Abstract

The dissertation is a case study of a phenomenon that the author proposes to label persona-driven cultural journalism and criticism. This term points to journalism and criticism in which the performance of the journalist’s and critic’s personality becomes a foundational element in the piece. The case study focuses on three radio hosts at the Danish radio station Radio24syv but an important argument in the dissertation is the need to apply a cross-media approach to the study of journalistic personas. The dissertation offers a theoretical framework rooted in performance studies and embarks on an analysis of three cases. The analysis of wine critic and journalist Poul Pilgaard Johnsen points to a persona performance using confessions, creating an intimate space by the use of wine, and adopting a repetitive approach in topics and appearances. The persona performance is termed a confessional-sensual persona who creates journalism and criticism displaying a style of being. The analysis of gossip journalist and TV reviewer Ditte Okman demonstrates a persona performance rooted in bodily expressivity across media, the use of an outspoken and lucid attitude, and the creation of socializing spaces. The persona performances are labelled an unashamed persona, who creates journalism and criticism guided by affect and the performance of the authentic and sincere. Finally, the analysis of food critic and cultural journalist Martin Kongstad elucidates a performative approach to reviewing, the use of fictitious layers and a display of the persona being simultaneously present across fields. The performances are termed an overflow persona, who creates journalism and criticism that could be conceptualized as a cultural product on its own. In the concluding chapter, the findings from the analysis are discussed in relation to findings from other studies. Furthermore, it is proposed to conceptualize persona-driven approaches in a way that draw on Baumgarten’s understanding of aesthetics and the differentiation between aesthetic impressions and aesthetic experience.