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Filmmusikal

(_sjanger) En film med innslag av sanger sunget av skuespillere, og eventuelt med dans. “[I]f a movie contains several instances of song and dance *within* its diegetic world, it is by definition a musical.” (Barry K. Grant i Mathijs og Mendik 2008 s. 77)

“One major genre, the musical, became possible only with the introduction of sound. Indeed, the original intention of the Warners when they began their investment in sound equipment was to circulate vaudeville acts on film.” (Bordwell og Thompson 2007 s. 458)

“Straight musicals are often romantic comedies, in which characters typically trace the progress of their courtship by breaking into song to express their fears, longings, and joys.” (Bordwell og Thompson 2007 s. 333) Følelser som ellers er undertrykt, kan få utløp i sang og dans (Gibbs 2002 s. 71).

Sang- og dansnumrene er urealistiske ved å gi standardsituasjoner en koreografisk form: en sunget kjærlighetserklæring, en strid i duett-form osv. (Kaufmann 2007 s. 101). Mange Bollywood-filmer har innlagte musikk- og dansenumre som ikke inngår i selve handlingstråden, dvs. de er “not part of the narrative” (Javed Akhtar sitert fra Krohn og Strank 2012 s. 176). Slike Bollywood-filmer der handlingen har mange sang- og musikkinnslag har blitt kalt “cinema of interruption” (Liptay og Bauer 2013 s. 398). Noen musikk-nummer kan ha en direkte funksjon for handlingen, mens andre fungerer mer som kommentarer til handlingen (Krohn og Strank 2012 s. 177). Musikkinnslagene trenger altså ikke å være realistisk motivert, men fyller andre funksjoner (Krohn og Strank 2012 s. 178).

“[T]he ability to burst out into song and dance whenever and wherever one likes constitutes one of fundamental pleasures of the genre” (Smith 2005 s. 13).

Filmkritikeren Eirik Alver har satirisk omtalt filmmusikalens “begrunnelse” for at skuespillerne begynner å synge som “ “vent, jeg føler en sang presser seg fram!”- øyeblikk” (i *Dagbladet* 17. juli 2008 s. 42).

“At musikalen er spesielt truet stemmer ikke, med Bollywood, Broadways *Hamilton*, og Disneys animasjonsmusikaler som *Frost* (2013), det siste tiårets kanskje mest innflytelsesrike film [...] En vanlig innvending mot musikalen er manglende realisme: Folk synger og danser jo ikke her og der! Men psykologisk-

realistisk bæres frynsete følelser på ermene, og hjertets pulseringer spruter ut i sang. I ekspresjonistisk, eskapistisk skildring av forelskelse og kjærlighet, blant våre minst rasjonelle følelser, er sjangeren uovertruffen. Betydningen av melodrama, *melos* (musikk) + *drama*, kroppsliggjøres. [...] Og i skildring av glede, savn og sorg har musikalen særegne kvaliteter.” (Jon Inge Faldalen i *Dagbladet* 25. februar 2017 s. 52-53)

I indiske filmer (Bollywood) kan musikknumre skape kontinuitet mellom ellipser i handlingen, de kan representere lange tidsspenn og dermed skape økte diegetisk tempo (flere år kan forløpe mens et musikkinnslag framføres) (Krohn og Strank 2012 s. 181). “Most Bollywood films include musical numbers. Today’s movies generally have fewer musical numbers than older films. While 10 musical numbers in a film wasn’t unusual in the past, four to six are more typical today. And more and more Bollywood movies don’t have any musical numbers at all. It’s important to remember that Bollywood films are not musicals in the American sense. Both Broadway and Hollywood are preoccupied with realism, and musicals are, by their nature, unrealistic because no one bursts into song and dance during dramatic moments in real life. American musicals address this problem by either telling stories about entertainers – *Show Boat*, *A Chorus Line*, *The Producers*, to name a few – and thereby creating a setting in which characters logically sing and dance – or by trying to make musical numbers a seamless part of the action, or as realistic as possible, which requires an enormous suspension of disbelief.” (<http://www.thebollywoodticket.com/bollywood/beginner.html>; lesedato 10.12.14)

“Bollywood is not encumbered with adherence to realism, which makes them all the more believable. Bollywood films embrace and openly acknowledge the reality that musical numbers are artifice and that fantasy is a rich facet of emotional life best expressed through artifice because fantasy isn’t real. Bollywood musical numbers, more often than not, show what characters are feeling or wishing, not what they are actually doing. In these *picturizations*, as the staging of musical numbers is called, anything is possible, just as anything is possible in the musings of the mind. Picturizations are deliberately unrealistic in order to signal to audiences that they aren’t literal. [...] The vast majority of film songs are sung by playback singers, who are famous in their own right. The movie and music industries in India are inextricably interlinked. Nearly all Indian pop music comes from movie soundtracks.” (<http://www.thebollywoodticket.com/bollywood/beginner.html>; lesedato 10.12.14)

I den amerikanske regissøren Charles Walters’ *Easter Parade* (1948) “the reconciliation of the couple at the end is brought about by a reversal (rather than an implied reassertion) of traditional gender roles as Hannah (Judy Garland) sings the film’s title number to Don (Fred Astaire), having already appropriated the male convention (previously enacted in more typical form by Don at the beginning of the

film) of sending flowers, together with an Easter hat and rabbit, to her lover. In providing such a noticeable contrast with *Singin' in the Rain's* closing sequence, *Easter Parade's* ending highlights how the presence of a stronger, more charismatic female singer may significantly disturb the gender power structures so characteristically inherent in the musical couple's romantic and professional relationship. In this particular instance, the privileging of Garland's voice in the final number even manages to overcome Astaire's more habitual mastery of the female through dance by the end of his films. Her active role as singer in turn facilitates a series of more detailed role reversals during the couple's impromptu dance in the male protagonist's apartment, with Garland even taking Astaire on her knee at one point while he responds throughout, as Babington and Evans observe in their close reading of the film, with a sense of 'embarrassment mixed with delight' as *he* 'is turned into the object of desire' ” (Smith 2005 s. 74-75).

Amerikaneren Busby Berkeleys film *The Gang's All Here* (1953) “er en skikkelig kultklassiker blant de utallige amerikanske filmmusikalene. Åpningssekvensen er legendarisk: “The Lady in the Tutti-Frutti Hat”, med Carmen Miranda, som var en megastjerne i USA under krigen [...] Filmregissøren og koreografen Busby Berkeley var en viktig kreativ skikkelse innen musikalfilmsjangeren fra 1930 til 1950. Han lot ikke sine dansere begrenses av teaterscenen, men lot dem danse videre ut i “virkeligheten” i påkostete filmsett og scenografi. Han var også kjent for sin dristige koreografi, ganske seksuelt ladede danser, og ikke minst for at han ved kreativ kamerabruk fikk danserne og kulissene til framstå i overdådige, kaleidoskopiske former på lerretet.” (*Cinematket* nr. 1 i 2014 s. 7)

“Berkeley was the first director to clearly understand that effective screen choreography involved the placement and movement of dancers *and* the camera. Instead of filming numbers from fixed viewpoints, he set his cameras into motion on custom built booms and monorails. The normally frugal Warner Brothers allowed Berkeley to film his fantasy numbers on a grand scale. Sweeping views of geometrically arranged dancers moving in unison became a Berkeley trademark, including kaleidoscopic patterns of uniformly costumed chorus girls. He would literally cut through the roof of a soundstage to get the right distance for an overhead shot. He also relied on elaborate sets and such bizarre touches as a leering midget trying to glimpse chorus girls while they disrobed behind a translucent curtain. Sometimes erotic, sometimes vulgar, the best of Berkeley's images delighted a nation desperate for cinematic distraction from the Great Depression, and all of his 1930s Warner Brothers films were filmed in glorious black and white. [...] Although Berkeley's musical sequences remained visually inventive, his formulaic backstage plots grew predictable.” (<http://www.musicals101.com/1930film2.htm>; lesedato 17.09.14)

“In 1928, businessman Joseph P. Kennedy teamed up with RCA Radio and the Keith-Orpheum vaudeville theatre circuit to form Radio-Keith-Orpheum, usually referred to as RKO Pictures. [...] It is perhaps appropriate that the first major

Hollywood studio formed after the invention of sound should produce the first series of screen musicals to creatively integrate song, story and dance as story-telling tools – all a full decade before Broadway saw a similar revolution begin with *Oklahoma*. RKO's earliest musicals had been forgettable efforts until a lucky bit of support casting unexpectedly opened the way for change. Broadway veteran Fred Astaire made little headway in Hollywood until RKO cast him in the minor role of a band leader in *Flying Down To Rio* (1933). When offered the choice of several starlets as a dance partner, he chose Ginger Rogers, who he had met when he choreographed a routine for her in the 1930 Broadway production of *Girl Crazy*. Through most of *Flying Down to Rio*, top-billed stars Dolores Del Rio and Gene Raymond slog through a tedious love plot (and several equally tedious songs) while Astaire and Rogers make occasional wisecracks. Then during "The Carioca," Fred and Ginger step on to a nightclub dance floor and link foreheads while dancing. Their wholesome charm had unmistakably sexual undertones, and turned an otherwise minor number into the highlight of the film, setting off a tremendous response among moviegoers." (<http://www.musicals101.com/1930film3.htm>; lesedato 17.09.14)

"Producer Pandro S. Berman persuaded the studio to showcase Astaire and Rogers in a star vehicle of their own. In *The Gay Divorcee* (1934), they danced and romanced, inventing what became their standard formula – in a high society setting, a charming playboy and a sweet girl with spunk get into a tangle of mistaken identities, fall in love on the dance floor (to something like Cole Porter's "Night and Day"), resolve their misunderstandings in the nick of time, and foxtrot their way to a black and white "happily ever after" ending. This film was based on the stage musical *Gay Divorce*, but the Hays office demanded a change of title. Under Hollywood's new Production Code, it was acceptable to suggest a divorced person was "gay" (meaning "happy"), but a film couldn't say that a divorce was happy! Despite the glamorous surroundings and witty banter, Astaire and Rogers come across as likeable Americans, "just like us" – or just like the folks most people wished they could be. The same formula was carefully repeated in *Top Hat* (1935), which embodies RKO's Astaire-Rogers series at its best. There is a variation of the "mistaken identities" plot with stylish comic support from Edward Everett Horton, Eric Blore and Helen Broderick, and a solid-gold score by Irving Berlin. "Isn't This a Lovely Day To Be Caught In The Rain," "No Strings," the title tune and the unforgettable "Cheek to Cheek" are deftly integrated into a story of mistaken identities set in an eye-popping black and white art deco vision of Venice. The dialogue is breezy and clever, and the atmosphere one of elegant delight. It is still hard to resist this cinematic cocktail. [...] Once the public embraced the Astaire and Rogers "mistaken identities" formula, RKO relied on variations of that plot for Astaire and Rogers in five more films, most directed Mark Sandrich. Choreographed primarily by Astaire and his associate Hermes Pan, these were the first musicals (on stage or screen) to make substantial use of integrated dialogue, song and dance to develop character and tell a story. The scores were always

provided by top composers.” (<http://www.musicals101.com/1930film3.htm>; lesedato 17.09.14)

“[T]he musicals *Mary Poppins* (1964) and *The Sound of Music* (1965) [...] were amongst the highest-grossing films of all time up to this point” (Stokes og Maltby 1999 s. 96). Amerikaneren Robert Wise regisserte i 1965 *The Sound of Music* (1965), basert på en teatermusikal. Filmen ble en enorm internasjonal suksess. “Pr. i dag har filmen spilt inn 286 millioner dollar, justert i forhold til inflasjon, nærmere 2,36 milliarder dollar. Den ligger på femteplass over tidenes mest innbringende filmer. Filmen hadde norgespremiere 11. april 1966 og gikk på norske kinoer i flere år etterpå. [...] Billetinntekter, kassarekorder og Oscarpriser sier sitt. Men bildet på omfanget blir tydeligere når vi vet at mange steder der filmen ble satt opp, ble det solgt billetter som oversteg folketallet både to og tre ganger. I Norge, som den gang hadde i overkant av 3,5 millioner innbyggere, ble det solgt over 1,5 millioner kinobilletter. Ei oslokvinne så filmen så mange ganger, at hun til slutt fikk komme inn uten å måtte kjøpe billett. [...] Jason Mahone, en smørblid og sangglad fyr fra Chicago, himler med øynene. Han og venninnen Debbie, har nettopp posert foran lysthuset. - Oh, my god! Jeg tror det er 27 ganger jeg har sett den nå. Jeg elsker bare den filmen, legger han til. - Og å være her, hvor den faktisk ble spilt inn, er surrealistisk.” (*Dagbladets Magasinet* 14. november 2015 s. 46-48)

I boka *The musical: Race, gender and performance* (2005) legger Susan Smith stor vekt på at en rekke filmmusikaler handler om en kvinnelig sangers mulighet til å manøvrere i en maskulin verden av mannlige managere, konsertsal-eiere osv. Musikalenes “fascination with the great female singer” leder til plot som bygger opp under “an intense, unwavering conviction in the uniqueness of the female singer’s voice. Already fully-fledged at the point of discovery and never really in dispute or in need of improvement, this more talented voice is capable of commanding the instant respect and admiration of even the most demanding of male protagonists.” (Smith 2005 s. 75)

Den amerikanske regissøren George Cukors film *A Star is Born* (1954) viser “the crisis experienced by the male as he seeks to come to terms with his growing dependency on the woman [sangerinnen Esther Blodgett] for his own status and identity.” (Smith 2005 s. 91) Men Norman Maine er sterkt alkoholisert, og begår selvmord etter å ha fått høre at Esther har tenkt å gi opp sin karriere for å gifte seg med han. De to har blitt stadig mer avhengig av hverandre, men han mest av henne. “The fact that Norman asks Esther to sing for him as he makes his way down to the beach to commit suicide further problematises the nature of the release available to him here as his use of her singing to steel himself to the task ahead implies a dependency on the female singer’s voice at the very point where he seeks to free himself from his mounting obligation to her. And although Esther’s reprisal of the song ‘It’s a New World’ is clearly intended by her as a reaffirmation of both her love for him and her ongoing indebtedness to him (‘You brought a new world to

me. And that it'll always, always be.') in choosing the song that marked her rise to movie stardom she unwittingly provides Norman with a musical reminder of the precise moment when her success first began to eclipse his." (Smith 2005 s. 103)

Scenen i *A Star is Born* der Norman går ned til sjøen for å drukne seg gjør Esthers stemme nesten til en naturkraft: "The overwhelming effect of Esther's singing on Norman is conveyed most of all, though, through the properties of the female voice itself which here becomes endowed with an almost omnipresent quality as, carried once again on the ocean breeze, it follows and surrounds him as he makes his way down to the shoreline. Indeed if, as Michel Chion suggests, 'Water and the voice are two instances of that which has neither location nor border unless we assign them one' (1999: 113), then this particular sequence would seem to invite a rather compelling link to be made between the fluid, floating qualities of the female singer's voice and the formless, uncontainable properties of the sea. This rhetorical link between voice and sea (especially compelling given the latter's traditional associations with femininity) consequently endows Norman's suicide with a further significance. For if the ocean can be construed as a kind of visual extension of Esther's singing voice, then his act of drowning tends to literalise his sense of being engulfed by her vocal power, the act of walking into the sea suggesting a final, voluntary subsuming of his identity into hers. The ability of the female singer's voice to generate and articulate a whole range of gender-related anxieties and concerns centred on the theme of identity culminates in the final scene" (Smith 2005 s. 103).

Den ungarsk-amerikanske regissøren Charles Vidor's *Love Me or Leave Me* (1955) er basert på sangerinnen Ruth Ettings karriere i USA på 1920-tallet, men har tydelige innslag av gangsterfilm i tillegg til biografisk film. Handlingen foregår i Chicago på 1920-tallet og den mannlige hovedpersonen spilles av en skuespiller kjent for sine gangsterroller. Ruth Etting får jobb i en nattklubb som eies av Marty Snyder, men hans hjelp har et seksuelt motiv, og hun blir stadig mer viklet inn i hans garn. De gifter seg, men filmen viser at "the sexual economics underpinning her relationship to Snyder even extends to the musical numbers themselves. It finds most explicit expression in the song 'Ten Cents a Dance', the first full-length number that Etting is shown performing after her marriage to Snyder and following her withdrawal from the Ziegfeld show. Positioned at such a point in the narrative and with its clear allusions to her earlier job as a nightclub dancer (ten cents was the fee that the male customers paid to dance with her), this number highlights the extent to which Etting sees herself as still trapped within the same crude forms of sexual exploitation that she found so oppressive at the start of her career." (Smith 2005 s. 84)

Ruth Ettings ektemann Marty dikterer hennes karrierevei, men hennes stemme og glede over å synge gir henne likevel en følelse av selvstendighet. Hennes "vocal delivery and the strong, confident posture" viser at hun har bevart noe av sin selvrespekt og stolthet over sin kunst (Smith 2005 s. 85). Som en følge av Ruths

suksess blir Martys kontroll over henne mindre, og han gjør desperate forsøk på å styre henne. Han tvinger seg f.eks. inn bakveien når hun skal på scenen. Han blir stadig mer et vedheng til henne og får sin identitet fra hennes stjernestatus. For å “gjenerobre” Ruth kjøper han en nattklubb der hun skal synges – en nattklubb som utallige steder er markert med hans egne initialer MS. Mens Marty sitter en periode i fengsel, redder Ruth han økonomisk med sin synging i hans nattklubb. Hennes stemme overskrider det mannlige og undertrykkende: “The fluid, mobile properties of the female singer’s voice and the assured, relaxed nature of the delivery offer a striking aural counterpoint to the forced, overbearing masculinity inherent in the *mise-en-scène*, indicating an ability on the part of the character herself to break free from the confines of the male identity” (Smith 2005 s. 90).

George Cukor regisserte også filmen *My Fair Lady* (1964) med skuespilleren Audrey Hepburn i rollen som Eliza Doolittle. Det er ikke Hepburns stemme som høres i filmen mens hun synger, med ekstramaterialet på en DVD-utgivelse av *My Fair Lady* “allows one to listen to Hepburn’s own original recordings of the two numbers ‘Would’t It Be Lovely?’ and ‘Show Me’.” (Smith 2005 s. 122)

Den franske regissøren Jacques Demys *Paraplyene i Cherbourg* (1964) “er et kjærlighetens melodrama, der replikkene synges, der scenene er romantiske og dekorasjonene er gjort i klare, nesten glorete farger. [...] De hadde store problemer med å få finansiert denne filmen – hvem ville satse på en ny type musikal, hvor all dialog blir sunget?” (tidsskriftet *Cinematiket* nr. 5 i 2014 s. 29-30)

Den amerikanske regissøren Joshua Logans *Camelot* (1967) er en tre timer lang filmmusikal fra et middelaldersk riddermiljø. *Camelot* “heralded the end of the big budget movie musical which would reach its nadir at the end of the decade with two disastrous flops, *Star!* (1968) and *Paint Your Wagon* (1969). Unlike those two films, however, *Camelot* struck a resonant chord with audiences who identified with its story of an idealistic ruler whose kingdom was destroyed by human greed, envy and jealousy. Certainly parallels were drawn between the musical’s storyline and the Kennedy Administration which saw its empire collapse after the President was assassinated on a Dallas street in 1963. But more than anything, *Camelot* held a fascination for many viewers because of its mythic qualities; the story of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table is part of our literary culture [...] For Guenevere, Logan desperately wanted Vanessa Redgrave [...] It was her idea to do the song, “Take Me to the Fair,” in a constantly changing setting with new backgrounds and costumes for every change of verse to show the passage of time.” (<http://www.tcm.com/this-month/article/87716%7C0/Camelot.html>; lesedato 11.12.14)

Den britiske regissøren Gurinder Chadhas film *Bride & Prejudice* (2004) “er Jane Austen’s classic “Pride and Prejudice” novel revamped, re-envisioned, and reconfigured into a loud, brassy, in-your-face Bollywood musical [...] The story is kept moving along by frenetic dance numbers and snappy songs that leap from pop

to classic rock 'n roll to touching ballads. Even Ashanti makes the scene playing a singer at an Indian-style rave. [...] The success of “Chicago” and “Moulin Rouge” have helped pave the way for contemporary American audiences to embrace the return of the movie musical. Hopefully “Bride and Prejudice” will help sell Bollywood newbies on the Indian cinematic experience.” (<http://movies.about.com/od/brideandprejudice/a/brideprej022805.htm>; lesedato 08.01.14)

En undersjanger av filmmusikalen er “the backstage musical, with the action centering on singers and dancers who perform for an audience within the story world.” (Bordwell og Thompson 2007 s. 333)

Den engelske regissøren Phyllida Lloyds *Mamma Mia!* (2008) er basert på en teatermusikal med samme navn som bruker den svenske popgruppa ABBA's musikk. “Agnetha, Björn, Benny and Anni-Frid’s layered harmonies and catchy hooks lend themselves well to the popular musical format [...] this aggressively fluffy pop music is juxtaposed with an equally exuberant and almost psychotically optimistic plot about following one’s heart and knowing that love is love [...] ABBA-loving optimists will be tapping their toes along to each musical number and delighting in the sheer undeniable whimsy and spirit. Director Phyllida Lloyd has opted for an edited, musical montage approach to the film rather than the choreographed soundstage method of other recent musicals like *Enchanted* and *Hairspray*. The result is decent and engaging, even if there are occasional moments similar to early '90s music videos where ingénues wear overly emotional expressions on their faces while singing at the camera. The question that most people will invariably ask about *Mamma Mia!* is can the actors sing? The answer is both yes and no. Amanda Seyfried is impressive all around, proving herself as a bankable star, which is especially significant considering that she is standing next to the multi-talented Meryl Streep, who herself has some solid pipes.” (http://exclaim.ca/Reviews/Film/mamma_mia-phyllida_lloyd; lesedato 24.09.14)

Til *Mamma mia!* ble det på noen kinoer satt opp “syng-med-forestillinger”, der publikum kunne synge så høyt de ville (uten å overraske eller irritere andre i kinosalen). Det å “incorporating community sing-a-longs into film exhibition practices” (Jenkins 2008 s. 139) var ikke noe nytt i 2008. “Have you ever been to a film musical and had the uncontrollable urge to burst into song? Sing-a-long-a Sound of Music is your chance to test your vocal range with several hundred other assorted nuns, Von Trapp family members and Julie Andrews look-a-likes. Sit back and watch the original 1965 movie in glorious Technicolor [...] with the lyrics for all the songs on the screen, so you won't miss a chance to sing your hearts out...” (<http://www.princecharlescinema.com/>; lesedato 26.09.14) Disneys *Aladdin: Spesialutgave*, i 1992 regissert av R. Clements og J. Muskler, inneholdt i norsk utgave en sing-a-long-versjon, der altså seerne er ment å synge med i filmens sanger.

“[T]he television “documentary musical” (or “documusical”) [is] television documentaries that use *purpose-composed* verse, music and song within a documentary setting. Four documentary musicals are currently extant: *Drinking for England* (1998), *Feltham Sings* (2002), *Pornography the Musical* (2003), and *Songbirds* (2003). All were directed by Brian Hill for Century Films, a London-based company. [...] Hill and Armitage took more risks in *Feltham Sings* (commissioned by Britain’s Channel 4 in 2002). [...] they] gained access to Feltham Young Offenders Institution. Situated in West London, near Heathrow Airport this facility is the largest youth detention center in Europe. [...] Feltham is a prison known for its high suicide rate and difficult conditions. Most of the young inmates have been sentenced for drug-related offences, theft, and both petty and violent crime. While there is a mixture of ethnic backgrounds, the majority of offenders are black and working class. Because of negative publicity over the years, Feltham is also camera shy. [...] There is one poem and seven songs, sung by inmates, prison warders and a social worker. Music video aesthetics were expanded, with split-screens and further text-on-screen graphics decorating the songs. “Dextrous” (a.k.a. Errol Francis) was chosen as composer because of his expertise with reggae, rap, hip-hop and drum’n’bass music. All these styles have roots in experiences of oppression and have a long history of telling alternative stories, especially of young people. They were appropriated to allow a selection of the inmates to tell their stories and to talk about their experiences as “outlaws.” The songs work with and sometimes against the stories’ content.” (Derek Paget og Jane Roscoe i <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc48.2006/MusicalDocy/index.html>; lesedato 05.12.14)

“All but two of the songs [in *Feltham Sings*] had lyrics written by Armitage [a young Yorkshire poet and novelist, Simon Armitage]. Inmates Cass Galton and Linden George turned his lyrics down and wanted to write their own. The working process in documusical allows plenty of room for negotiation so they were given their head. Cass’s rap “This is Me” is good enough to be repeated three times in the course of the film (once as a duet with Linden). Good as both their songs are, however, they do close Linden and Cass off. The two of them reveal more of themselves in interview than in their self-penned songs. Their lyrics comprise a relatively commonplace lexicon of hip-hop/rap. While Armitage readily admitted he “could never have written anything with that rhythm,” the songs do not *crystallize character* in quite the way songs in documusicals often do. Paul McBride’s song (a particular favorite of director Brian Hill) is a case in point. McBride’s understated vocals for “Boomerang Boy” contrast with the harshness of his surroundings, the severity of his sentence, and the nature of his crimes. The latter are detailed in the lyric, and include attacking someone with a cricket bat. He sings of drugs, violence and the vicious circle of multiple re-entries to the world of prison. Drawn in by the visual aesthetics of the music video, it is difficult not to engage with song and singer – “a boy,” he sings, “born in Holloway.” A pop star for three minutes, McBride is still recognizably a vulnerable amateur singer. When the words kick in with the harder story that they tell, delivered by a disarmingly uncertain singer, they challenge the viewer to a complex response.” (Derek Paget

og Jane Roscoe i <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc48.2006/MusicalDocy/index.html>; lesedato 05.12.14)

I *Feltham Sings* “Hill mixes locations and camera set-ups. As McBride talks and sings about his life, images are at one moment documentary and at another music video in style. McBride speaks and sings in his cell, in corridors with bars, in the prison games room (surrounded by warders who become his backing singers). Most poignantly he sings in the empty Visitors’ Room. Here, waiting for a mother who fails to turn up he sings:

“Your ma says she’ll visit, then suddenly she can’t,
So you’re sat for an hour in a corner like a cunt.
Wanna be a chef, wanna be a stuntman.
Don’t wanna sit in a corner like a cunt, man.”

Lyric and performance add a distinctive layer to McBride’s presentation of self. [...] In “giving voice” in song the participants “enhance and project [their] marginalized identity” in an altogether arresting way.” (Derek Paget og Jane Roscoe i <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc48.2006/MusicalDocy/index.html>; lesedato 05.12.14)

“Afroamerika og filmmusikalen har et broket forhold, fra blackface i *The Jazz Singer* (1927) til rasismeanlagete *Song of the South* (1946) (med Oscar-vinner “Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah”) og nær glemte *Porgy and Bess* (1959), begge sjeldent vist i seinere år, men også suksesser som *Dreamgirls* (2006) og serier som *Empire* (2015-) og *The Get Down* (2016-).” (Jon Inge Faldalen i *Dagbladet* 25. februar 2017 s. 52)

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