in action; therefore, music is criticized for its stance that either affirms or opposes the dominant ideology (Dibben, 1999, p. 331).

Everything is Staged

ADCM begins with a boy looking through the car window at the camera inside the car. The second scene is PJ Harvey's voice heard over the image of an abandoned cinema in Kabul. Harvey conveys the information she heard: 'I've heard twenty years ago, you could pay to get into the cinema with bullets.' The following images are preparations for the screening in a movie theatre in Kabul. Then we hear the words of PJ Harvey's acapella song called *The Orange Monkey*¹ in her voice. Harvey's words are supported by footage of air travel.

From the beginning, Harvey says that she will be telling her journey and the reason for this journey, representing herself with her art form. Afterward, the audience is informed about what the film will narrate by referring to the textual information about the film.² This information indicates that the film is a joint work of the two artists; it also emphasizes that Harvey will represent herself as a musician, and Murphy is presented as a photojournalist. This information can also mean witnessing what will be shown, said, heard and how this reality affects the artists' representation. First of all, it should be noted that the film does not have a linear or chronological narrative structure. For example, in the first travel footage, although the place shown is named after Harvey's voice, as the film progresses, places can only be understood by the viewers' perceptions of the visual representation in the visible. This situation occurred as a result of Murphy's choice during editing. Murphy, behind the camera, and Harvey, in front of it, may have thought of representing

themselves with the characteristics of the spaces they are in, or maybe the viewer decides the relationship of these self-representation situations with the space.

Considering that the work is an excursion film set in different geographies, it is inevitable for Murphy and Harvey to have different and layered forms of representation. Murphy more openly reveals his camera, his representative tool. In Kosovo and Washington DC. Murphy's camera is a more visible tool for people and places viewed; in Afghanistan, Murphy is more discreet, showing snapshots from afar or pointing his camera at Harvey. On the other hand, Harvey shapes her visibility differently in all three spaces. Due to the cultural environment, Harvey has created her physical representation with different outfits and appearances, especially in her outdoor images in Afghanistan. Harvey's first images in Afghanistan confirm this representation. As Harvey walks down a crowded street in Kabul, the camera follows her. What appears in the film is a person wearing a black coat, hooded, and holding a notepad; her face is mostly covered, and she walks briskly down the street. Only when the viewers hear Harvey's voice-over,³ they understand that it is Harvey's representation that is visible in the camera.

Since the film also shows the production process of PJ Harvey's album *The Hope Six Demolition Project*, the film's fourth place is the Somerset House in London, where the album recording process is exhibited live. After the Afghanistan image, the film provides written information about this process.⁴ Together with this information, the preparations of Harvey's studio appear. Harvey opens up where she will represent herself as an artist, both as an exhibition and for Murphy's camera. Although Murphy's artistic stance as director remains the same throughout the film, Harvey's stance constantly moves between narrative, sound, and imagery. Harvey, invisible in the film world, is the most obvious to the viewer. The artist's representation of Harvey, which makes itself evident only by being introduced to people in the places that Harvey

visits, is mainly known by the audience. A representation is constructed between invisibility and visibility.

The next stop is Kosovo; its images appear with Harvey's testimony and voice while she is seen in a cemetery as she talks about the 1998–1999 war, the dead, and the missing, accompanied by images of abandoned places. Then she tells the story of Zagorka, a woman who lived through the war. As Zagorka walks in with keys in hand, Harvey states that those keys belong to the house of those who left and relates what Zagorka said to her. Later, in the studio, Harvey is seen singing *Chain of Keys*.⁵ While Harvey's song tells the story, the equivalent of self-representation is experienced. Harvey's journey as an artist and how this story affected her afterward are presented. With this situation, the film's direction shifts towards an utterly open scene of self-representation of Harvey as an artist. Harvey begins to take on different representations as a traveler, a listener, a witness, a narrator, and an artist. These different representations also stratify the film stylistically. As a traveling artist, the footage of Harvey rummaging through an abandoned house in Kosovo provides information about where she represents herself, in parallel with the camera in the car the boy was looking at at the beginning of the film. Harvey's voice says: 'A handmade, rotting wooden ladder, a corn store, these were country people. And I'm stepping on their things in my expensive leather sandals... All that's left from the looting strewn in the floor's dust. With these words, Harvey makes sense that she knows what she stands for, who she is, where she is, and for what she is there. By emphasizing her expensive sandals, Harvey first states that she is a visitor and that she does not belong to the time and space she has entered. By interpreting her image and situation with her voice, perhaps even criticizing it, she tries to explain to the viewer through narrative representation the manipulation that may arise for the viewer and be perceived as fiction. In a time-space relationship where everything is staged, she emphasizes that she is aware of this staging by using the essayistic feature, which is dominant throughout the film.

Narrations Engaged

The first fictional connection between the places visited is experienced in the transition from Kosovo to Washington. The sound of a helicopter is heard as Harvey wanders through the garden of a house in Kosovo; it connects to Harvey, who is looking at it. The following image shows the helicopter hovering over Washington skies. The artist, who makes herself almost invisible in Afghanistan, appears in her daily outfit in Kosovo, to which she adds a hat in Washington. Harvey seems to have changed her physical self-representation according to the places she has been as an artist: almost unnoticeable representation in Afghanistan, presents a more comfortable representation in Kosovo, while in Washington, she prefers the hat because she is a more recognizable person there.

Harvey's voice is heard along with images of the White House and Washington Monument, Harvey's voice is heard: 'There is a huge, white building, so huge it makes tiny the people who raise their eyes to look up at it; 100 flags are flying, 90 tourist cameras popping, 20 buses busing, and a white giant finger pointing straight up. God, it says, God, look how you have made us.' Unlike Kosovo and Afghanistan, people encountered in Washington are seen talking to the camera, especially the Black people from the south of the Anacostia River, which divides Washington, and the characters narrated by Harvey's voice.

Harvey introduces the person who runs the neighborhood, Paun (Paunie); (s)he throws dice for dollars. Harvey talks about Paun's dog, Money, which inspired the film's title. The film shows Black teens rapping/singing in the rundown neighborhood while Harvey continues to narrate her thoughts. Harvey represents herself as a narrator; by appearing even behind the scene in some images, leaving the image but narrating what is visible, she strengthens her representation as a narrator. As in Zagorka's example, the camera turns to the studio to show the creation process of

the song *A Dog Called Money*.⁶ Although Murphy does not leave his representation of the viewer behind the camera, Harvey is in and out of her representation of a musician. In Afghanistan, Harvey plays music with traditional instruments and chats with people in a shop with musicians and tailors. Afterward, Harvey listens to traditional music in a male-only environment, and the image shows the blimp that frequently appears in the Afghanistan scenes of the film. Harvey makes sense of this image with these words: 'A Tajik man sings his soul at the end of Stonecutter Street. The blimp takes it all in, beams it back to grand control in Washington, DC.'

Although not included in the album, the song *Homo Sappy Blues* is next heard in the studio while the village of Istalif in Afghanistan is seen. Harvey reflects the images of children among the ruins of stone houses: 'Ruins, the same shape as gravestones. Who lived here? When did they leave?' Children are sitting in a house, and they look at Murphy's camera and Harvey with modesty. Harvey performs the scene as the children serve their guests' hot drinks: 'The children look into the camera with no affectation. We sit in silence, smile, stare, shy, curious. Us and them. I hope we know when to leave.' At this point, it can be mentioned that Harvey and Murphy reflect two different forms of self-representation. On the one hand, they are the children's guests in the recorded reality; on the other, they are the artists in the film's narrative. It can be deduced from Harvey's words that both artists are aware of this dual self-representation. Harvey describes herself and Murphy as guests, hoping she knows when they will leave. While voicing this text, she uses artistic self-representation.

As Harvey continues to voice her feelings and thoughts, a remote image of Kabul appears with the Azan sound. Harvey says: 'The light is almost gone; five separate calls to prayer sang across the ravine. A few lights came on, the singing intertwined, joined for a second, harmonious, then spun off into discord. I felt my soul open to the singing. Way below, looking south, the lights of the airbase, huge and sprawling. Could be any Western city.'

When returning to the studio from the Afghanistan footage, the recording of the song *I'll be Waiting*⁷ is visualized with close-up shots of Harvey and the audience who came to watch the exhibition. The lyrics in the song convey the previous images to the installation and its audience through the music. Harvey's guest representation in Afghanistan evolved into the film's narrator, a musician, and an exhibition object. Unlike all these representations, the song's lyrics seem to be sung from a child's perspective in Afghanistan.

As with any art form, Harvey tells a story using her art. The story she tells represents what she experienced on the journey, and she uses herself as a means of representation. In contrast, following the lyrics and music of the song, Murphy shows Harvey, those who watch the exhibition, and eventually, the visuals formed in his thinking through the moving human portraits he took on the journey. Harvey's self-representation thoughts turn into sound with melody and lyrics, and Murphy's self-representation finds its place in the sequence of images.

After Murphy turns his camera on Kabul's daily life, Harvey comments on what happened: 'So many in such a small space. All just getting on with it, going about their business. And the call to prayer spreads out its arms across old city.' As the film's visual narrative increases, Harvey's songs also change. The song *The Ministry of Social Affairs*⁸ has a purely visual narrative. Harvey first makes technical comments about her musician identity, and then the images of Afghanistan are reflected on the screen with the song. The images show American soldiers, mostly males, in public space, children, tanks, planes, airbase, animals, and the blimp. Music forms the basis of the narrative in this section. Harvey likens the saxophone to the sound of screaming children in the studio.

With the River Anacostia footage, Harvey highlights the difference in prosperousness between the east and west of the river, highlighting the trip with Paul Schwartzman of the

Washington Post. Then Harvey gives information: 'I heard there's no metro in Georgetown 'cause they don't want Blacks to reach their neighborhood, the other side of the river.' The song *River Anacostia*⁹ is heard with images in the region. As Murphy presents parade images of people of different ethnic groups—mostly Black—in the region, Harvey quotes: 'Ida. B. Wells-Barnett, she says what I did not yet know so intensely was the hatred of the White American for the Black, a hatred so deep that I wonder if every White man in this country, when he plants a tree, doesn't see a Negro hanging from its branches.' At this point, Harvey also places her self-representation in a political stance. The representations of Murphy, who shows the unseen in Kosovo and Afghanistan, and Harvey, who says the unsaid and even sings, meet at a common point.

After the shot of a religious group in Washington, Harvey plays a melody, and the image of two girls following their car in Afghanistan appears on the screen. Murphy shows a religious ritual in Afghanistan, the ritual of *dhikr*. The image is contextually similar, if not identical, in content to the Washington footage. Murphy chose to deconstruct the distance between geographies by juxtaposing these images conceptually. The sound of *dhikr* in Afghanistan is then heard as a melody in Harvey's song. With the production process of the song *The Ministry of Defence*,¹⁰ images of the Ministry of Defence building in Kabul are displayed simultaneously because the song's lyrics describe this building. Murphy mixes what the music represents with the image as the song continues.

Speaking about the album and book project on the BBC's Andrew Marr Show (2016), Harvey said that they chose Washington DC to finish their project after Afghanistan and Kosovo because many decisions affecting Afghanistan and Kosovo were made in Washington. She also mentions that as an artist, she focuses on similarities rather than differences and that they spend more time in a poor and rundown neighborhood in the southern region of Washington. Harvey's words give a clue to the choice of locations in the film. Just as the images that Murphy's camera frames are

chosen, the artists also choose the places of travel. At this point, these choices of the artists also draw attention to the manipulation factor regarding the narrative. The places chosen, the images shown, and the words spoken result from a decision taken at the beginning, and the artists have put themselves in a manipulative situation. This manipulative situation is also reflected in the audience. However, the artists have created the film due to the manipulation they have entered into with their representation. Even in the documentary genre, which aims to tell the truth, the things that the director takes into the frame of the camera and leaves outside can be interpreted in a way that is open to manipulation, while in the case of *ADCM*, the intention already determined from the very beginning constitutes the essence of the artists creating the work that can be perceived as manipulative and transferring the emotions created in the artist representations to the film as a result of the manipulation. It can be said that PJ Harvey, in particular, has perhaps risked becoming a part of the manipulation by placing herself in the frame and even made herself a part of the manipulation by turning the recording of the album into an exhibition and placing herself in the position of the observed, while she was the observer during her travels. While Harvey, who shows her travels to the viewer behind the camera glass, tries to equalize the artist's representation by turning herself into an object of exhibition and viewing, Murphy engages these two representations in the film's narrative.

Representation Exchanged

As the film progresses, it is stated that Harvey's songs include more visual descriptions. Harvey further references what Murphy has shown while turning what she gained from the excursion into her artistic self-representation. Harvey says with images from the liturgy at the Baptist Church in Anacostia: 'Drugs and guns. They will always be here says the woman with the short red hair. The

choir raise their hands, show their palms, open, facing forward, I have a victory, you won it all for me. The Lord, Jesus, is Black. His black beard is going grey at the roots, maybe he dyes it like the Afghan elders.' Harvey represents the contextual relationship between belief and geography that Murphy creates with image and montage, and then with the song *The Community of Hope*,¹¹ Harvey describes a purely visual neighborhood community.

As the contextual relationship continues, Murphy shows a broad view of Kosovo's landscape from the car in which Harvey plays the guitar. Harvey turns this scene into text: 'We have been driving 'til the air turned cool, and we entered trees and wind, the rain brewing, wetting the air.' Next, Harvey's voice is heard with images of the liturgy at The Visoki Dečani Monastery in Kosovo: 'If you don't have to break the branch, don't do it. If you don't have to kill the animal, don't do it.' Using the pronoun we, Harvey conveys her experiences in Kosovo with images of a circumcision feast and traditional celebrations attended mainly by men. Harvey describes this experience: 'And me, only woman present allowed by the village elder; his face was a map I need to study closely.' While the creation process of the song *The Wheels* about Kosovo is shown, the contextual relationship is established with Washington. Harvey comments on the footage of Black teens: 'This is the Southeast where they wear t-shirts that say RIP; last year they killed a kid just for his shoes.' Then, a youngster named Paunie is seen walking through the neighborhood, describing the loss of acquaintances and the dangers in the neighborhood. At this point, Murphy becomes the mediator of the community by taking representation through recording.

Towards the end of the film, the representations between the music and the image become more merged. The song *The Guilty* shows images of Afghanistan, recording studio footage, American soldiers, literate girls, and local people. Murphy and Harvey minimize their representation in the North Macedonia footage mentioned at the film's beginning. Instead, images of immigrants at the country's border represent themselves. With the song *The Age of the Dollar*,¹² which is not

included in the album, the representation of both artists begins again. As a musician in the studio, Harvey is represented by her song, while Murphy is represented by his chosen images of people in three different geographies. The action of the image merges with the rhythm of the music. Harvey is visible with sound, though not verbally, and Murphy is presented with his camera. Murphy turns his thoughts into contextual representations with images of dancing people from all over the world. Like the North Macedonia images, Harvey and Murphy withdraw themselves in the campaign footage and the people's debates of the people in the 2016 elections in the USA. The film closes with *Dollar Dollar*,¹³ the album's last song. The song is reminiscent of the boy seen at the film's beginning looking through the car window. Reminding the audience he was there, Harvey reflects in her lyrics when she encounters a boy in Afghanistan who asks for money in traffic. Afghanistan footage and notes by Harvey appear. An object thought to be the blimp, which appears as a constant witness throughout the film, burns and slides in the sky. A young girl runs while looking at the camera from afar, and the plane appears to land with shadow in reference to the plane at the beginning of the film when the journey starts.

Conclusion

As artists in two different fields, PJ Harvey and Seamus Murphy conveyed their travel and their changing selves due to the excursion to the narrative with the film *ADCM*. The film shows three different places the artists went to, then left and returned. Returned home is the exhibition venue in London, which was revealed regarding the artistic representations formed after the excursion. The narrative created as a duo presents both artists as the first person, as Lebow (2012) mentioned. The places they visit, except Washington, are uncanny, open to discovery, and changing themselves, although the places shown in Washington reveal the unknown and invisible side of

the city. Corrigan (2011) points to this type of experience when he mentions the excursive essay. Both artists represented the film through the places visited, the images chosen, the words spoken, and the songs heard.

However, the most obvious place Harvey represents herself is the studio where the album was recorded. Both artists, especially Harvey, placed themselves on the opposite side of their self-representations with the exhibition. Where they went, as observers, they used both the film and the exhibition to put their representations in the observed position. While they represented the state of being observers in the places they went, they used the film and the exhibition to put their representation into the observed position. In other words, they performed the observing artist representation during the tour and the observed artist representation during the album recording. On the other hand, the film as a medium carried this representation of observation out of the exhibition. Maybe the artists wanted to reflect their changing selves from beyond the glass in the process after the excursion, just as the artists' selves mean to the child who looks through the car glass at the film's beginning. Although it cannot be understood by the viewers going to the exhibition, when the film is watched, why the studio was built as a white and sterile environment despite all the places visited may be due to this anti-self-representation. It is like getting lost in the places during the excursion and then appearing in white in the exhibition. Moreover, Harvey's status of being the only woman in the place, which she sometimes emphasizes in the film, continues in the exhibition, perhaps because of the form she wants to represent herself to make reflexivity.

Through Murphy's placement of Harvey on a self-reflexive subject, experimental film and self-representation can be imageable, visible, and traceable. The essay film's narrative, which consists of the words, images, sounds, and their combination, takes on a new costume and increases its action with the addition of Harvey's music and lyrics. While artists create this as an intentional

activity, as Currie (2010) states, they connect this situation with the outside world, as Morawski (1974) emphasizes. The moving image, created consciously by the artists while using the self-reflexivity provided by the essay film when viewed from the perspective of Thumim's (2012) tacit understanding, the opening of this situation to participation has also removed the film from its traditional form, as Dobson (2015) points out. Rather than dialogue, the film reveals its status of criticism with the places where the artists go, Harvey's voice-over, songs, and the images Murphy placed in parallel with the sound. In particular, Harvey's songs enabled the opening of new layers regarding the representation in the film, as Alter (2018) stated, the widening of the scope of the form, as Montero (2012) pointed out, and the superimposed of its status with other layers, as Rascaroli (2016) emphasized.

Further, the use of music in the film created a discourse by adding meaning to the social position in the geographies visited, assuming the role of an agency between the shown world and the viewer, reflecting the thoughts of the artists in the places visited; it also represented the music itself in the installation space; Harvey with the melody and visual description of her songs, Murphy with his visuals on what is heard. Harvey, with her visually descriptive music and lyrics, and Murphy, with his reflected images through what was heard, have completed their excursive essays, leaving the viewer with perhaps more questions and thoughts than they initially asked. Traveling to three different countries, the two artists navigate between documentary and essay genres: they open the door to documenting reality, a new experience with two narrators, and essaying with fiction created with music and lyrics.

Everything is seen from behind a glass, as in the movie's closing song and the album's last song. The self-reflexivity and representation that an essay film adds to the narrator and the object and subject to which the director directs his camera in a documentary-like manner meet in the

layered structure of *ADCM*, in which Harvey is the narrator, and Murphy is the visualizer. This structure contains a documentary, representative, demonstrative and exhibitionist meaning in its context. Narratives describe what is seen, and what is seen represents what is described. While the words and music accompanying the camera's reality are in the first person, the representations of what is seen point to an experimental and layered narrative both inside and outside the film through the representation of the artists who create and narrate the image. The real passes through the artists' representation filter and transforms into the representations behind the camera glass, thinning the boundaries between documentary and experimental film and the glass between the narrator and the viewer.

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ENDNOTES:

¹"A restlessness took hold my brain and questions I could not hold back, an orange monkey all in chains on a bleak uneven track, tell me that to understand, you must travel back in time so I took a plane to foreign lands and began the strange and distant climb." (Harvey, 2019)

²"PJ Harvey accompanied by photojournalist Seamus Murphy on his trips to Kosovo, Afghanistan and Washington DC. She kept a notebook of immediate impressions which later become songs and an album. Work he made from Syria, Macedonia and America during the period of their collaboration also features in the film." (Murphy, 2019).

³ "Everyone driving in one direction. Everyone driving in every direction. Where to go? Why? What to say when I get there? Open sewage ditches to break your leg in, or break your head on. Hard work, they work hard. The rich are poor, and the poor are rich, and the rich are poor. Few women, hidden women, high heeled women in the rocks and mud." (Harvey, 2019)

⁴"The album was recorded in a specially constructed room in the basement of Somerset House in London. The public was invited to the recording as an installation. One-way glass allowed the musicians to work undisturbed." (Murphy, 2019).

⁵ "The woman's old and dressed in black. She keeps her hands behind her back. Imagine what her eyes have seen. We ask but she won't let us in. A key so simple and so small; how can it mean no chance at all? A key – a promise, or a wish; how can it mean such hopelessness? A circle is broken, she says." (Harvey, 2019).

⁶ "The kids are rolling dice for change sitting on the backyard steps calling Money! Money! An old guy walking to the store chewing on a cocktail stick stops to tell us what is what – He says, Everything is staged – that's how it is – people are jus' paid an' bought, and I'm tired of it. What are you gonna' do to change it? Everything is staged – that's what's going on. The kids roll their dice again. The sun is beating down. I ask the old guy's name. He smiles. The pit bull runs our way – the kids call out for him, Money! Money! He says, 'Everything is staged – that's how it is – people are jus' paid an' bought, and I'm tired of it. What are you gonna' do to change it? It's all about money – that's what's going on." (Harvey, 2019).

⁷ "They swept across the land. They did not leave a thing. They did not leave a person, a stone, or a tree. They did not leave anything. All that's left is sand. I remember father. I remember him. Every minute I remember. Every moment. Now I hate everyone – before I used to love. One day thorns shall grow from their graves. When they return I'll be waiting. I will not leave a person standing. All I'll leave is sand." (Harvey, 2019).

⁸ "See them sitting in the rain as the sky is darkening. Three lines of traffic edge past. The Ministry of Social Affairs. At a junction, on the ground an amputee and a pregnant hound sit by young men with withered arms as if death had already passed through every alleyway and left a million beggars' silhouettes near where the money-changers sit by their locked glass cabinets. What's happened? Let's go and ask The Ministry of Social Affairs, near where the money-changers sit by their locked glass cabinets." (Harvey, 2019).

⁹ "Oh, my Anacostia – do not sigh, do not weep – beneath the overpass your saviour's waiting patiently walking on the water, that flow with poisons from the naval yard. He's talking to the fallen reeds. What will become of us? A small, red sun makes way for night – trails away like a tail light. Is that Jesus on the water talking to the fallen trees? What will become of us?" (Harvey, 2019).

¹⁰ "This is the Ministry of Defence, the stairs and walls are all that's left, mortar holes let through the air, kids do the same thing everywhere; they've sprayed graffiti in Arabic, and balanced sticks in human shit. This is the ministry of remains, fizzy drinks cans, magazines, broken glass, a white jawbone, syringes, razors, a plastic spoon, human hair, a kitchen knife and the ghost of a girl who runs and hides. There's the bus depot to

the right levelled like a building site, those are the children's cries from the dark, these are the words written under the arch, scratched in the wall in biro pen: This is how the world will end." (Harvey 2019).

¹¹ "Here's the Hope Six Demolition Project stretching down to Benning Road, a well-known pathway of death, (at least, that's what I'm told). Here's the one sit-down restaurant in Ward Seven. Nice. Okay, now this is just drug town, just zombies, but that's just life. Here's the highway to death and destruction, South Capitol is its name. The school looks like a shit hole – does that look like a nice place? Here's the old mental institution now the Homeland Security base. Here's God's Deliverance Centre, a deli called MLK. The Community of Hope. They're gonna' put a Walmart here." (Harvey, 2019)

¹² "He raised his hands, Stepped back inside, put it on his ammo belt, and He rest his finger on his gun and he felt good, he felt understood. He wandered out with every step, his ammo belt Began to twang, He's speakin' in a different tongue but he felt good, he felt understood. Fluttering of the dollar bills lacing in the wind, not far from here, it'll be okay from here and there, pickin' up the change of the dollar bills." (Harvey, 2019).

¹³ "A boy stares through the glass. He's saying, Dollar, dollar. Three lines of traffic pass. We're trapped inside our car. His voice says, Dollar, dollar. I turn to you to ask for something we can offer. Three lines of traffic pass. We pull away so fast, all my words get swallowed. In the mirror glass a face pock-marked and hollow is saying, Dollar, dollar. I can't look through or past, the face saying Dollar, dollar, the face pock-marked and hollow, staring from the glass." (Harvey, 2019).