

As archives are passed through generations, the beauty of trauma is traveling along them.



The thesis will be an exploration of my family archive, the archive that I inherited from my grandmother Éva. And it will visit the following topics:

- The meaning of inheriting something: Written from my own perspective. And my experience of inheriting my grandmother's archive. Questions: What do our possessions say about us? What does it say about our past, present, and future? How do I identify with my family archive? What are some of the important findings within my family archive?
- Repetition: This part will connect to all the other elements within the thesis and the project. The meaning of generational repetition within my family archive: In this part of the text, I will dive into the meaning of generational repetition. It will be part of my analyses of the family archive (Similarities in appearance and similarities in behavior). This will lead to the next chapter: generational trauma. As it is part of the repetition that I am talking about.
- What is the meaning of generational trauma? And how is it alive in my family archive? It will cover the undeniable aspects of behavioral repetition within my family and the feeling of disconnection and discomfort when looking back at our pasts. This part will end with my grandmother's life story, from her traumatic childhood to her last years of living. One big part is her love for music and her self-written piano music.
- How can music tell a story in words? The piano music will also play a big part in my thesis and graduation project: Within the graduation project, the piano music will be my grandmother's voice. I even want to expand this to multiple instruments. Since then, the love and passion for music has always remained in the family. So this has constantly repeated itself. Within the thesis, I will write a separate text in musical notation as an addition to the main thesis text. This musical notation will be a small personal story that fits one of the thesis chapters and might even be used in the film. Within this chapter, I will also research different ways to use musical notation as the spoken language and how music can be used as a way of storytelling.

Resemblances

Music
 ↳ Classical music in the Archive videos when I was a baby/toddler

Commenting
 ↳ Commenting on behaviour of the child. Analysing the behaviour of the child out loud

Sentences (Same word choices)
 ↳ "Ga magy, een liedje zingen"
 "Sing a song for us"

Voice sound:
 ↳ My mother's voice is very similar to the voice of my grandmother
 ↳ in the archival recordings
 ↳ My voice is similar to my mother's in her 20s
 ↳ Speaking past
 ↳ There is a slowness to the speaking
 ↳ My mother, uncle and grandmother have it

Pets
 ↳ Dogs!

Music making
 ↳ Grandmother piano
 ↳ Mother cello
 ↳ Uncle violin
 ↳ Brother violin
 ↳ Me saxophone

places
 ↳ Hungary
 ↳ As a home & motherland
 ↳ to visit family
 ↳ vacation

Food
 ↳ Traditional Hungarian dishes

toddler
 ↳ recognisable sounds
 ↳ talking in third person

Voice / sounds
 ↳ Coughing sounds
 ↳ Mother & grandmother have the same cough
 ↳ Clearing the throat
 ↳ Uncle, mother sound the same as my grandmother

Interests
 ↳ Grandmother started her studies in psychology later on in life (in the 20s)
 ↳ My mother became a psychiatrist and skill is

Writing
 ↳ My grandmother wrote a lot of letters. Definitely when she was feeling emotional
 ↳ I do that too

Emotions
 ↳ My grandmother was very emotional and felt deeply. When she was emotional she could not put it in perspective and she could not change her feelings in the moment or put it aside. She would feel often lonely and not understood, not being able to see the other side of the story.

Image of the world
 ↳ My grandmother saw the world in a very critical and often negative way. Things go wrong often in her mind and ~~anxiety~~ plays a big role. Sees the glass half empty.
 ↳ My mother & uncle also have a more negative and realistic image/approach to the world.

Interest 2
 ↳ grandmother was a piano teacher
 ↳ I work as a composer/producer for the orchestra
 ↳ My mother plays violin in an orchestra

behaviour
 ↳ my great-grandmother and grandmother wanted to control their surroundings as much as they could.
 ↳ Me & my mum have that too, less than my grandmother had

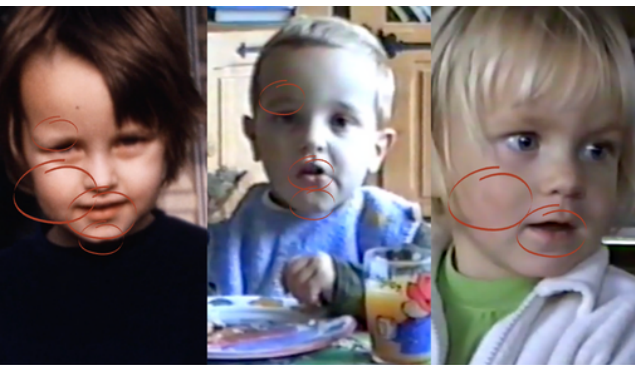
Éva



Isis



Me



Isis

Ernö

Me



Éva

Finley

The final thesis will consist of two texts: **One** will be a written story in music (musical notation); what the story is about is yet to be discovered (this will be creative writing and non-linear). **The second** will be a linear research text (a long read) with my family archive as the base of the text, written in a more intimate diary form.

My writing:



You and I are sitting on the floor. We are in an empty room, and in front of us is a big plastic box. This box contains a lot of information, personal information. But for me, it also has a lot of value and meaning. It is my grandmother's archive. I open the plastic box, and a whole storybook unfolds before me.

In one hand I am holding a bunch of photographs and in the other hand I am holding written letters by my grandmother. All the different archive materials make me wonder about my grandmother's archive. How did she decide what to put in the box? How do I identify with this archive? What does it mean to my mother? How does this archive reflect on the past, present, and future? And what would my plastic box contain?

I see various resemblances after spreading all the photographs, video fragments, musical books, diaries, letters, postcards, and silverware on the floor in the empty room. These resemblances are seen in behavior, appearance, and environment. Every archival piece connects to another archival piece or another time. It is part of how we can identify ourselves. Now that I see all the archive material in front of me, I can see the amount of repetition within my family—the amount of generational repetition.

The longer I look at the archive material, the more I see. And it didn't take me long to see the sadness, the anger, and the gloominess. It echoes through the empty room, and it takes up a lot of space within the plastic box.

You start talking.

"You know that my childhood wasn't always the most fun? You know that when I became older, she got worse?"

I nodded

"So your grandmother was born and raised in Hungary, and at the age of nine, she got polio. So, most of her childhood years were spent at home or in the hospital. At the age of 17, she had to flee the country. That is how she ended up in The Netherlands. It was because of the Hungarian Revolution."

I don't know what to say.

The only thing that I am thinking of is how traumatic her first years of life must have been. The only echo that I now hear is the repetition of trauma, generational trauma. So repetition is making its way through the whole of the archive. It is also seen in one of my favorite archive pieces, my grandmother's self-written piano book, where repetition is also evident in the musical notation, the ability to play music, and the love for music.

You look at me, and you start telling me about my grandmother's life and her love for music:

"Grandmother Éva has always loved music from a very young age. She wanted to become a ballet dancer, and at the age of 4, she got into the Hungarian National Ballet. Sadly, she was diagnosed with polio at the age of 9. But her connection to music never faded away. She became a piano teacher. I remember her playing almost every day. Music was part of our daily lives. Not only did grandmother Éva play an instrument, but your uncle Finley and I did, too. And even though grandmother Éva passed away. The music never left the family."

I look at you, around me, at the archive in front of me. It is all clear to me that everything is connected.

And I want to thank you, Mom.

"An archive is the soul of a person, divided among various archival pieces. It is the soul's story to tell. In that way the soul can enter the body. We start to shape as the soul's original embodiment. And we begin to behave as the soul's original behavior. In that way, we stay a copy of the past. And the future won't be as different as we had hoped".

The key issues

- My family archive (my family archive: images, audio recording, video recording, written pieces)
- Repetition
- Generational trauma
- Music (how it works as a voice)

Construction in chapters

An image of the family tree

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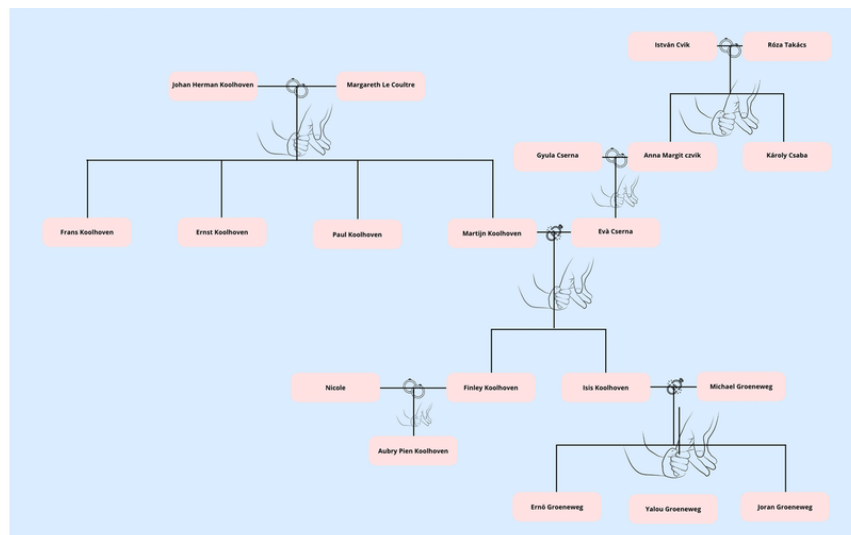
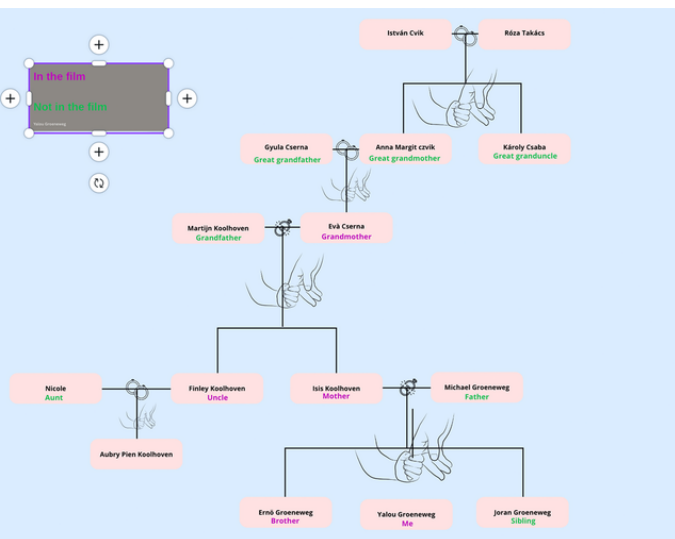
A letter written by my grandmother, where she tells about her life: this letter already exists.

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I will finish the introduction with the introduction of my grandmother's archive, and the text will be built on the findings within my grandmother's archive.

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Images of the archive



Chapter 1:

The meaning of inheriting an archive.

Chapter 2:

The topic of repetition and with a focus on generational repetition.

Chapter 3:

With generational trauma and how this is not only passed through emotionally but also alive in family archives

Chapter 4:

How do you translate music into words, or how do you translate words into music?

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This chapter is connected to the music piece I will write for my thesis. So, in this chapter, I will also explain the meaning of the music piece and how I wrote it.

Conclusion

The conclusion will sum up my findings in connection to my family archive.

I want to end the thesis with a question to myself.

(How do we become part of the past?

It is already in us.)