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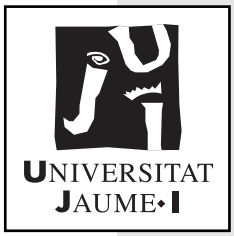
La intermedialidad

Intermediality



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Presentación

El presente volumen de la Revista *Cultura, Lenguaje y Representación* aborda el tema monográfico de «la intermedialidad en la cultura contemporánea». En una época en la que la denominada revolución tecnológica se ha erigido en uno de los factores determinantes de las relaciones sociales y culturales, de una manera similar a cómo lo habían hecho en siglos anteriores las sucesivas revoluciones industriales, se hace perentorio el análisis de su articulación entre comunidades, individuos y con el entorno, desde la perspectiva de su interacción con el salto cualitativo tecnológico que las condiciona. El fenómeno de la globalización ha contribuido a acelerar la reconceptualización de tales cuestiones en colaboración con los medios digitales para instaurar la era de la sociedad de la información «instantánea», acentuando los procesos de doble sentido, de homogeneización, pero paradójica y simultáneamente, de disgregación y deslocalización. En este sentido, las formas mediante las cuales se negocia la construcción de identidades entran en crisis, vía la entrada en crisis de los procesos de representación, lo que permite preparar el terreno en la exploración de nuevas estrategias para afrontar las cuestiones que periódicamente cada generación debe abordar en un intento de adaptarse a las condiciones cambiantes de su entorno, ejemplificadas en esta ocasión a través de los espacios de diálogo y confrontación entre los procesos artístico-culturales y los medios tecnológicos.

La selección de artículos aquí presentados constituye una panorámica exhaustiva del fenómeno de la intermedialidad en la cultura contemporánea, tanto desde la perspectiva teórica, como desde el análisis empírico de manifestaciones artísticas concretas y sus implicaciones generales. Constituye una satisfacción para la Dirección de esta Revista la posibilidad de haber contado con la cooperación de Freda Chapple, de la universidad de Sheffield, una experta de reconocido prestigio en el área de la intermedialidad, en calidad de editora invitada de este volumen ordinario de la Revista. Nos gustaría agradecer el gran esfuerzo y trabajo que Freda ha realizado en la edición de este volumen, quedando patente la alta calidad de los resultados académicos y científicos obtenidos.

Editorial

This volume of *Culture, Language and Representation* is devoted to intermediality in contemporary culture. In an age when the so-called technological revolution has become a major catalyst in shaping social and cultural relationships, similarly to the successive industrial revolutions of previous centuries, it seems imperative to engage in the analysis of the interdependence of communities, individuals and their environments, with the digital and technological developments that may influence them. The phenomenon of globalization in turn has contributed to the reconceptualization of such issues in reaching what could be termed the society of «instantaneous» information. Thus, the current strategies laid out to negociate the construction of identity fall into crisis, via an overall crisis of the processes of representation, opening the ground for the articulation of novel approaches that may explore the potential spaces of dialogue and confrontation between artistic and cultural practices, and digital and technological media. The selection of articles gathered in this volume constitutes a comprehensive account of the issue of intermediality, ranging from theoretical aspects to the empirical analyses of specific artistic practices.

It has been an honour and a pleasure for the Editors of the Journal to have had Freda Chapple, from Sheffield University, acting as guest editor for this volume. We would like to thank Freda warmly for her splendid work and great effort in making this enterprise possible. Her research experience and expertise in the field of intermediality have no doubt been a crucial factor in the high quality of the academic and scientific results arrived at in these pages.

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On Intermediality

One of the delights of guest editing the journal *Culture, Language and Representation* on the concept of *Intermediality* has been the privilege of reading the rich response to the call for papers, which presented different perspectives «on intermediality» from many countries around the world. The feature that is common in all articles presented here is a shared interest in what happens when traditionally ascribed, ontologically separate art forms and a variety of different media meet, merge and cross-over into the territory of another. In their different ways, the authors assess the implications of the concept of intermediality and present an analysis of emergent academic frameworks and new fields of knowledge-making. Through their analysis of intermediality in literature, theatre, music, dance, art and digital technology they explore how intermediality impacts on learning, teaching and research about and into our cultural industries and heritage. Taken together, the articles reveal the potentially radical intermedial forces that are in play as a result of intermedial exploration across disciplines, academic areas, art forms, media and modes of learning.

Underpinning all of the articles, whether explicitly addressed or implicitly acknowledged, is digital technology – the new media – and its relationship to contemporary life. Whether it is through a practical exploration of the impact of new media applications on traditionally ascribed art forms, or through theoretical and historical insights into definitions of media and the inter-relationships of «new» and «old» media; the driving concern of the journal is the application and reception of digital technology into our lives – and the political and educational consequences of its arrival on our cultural consciousness.

For ease of reference, the content of the journal is divided into two sections: theory and practice, but, of course, they are inter-related and readers are invited to make the connections. The theoretical perspectives on intermediality, although written independently and from different perspectives, share a common interest in «change» – change in the ways that intermediality is conceptualised

in relation to existing paradigms of knowledge; exploration of the medial changes that happen through the process of creating intermedial work; the change in perspective that is achieved by the way that artists and audiences participate in intermedial practice; and the potential for radical change that is encompassed in the concept of intermediality, which has within its conceptual framework the idea of «becoming» – of moving into something else – of deconstructing existing paradigms and therefore of perceiving (and acting upon) the structures that control us, differently.

The journal begins with a concise overview of the terminology and conceptual field of intermediality in performance as interpreted by CHIEL KATTENBELT in «Intermediality in theatre and performance: definitions, perceptions and medial relationships». Kattenbelt provides clear definitions of multi-, trans-, and intermediality set in the discourse of the arts and media relationships. He locates intermediality in the then «new technologies» of the early twentieth century and the work of the Avant-garde, which was fundamental in breaking the illusions of reality established by nineteenth century art perspectives. Kattenbelt relates the Avant-garde fracturing of reality and manipulation of time and space to the work of contemporary theatre directors. Working at the book-ends of the twentieth century, both sets of artists, Kattenbelt argues, create artistically exciting intermedial performances where the mutual relations between materiality, mediality and aesthetic conventions of making and perceiving theatre are changed: redefined through performance that carries within it a «conscious striving for a breaking open of the cultural spheres and action domains».

The relationship of media definition and perception is expanded and set in a historical context by KATI RÖTTGER in «*F@ust vers. 3.0*: A (Hi)story of theatre and media». Acknowledging first that «there is a problem inherent in any useful and widely applicable definition of media» Röttger is impressive in her exploration and critique of a largely European discourse on media. Setting her contribution amongst the literature of Paech, Luhmann, McLuhan, Fiebach, Meyer, and the German philosopher Sybille Krämer, Röttger moves from preliminary reflections on media theory *per se*; to media theory in relation to theatre; then towards an intermediality of theatre; and finally to define theatre as an intermedial event and cultural practice. In her definition, Röttger proposes that intermediality in theatre has three important aspects. The first is embodiment; the second is performative; and the third is intermediality as an «epistemic condition of media perception». Röttger argues that media do not produce anything but they do restructure and stage new inter-relations, new perspectives and new viewpoints on the world; and that the most important thing about «a definition of theatre as a medium of vision is that it is a temporal event». She sets her ideas in the historical context of Goethe's use of the Faust-

legend to highlight two competitive orders of knowledge and media by presenting, on the one hand, «the romantic, electric, and Mephistotelian ways of seeing and, on the other hand, the classic, literal and scientific order of knowledge». She then applies her ideas through an analysis of how the Catalan theatre group Fura dels Baus transfer this conflict to the contemporary stage in a synthesis of text, music, video clips, the internet, lighting and actors. The manipulation of the actors to perform with and in the technology, and a remediation of the Faust legend, culminates in the performing bodies of the Fura dels Baus theatre group becoming enmeshed, literally and in a virtual sense, «in the net» on the stage. As the audience view the scene and actively play with the new media at the same time, so actor and audience all become players in an open cultural event, which leads to a reconceptualization of theatre as non-hierarchical and inter-active performance space.

The problematic place and space of «the body» of the actor in mediated performance is explored in greater detail by RALF REMSHARDT in «Beyond Performance Studies: mediated performance and the posthuman». Remshardt's aim is to set the discourse around intermedial performance within a larger context because «the discipline of performance studies has yet to find a coherent approach to the type of performance that is not grounded in the presence of the body». His position is that distributed performances, immersive virtual realities, televisual presence, digital avatars and computer generated images all demand that we think through the theoretical paradigms that have served us well in the past, but need now to be reconsidered. In his first section, he provides a very persuasive account of the current performance studies debate, from which he moves to argue that «the view that ties performance to individual human agency, to the performer and the body of the performer is a liability in the study of mediated performance».

In his second section, Remshardt considers «digital doubling» and the «presence of the body» on video and suggests that video repositions performance in the margins where «one mediated mode adjoins and creates tension with the other» and he asks what happens when personal agency is reduced, for example, when control of the performance is given to the computer programme or cybernetic system – as with Stelarc's *Fractal Flesh* and *Exoskeleton*, or through the deployment of an avatar. Remshardt considers that the categorical difference of computer generated images (CGI) is that it is «the performance of no-body emanating from no-space in no-time» and argues that as the body was the locus and raison d'être of performance theory, so the locus and raison d'être for posthuman performance theory is consciousness. Thus, Remshardt foregrounds the need for new theoretical and methodological modes of understandings about mediated posthuman performance in the context of the work of Gibson, Ascott, Hayles, Hofstadter, Birringer, Murphie, and Melrose. In

a short coda, Remshardt notices that theorists writing in the posthuman digital debate seem to hanker for categories that are tinged with nostalgia, such as «body», «presence» and «narrative». However, he concludes: «You can go back, they seem to say, only as long as you understand that there is no going back» and I think that many will agree with him.

In the final theoretical article, «Towards Intermediality in contemporary cultural practices and education» ASUNCION LÓPEZ-VARELA AZCÁRATE and STEVEN TÖTÖSY widen the debate by turning to negotiations of culture and education, and they explore how inter-cultural and educational practices employ new media. They argue that intermediality raises a number of issues that include social and cultural practices, education, aspects of globalization and the cultural industries. Considering intermediality from the perspective of comparative cultural studies – a theoretical and methodological framework built on tenets of (radical) constructivism, inter-disciplinarity, and the contextual and empirical study of culture –, Azcaráte and Tötösy look to fill the gap that exists in the social and humanities discourse relating to multimodal culture, where intermediality may be analysed as a relationship set in-between the employment practices of multimodal media in contemporary cultural practices and in education. Thus, they take us into the location and spaces where «intermediality and interdisciplinary study touch and then withdraw themselves from definite territorial demarcations as their points of encounter constantly shift». They argue that there is a need for a more complex theoretical understanding of intermedial processes and on the practical cultural implications of intermediality based in new media for its users. For them, intermediality is related to critical literacy, where intertextuality is defined as a first level intermediality through its narrative structures transgressing medial boundaries. They draw on McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin, Lehtonen, Muller *et al.*, to argue that «the sense and practice of agency and the very notion of mediation implies that media studies and related disciplines, such as comparative cultural studies, cannot continue to be seen as isolated monads but need to become part of more complex research networks, which work both in scholarship and education as well as in cultural practices in general».

Their idea of bringing together scholarship, education and cultural practices is witnessed in the development of web technology, which leads to issues around copyright, open access publishing, media literacy, knowledge management, the preservation of heritage and national objectives of cultural co-operation, which they identify as being located in historical and artistic patrimony, the strengthening of national identities and the expansion of their markets, which need to be orientated towards inter-cultural co-production. Azcárate and Tötösy provide examples of intermedial practice by web users that are particularly pertinent at this moment of mass immigration and emigration within and outside

the European countries. Their research findings include those who are using web technology to create their own intermedial communities, and who are looking to find a space in cyberspace in which they can voice and express their identity and they conclude that «Both resistance and participation should replace resignation. Intermediality and the supplementary relations between subject and media always hinges on the notion of becoming. Becoming holds an "in-between" space, a gap between absence and presence that invites an analysis to the process of intermediality in terms of philosophies of difference (Derrida, 1967), as an opening up but also a crossing-over. Comparative bridges to cross over from the theoretical development, with its contingent application of intermediality to cultural remediation and back towards inter-culturality would advance society in all its contexts and processes». Thus, the radical potential of intermediality as a concept of change is expressed clearly and related to the need for social change in the global community, which digital technology brings together for all those who have the economic means to access it.

The links discernable in the theoretical contributions are mirrored in the practice-based articles. For example, LOUISE LEPAGE continues Remshardt's theoretical discussion on consciousness and presents an extended exploration of Katherine Hayles's work on posthuman ontology in her own article «Posthuman perspectives and postdramatic theatre: the theory and practice of hybrid ontology in Katie Mitchell's *The Waves*». In an intriguing article that explores the intermedial implications of digital technology and the human body sharing central stage, Lepage suggests that there is a need to interrogate changing models of theatrical forms and subjectivity. Through her analysis of Katie Mitchell's 2006-2007 National Theatre production she comes to the conclusion that «consciousness is specific to experiences of embodiment. There is no reality "out there". *The Waves*, in effect, in its precise use of forms, argues that the production, the subject, and, by implication, the world, are formed of specific organisations which alter the very terms of cognition or consciousness. Such ways of perceiving ourselves and the world are challenging because traditional ontology is turned on its head. *The Waves* suggests that the subject is posthuman, a specifically and materially instantiated hybrid being, whose ways of thinking, perceiving, and being, are consequent of physical and emergent processes. In Mitchell's world, there is no transcendental subject formed of mind and body».

In «Bound to Honour: the detention of David Hicks as performance» SANDRA GATTENHOF examines the relationship of theatrical performance to the actual real life detention of the Australian citizen David Hicks in Guantanamo Bay as exemplified in the production of *Honour Bound* (2006). Gattenhof assesses a combination of set, sound and lighting with dance, aerial work and the extremes of physical theatre which work to «symbolically communicate the confronting aspects of imprisonment and incarceration and raises questions

about human rights, justice and the role of politics in the war on terrorism». Referencing Chapple and Kattenbelt's analysis of intermediality as being «in-between realities», Gattenhof concludes that «This mirrors the reportage of David Hicks' incarceration. Somewhere in-between the mediatic portrayal and Hicks' personal experience lies the truth. This is what *Honour Bound* does. It asks the audience to question the nature of truth. It is not an Aristotelian narrative in structure with a neatly packaged resolution. Instead, it asks questions, poses problems and then invites the audience to juxtapose their lived experience of events, with the images, soundscapes and voices of David, Terry and Bev Hicks».

It is the aesthetics of interdisciplinary and intermedial work that is at the heart of the matter in three articles written by practitioners who are also academic researchers and teachers. They explore what happens when the traditionally ascribed art forms of dance, music and painting meet and mingle with the hard wires of digital technology.

In «Remediation of moving bodies: aesthetic perceptions of a live, digitised and animated dance performance» PAULINE BROOKS sets her research project amongst the philosophical and aesthetic debates of dance and technology in performance, with its focus on the tension between «the acceptance or rejection of "unnatural" remediated bodies and "natural" live bodies moving in the stage space». A professional choreographer and currently collaborating on an international teaching and learning project on choreography and technology, Brooks discusses her own dance performance project *Interface 2,* which involved live student dancers, animated computer projections – a remediated creation of the live section – and the interface of live dancers with dancers on film undertaken as part of an undergraduate module. She presents a fine analysis and discussion of the responses and perceptions of an invited audience to the staging of the performance, and in tandem with this, she reflects on the opportunities that the use of digital technology in dance presents for student learning as well as some of the likely impact on teaching and research.

In contrast, EMILIE CRAPOULET brings the perspective of a combined interest in the relationship between music and literature, and as a solo pianist who has given piano recitals in Europe, Australia and the United States, as well as being a member of chamber and orchestral ensembles. In «From intermedial music to interactive multimedia event: the performance of Ravel's *Miroirs*: The aesthetic consequences of a move towards multimediality in contemporary music performance practice» Crapoulet discusses the intermedial ontology of music: «the acoustic (or musical) medium; the visual medium; and the linguistic (or literary) medium», all of which, she argues, contribute equally to the effect of the performance as a whole, but which are not always visible to the audience. Her discussion of the influence of poetry and the art of Monet to Ravel's music

make for a fascinating insight into the unseen areas of intermediality. In exploring the move from implicit intermediality to explicit multimediality in the performance of Ravel's collection for piano solo, Crapoulet seeks «to redefine the artistic function of the performer and sow the seeds of a theory of the multimedia piano recital».

KAREN SAVAGE, on the other hand, works from the perspective of a film practitioner, academic and Director, with Dr Garrett Monaghan, of the International *Sixty Second Film and Video Festival* who has a particular interest in intermedial space. Here she examines the intermedial spaces created by performance practitioners Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie in their film/video/performance piece «Men in the Wall», which is located in the space of an Art Gallery. In «Black to White: The fading process of intermediality in the gallery space» Savage conceptualizes intermediality as «the relationships *in-between* the media and practices (creation, presentation and reception) and how the media communicate with each other and the participants». In her key image of the mollusc, which leaves a slither of a trace behind itself with every movement it makes, Savage suggests that the mollusc functions as a metaphorical and architectural analogy for the process and practice of interdisciplinary work in intermedial spaces.

Interdisciplinary work that was both creative and operative in a digital network drew together students and staff for the intermedial project «Convergence and creativity in telematic performance: *The Adding Machine*», which is discussed by GEORGE H. BROWN and GERHARD HAUCK. Their article analyses the artistic, dramaturgical, and technical discoveries made during the production process, and offers theoretical insights about convergent telematic performances. That the project allowed them to explore, in theatrical terms, the range of communicative choices provided by digital technology and its associated media (video, sound, etc.) was clearly hugely beneficial for the theatre departments involved, but it also offers a way forward for intermedial analysis. As they report «Multi-point telematic productions like *The Adding Machine* have the potential to be interactive on a global scale that is truly inter- and cross-cultural. […] In conjunction with some of the latest developments in computer-generated special effects, telematic performances facilitate the real-time co-existence of live performers, with mediated performers and digitally generated avatars; they can be streamed live onto the web to audiences counting in the millions; and they enable theatre researchers to access an unprecedented amount of data to back-up their theoretical meditations on as yet unresolved questions in performance and reception studies, and thus lead to the advancement of a truly global approach to theatre and performance research».

We can see here how digital technology and the concepts of intermediality come together to provide a potentially global network that may incorporate

world wide learners in a new performative intermediality that includes radical potential within an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural intermedial form.

What this colection of articles has revealed is that intermediality is about the process of becoming something else. It is about questioning our artistic practice and how we teach it; it is an exploration of new intermedial performance practices; it is about moving to inhabit different philosophical and aesthetic spaces that reside, touch and are located in-between media. Crucially, intermediality as explored in this edition of the journal, presents intercultural and intermedial ways «of becoming», as well as learning in and about digital society. I hope that this special edition, which has been made possible by the support of José Ramón Prado-Pérez and the Universitat Jaume I, will provide a platform – a benchmark – from which others can and will take the debate further.

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Artículos / *Articles*

Theories of Intermediality

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Intermediality in Theatre and Performance: Definitions, Perceptions and Medial Relationships

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ABSTRACT:: This article provides a brief overview of the discourse on the relationships between the arts and media over the twentieth century, with specific reference to the concepts of mediality: multi-, trans- and intermediality set in discourse of arts and media relationships. I discuss the concepts, together with the impact of the growth of media technological developments, on the perception of audiences to the works of Wagner, Kandinsky, Meyerhold, Balázs, Eisenstein, Brecht, and to contemporary theatre and performance-makers, before concluding with a short presentation of my own current thinking about the concept and purpose of intermediality.[1]

Keywords: multimediality, transmediality, intermediality, digital media, sense perception.

RESUMEN: Este artículo presenta una panorámica general del discurso sobre las relaciones entre las artes y los medios de comunicación a lo largo del siglo XX, con una mención especial a los conceptos de medialidad, multimedia, transmedia e intermedialidad. Se aborda el impacto del desarrollo tecnológico de los medios en la percepción de la audiencia, centrándose en el trabajo de Wagner, Kandisky, Meyerhold, Balázs, Eisenstein, Brech y el teatro y la representación contemporáneos. Se concluye con una apreciación personal sobre el estado actual del concepto y propósito de la intermedialidad.

Palabras clave: multimedia, transmedia, intermedialidad, medios digitales, percepción sensorial.

1. Extracted material used in this article was delivered at *Intermediality: performance and pedagogy*, at an event funded by the Higher Education Academy subject area for Theatre, Music and Dance (Palatine) and hosted by the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield.

1. Introduction

A significant feature of recent art and media theoretical discourses is recognition that the arts and media should not be studied in their own historical developments and with their own rules and specifications, but rather in the broader context of their differences and co-relations. What is notable also is that in the discipline of theatre studies a change of paradigm is taking place. One contributing factor to the change in paradigm might be that our contemporary culture has become a media culture, with all the performative features that this entails, which is not to say a mediatized culture (Auslander, 1999). Another feature is that contemporary art practices are increasingly interdisciplinary practices. As has happened so often in the past, artists who are working in different disciplines are today working with each other – particularly in the domain of theatre – their creative work is «finding each other» – not only metaphorically but also literally on the performance space of the stage, and I suggest that this is because theatre provides a space in which different art forms can affect each other quite profoundly. Maybe we could even say: when two or more different art forms come together a process of theatricalization occurs. This is not only because theatre is able to incorporate all other art forms, but also because theatre is the «art of the performer» and so constitutes the basic pattern of all the arts (Kattenbelt, 2006). This holds true as long as the notion of art remains attached to human creativity; to human individuals who stage themselves in words, images and sounds, in order to make his or her own experiences perceptible to the audience; and that this is done with the intention to explore to what extent life experiences are shared with other human beings (Seel, 1985: 127).

In a variety of art and media discourses, a wide range of concepts have been developed in order to characterize specific relationships between the arts and media. What we can notice is that historical contributions to these discourses are usually descriptions of how the relationships between arts and media have evolved, whether or not that began with the intention to deduce rules and regularities in this process. However, theoretical contributions are usually conceptualizations of specific relationships between arts and media (whether or not with the intention to set out the criteria on which specific distinctions are based). This article is mainly a theoretical one, although it is based on some historical assumptions, and so I focus my attention on three concepts of mediality: multi-, trans- and intermediality. To phrase it very briefly, «multimediality» refers to the occurrence where there are many media in one and the same object; «transmediality» refers to the transfer from one medium to another medium (media change); and «intermediality» refers to the co-relation

of media in the sense of mutual influences between media. These concepts are not only used in different discourses, but often also in one and the same discourse where they can operate on different levels. The levels are not always explicitly distinguished from each other, and a consequence of this is that it is not always clear or certain what is or could be understood by these terms. My intention is to provide some clarification about the three concepts by defining these terms as distinctive from each other. However, it is important to state first that the concepts of multi-, trans-, and intermediality do not exclude each other. They stand for three different perspectives from which media phenomena can be studied with respect to their mediality. I also need to make it clear that I regard the different arts *as* media – that is my starting point. Personally, I do not speak any longer about arts *and* media, as in, for example, theatre *and* media, but only as media.

In many publications that have occurred in the past ten years or so, which have talked about the arts and aspects of their mediality, and about the relationships between the arts as media, we can find some assumptions that show up again and again, which could be summarized as follows:

1. Media changes and co-relations between media are important tendencies in the development of the arts since the beginning of the twentieth century. These are usually associated with the blurring and crossing boundaries between media; with the hybridization of media utterances; with intertextual relationships between media; with intermedial relationships between media; and with an increasing self-reference and self-reflection of the arts as media.

2. Media changes and co-relations between media have resulted in new forms of representation; new dramaturgical strategies; new principles of structuring and staging words, images and sounds; new ways of positioning performing bodies in time and space; of creating time-space relationships; of developing new modes of perception; and of generating new cultural, social and psychological meanings.

3. Technological innovations have played and are still playing a prominent part in the development of arts and media and in the interaction between all modern and postmodern media.

4. The historical avant-garde created the necessary conditions under which media change and co-relations between media could develop as important features of modern and post-modern art, in particular as far as it is related to the exchangeability of expressive means and aesthetic conventions between media, and to the playful staging of signs from which modern and post-modern arts derive a pre-eminently performative (not to say theatrical) and self-critical aspect.

2. Multimediality

In art and media theoretical discourses the concept of multimediality is used at two different levels. On the one hand at the level of sign systems (word, image, sound) and on the other hand at the level of different disciplines as distinguished as different (institutionalized) cultural action domains or practices (literature, visual arts, music, theatre, film, television, video, internet etc). At the level of sign systems an utterance, for example, is multimedial because it consists of a combination of words (written, shown or spoken), images (still or moving, graphic or photographic) and/or sounds (environmental sounds, soundscapes, music, speech etc). Similarly, digital objects like websites may be considered as multimedial in so far as they are equipped with words, images and/or sounds. It is interesting to note that computers, in which words, images and sounds are made, processed and played back, are usually referred to as multimedia computers. The term was invented by the computer industry in order to emphasize that the computer can be used for many different aims such as editing video recordings, composing music and playing games. Multimediality is often mentioned as a feature of digital media, which in interaction with the features of virtuality, interactivity and connectivity constitute the specificity of digital media (Raessens, 2001). Thus, at the level of the sign systems, we could consider (analogous to digital media) theatre performances, sound films, television broadcasts and video recordings as multimedial.

The multimediality of media is usually, but not always, restricted to audio-visuality, that is to say, to what we perceive with our so-called «distance senses», our eyes and ears, which are the two senses that are so important for developing our intelligent capacity of structuring the world and ourselves in relation to it, in time and space – a capacity, by the way, which allows us also to keep things at a distance. Time and space are still the two main dimensions by which we distinguish media from each other and determine their specificity. Such a determination of the specificity of media is usually related to their materiality, although we may notice that in the media comparative discourse there is apprehensiveness about ascribing the specific features of a medium to its materiality.

At the level of differentiating between media, the concept of multimediality refers to a combination of different media instead of different sign systems in one and the same object. Strictly speaking, this means that only theatre can be ascribed as multimedial, for theatre is the only medium that can incorporate all other media without damaging the specificity of these media and its own specificity (Kandinsky, 1912/1923) at least as far as the materiality of the different media is concerned. Theatre on film and theatre on television or on video or DVD is, in its mediatized form, no longer theatre but respectively film,

television, video or DVD, and, as such, at most a representation of theatre; whereas film, television, video and DVD are, even as elements of a theatrical performance, still film, television, video and DVD; although the images and sounds that these media provide are not only screened or played back, but also staged, and, in this capacity, not only cinematic, televisual, videographic or digital, but at the same time theatrical.

It is because of its capacity to incorporate all media that we can consider theatre as a hypermedium, that is to say, as a medium that can contain all media. Maybe it is because of this specificity that the theatre has always played and continues to play such an important role in the exchanges between the arts. In contemporary theatre, digital technology functions in the exchanges between the arts as an interface. To think this assumption one step further, we might say that at the level of the medium, theatre is a physical hypermedium, whereas at the level of sign systems the Internet is a virtual hypermedium. It is because it is a hypermedium that theatre provides, as no other art, a stage for intermediality. On this stage, the performer is the player of the different media who acts in the empty spaces between the media. Concluding this section, we may also say that multimediality can also be defined with respect to a project, instead of an individual object, for example, the project *Tulse Luper Suitcases* by Peter Greenaway «[which] includes three feature films, a TV series, 92 DVDs, CD-ROMs, and books» (http://petergreenaway.co.uk/tulse.htm- accessed 16-02-2007)

3. Transmediality

The concept of transmediality is mainly used in art and communication theoretical discourses for referring to the change (transposition, translation etc) from one medium to another. This transfer may apply to the content (to what is represented, the story) or to the form (in formalistic terms we might say to the principles of construction, stylistic procedures and aesthetic conventions). At the level of the content the concept refers in particular to those media changes which become absent, for example, the way that the specific features of the source medium become lost in the process of transposition. Notably, most feature films that are based on a novel are transpositions of stories, which do not take into account the specific literary features of the original narration. These features are usually ignored: once converted into the other medium very little reminds us of the medium specificity of the literary original. This is connected with the compulsion of transparency that applies to the feature film as a mass medium because the ultimate consequence of a film medium that defines its audience as a mass is that it wipes out its mediality for the sake of an optimal accessibility of the world that is represented in the film. This transparency is, like the classical

mode of film art itself, an invention of the 19th-century novel. In the course of the 19th century the narrator hides himself more and more behind the story that is told - as if mediation is not the case at all. With his disappearance, the narrator deprives himself from the possibility of comments, which also implies that he sacrifices to a certain extent his authority. However, there is also something to gain: on the one hand, the possibility of an accurate and detailed descriptions of the events and actions that are taking place in the story; on the other hand, an extensive description of the experiences through which one or more characters in the story are living – and it is the same with the classical mode of film art.

A transposition of construction principles, stylistic procedures and aesthetic conventions means that one medium takes-up or imitates the representational principles of another medium. As an example that is particularly pertinent to theatre and film we may think of the free exchange of expressive means between different media that are characteristic of German Expressionism. Such a taking-up or imitation by another medium may be considered either as an ideal, or as a shortcoming. Considered as an ideal, I think of Vsevolod Meyerhold's idea of a cinematification of the theatre (Meyerhold, 1930: 254). What he had in mind was a high speed alternation of individual scenes - like in film, which according to Meyerhold, did not necessarily imply that film projections should be used in the theatre performance even though he was one of the first directors who experimented with film projections in the theatre (Murray, 1972). Considered as a shortcoming, we may think of Béla Balázs' characterization of film in its beginnings (let's say until 1915) as «photographed theatre» (Balázs, 1973 [1938]: 150). At that historical moment, film relied on the methods of representation of theatre, at least within the individual scenes, which presented spatial totality and invariability of perspective and distance. Film began to develop its own language from the moment that it broke through the theatrical methods of representation, which meant that the space was no longer shown as a totality, and that perspective and distance could change all the time by changing the position and the framing of the camera.

The taking-up or imitation of the methods of representation of one medium by another medium can also function as a specific, medium-crossing form of intertextuality, which implies that one medium refers to another medium (Balme, 2001: 148-150). In the book *Transmedialität* the concept of transmediality emphasizes, in particular, the process of transition from the source medium to the target medium. Simanowski (2006: 44) defines transmediality as «the change of a medium into another medium as a constituting and conditioning event of a hybrid aesthetic phenomenon» [my translation]. Hybridization stands for the mixture of the diverse. When transmediality is conceived of as the representation of one medium in and by

another medium, we come very close to the frequently used concept of *remediation*, introduced by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (1999). They define remediation as «the representation of one medium in another» (Bolter and Grusin, 1999: 45). They consider remediation as «a defining characteristic of the new digital media» (Bolter and Grusin, 1999: 45). They distinguish different forms or grades of remediation dependent on the specific effect that is desired by the artist. They recognize two motives of remediation: tribute and rivalry. In the case of tribute, the new medium imitates the old medium by putting itself aside. In the case of rivalry, the new medium places the old medium in a new context or absorbs the old medium almost completely. These two motives correspond with the «double logic» of remediation: transparent immediacy and hypermediacy. The first logic aims at making the user forget the medium, whereas the second logic aims at making the user aware of the medium. Both logics are inextricably linked to each other and in the end they aim at the same thing, which is to exceed the restrictions of representation in order to intensify the experience of the real, even in those cases in which we know that the real is everything but real, but it could be real (Bolter and Grusin, 1999: 53).

4. Intermediality

The concept of intermediality is, like the concepts of multi- or transmediality, used in different discourses. This is particularly pertinent because over many years the concept of intermediality has been so frequently used in different discourses and in different meanings that it is almost impossible to map out its semantic field or range. Irina Rajewski (2005: 44) is right when she states that everybody who uses the concept intermediality is obliged to define it. As far as the concept is used as distinct from other concepts of mediality, it emphasizes, in particular, the aspect of mutual influence (interaction). For my own contribution to the art and media theoretical discourses I like to use the concept intermediality with respect to those co-relations between different media that result in a redefinition of the media that are influencing each other, which in turn leads to a refreshed perception. Intermediality assumes a co-relation in the actual sense of the word, that is to say a mutual affect. Taken together, the redefinition of media co-relationships and a refreshed perception resulting from the co-relationship of media means that previously existing medium specific conventions are changed, which allows for new dimensions of perception and experience to be explored. In making this claim, I recognise that intermediality is an operative aspect of different media, which is more closely connected to the idea of diversity, discrepancy and hypermediacy (in the sense of Bolter and

Grusin) than to the idea of unity, harmony and transparency. Intermediality assumes an in-between space – «an inter» – from which or within which the mutual affects take place.

To give some historical references, the concept of intermediality today can be more closely associated with the *Bühnenkompositionen* (stage compositions) of Wassily Kandinsky (1912/1923) as opposed to the *Gesamtkunstwerk* of Richard Wagner (1850) because Wagner strived with his music dramas for a reunification and reintegration of the arts under the primacy of music. Wagner's aim for the «artwork of the future» of his day was for the spectator to be immersed into the represented world. Kandinsky on the contrary strived with his stage compositions for a theatre that could function again as «a hidden magnet» that makes the different arts affect each other. The interplay of the arts, as Kandinsky (in Bill, 1973: 125) imagined it, as «a dynamics of musical, pictorial and choreographed movements» was, according to him, only possible because each individual art had developed its own purity of expression in a relative independence from the other arts. Kandinsky's aim was not illusion, but the expression of inner experiences («the vibrations of the soul»).

We may also think of the concept of «montage of attractions» which Sergej Eisenstein (1981 [1923]: 16) developed initially for the theatre and later applied to film: the different elements of the performance should, so to say, crash on each other, with the result that a new energy is released, which directly, that is to say, physically affects a shock experience. We may also think of Bertolt Brecht (2004 [1930]: 102) who advocates in the prologue of his *Mahagonny* «a radical separation of the elements» in order to thwart a melting together of the arts - as is the aim of the Gesamtkunstwerk - and by that to prevent the spectator being brought under control of «magic», «hypnosis» and «unworthy ecstasy». The clear borderlines that Brecht wanted to draw should create in-between spaces, which the spectator actively needs to fill in. Moving forward a little historically, we may also think of the montage and fragmentation strategies, which Robert Wilson, Alain Platel, Gerardjan Rijnders and Jan Lauwers - just to mention a few theatre directors - used in order to knock over the traditional interruption techniques of the theatre.

In the course of many centuries, these interruption techniques have been developed in order to escape from the restrictions of the closed continuum of the «here and now» in which the theatre performance takes place, without affecting the coherency of the represented story and the causality of the represented action. Fragmentation, repetition, duplication and slowing down are used in order to intensify the continuity of the performance itself instead of sacrificing this continuity for the sake of an illusion of continuity (namely the continuity of the represented action). In contemporary theatre a notable example is the theatre

performances made by Guy Cassiers, who makes extensive use of new media technologies in his productions in order to represent from different perspectives the inwardness of experience and the outwardness of action. Indeed, in his theatre performances experience and action are separated from each other in order to connect them again in a new way. Cassiers represents different times next to each other (spatialisation of time) as well as different worlds, of which each world is connected with specific modes of perception and experience (Merx, 2003/2006). We may also think of the group Hotel Modern (http://www.hotelmodern.nl [accessed 16-02-2007]) and Carina Molier who, by using video in their performances, confront the reality of illusion with the illusion of reality, aware as they are of the difference between live and mediatized representations. We may also think of the many theatre performances, films, installations and exhibitions by Peter Greenaway who has, like no other artist, and as an artist who works in many disciplines, examined the possibilities of modular dramaturgy, in particular, in its application to theatre and film. In particular, through his use of digital technologies he has significantly extended the epical methods of representations of theatre and film. Thus, I agree with Oosterling (2003) when he says that in art and culture philosophical discourses today, intermediality refers particularly to the correlation between art, science and ethics (politics) as a conscious striving for a breaking open of the cultural value spheres or action domains. From a trans- and intermedial perspective it is important to examine to what extent these changes and correlations have been decisive for the development of new modes of experience and expression. We need also to question how much the ontology of media is relevant, assuming that the dynamics of trans- and intermedial processes primarily concern the mutual relations between materiality, mediality and aesthetic convention of making and perceiving.

I began this article by setting out some of the assumptions that we regularly find in discourses on media changes and correlations between media. From a trans- and intermedial perspective it is important to examine to what extent these changes and correlations have been decisive for the development of new modes of experience and expression. We need also to question how much the ontology of media is relevant, assuming that the dynamics of trans- and intermedial processes primarily concern the mutual relations between materiality, mediality and aesthetic convention of making and perceiving. However, for research on media changes and co-relations between media, the interdisciplinary arts practice is the main point of reference.

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F@ust vers. 3.0: A (Hi)story of Theatre and Media

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ABSTRACT: The article illuminates Goethe's *Faust* (1 and 2) by tracing the theoretical conceptualization of an intermedial approach to theatre and performance, and argues for a historical dimension to the medial constitution of perception. While Goethe used the Faust-legend in his play to highlight two competitive orders of knowledge and media by presenting, on the one hand, the romantic, electric, and Mephistotelian ways of seeing and, on the other hand, the classic, literal and scientific order of knowledge; the Catalan theatre group Fura dels Baus transfer this conflict to the digital age in their remediation of the Faust-legend on the contemporary stage.

Keywords: intermedial performance, digital culture, Fura dels Baus, embodiment, media theory

RESUMEN: Este artículo propone una relectura del *Fausto* (1 y 2) de Goethe a través de una conceptualización teórica intermedial del teatro y la representación que defiende la dimensión histórica de la constitución intermediada de la percepción. Mientras que Goethe utiliza la leyenda fáustica para subrayar dos órdenes de conocimiento en competencia, por un lado, las maneras románticas, eléctricas y mefistofélicas de observar, y por otro, el orden clásico, literal y científico del conocimiento, el grupo catalán de teatro La Fura dels Baus traslada el conflicto a la era digital en su transducción de la leyenda fáustica a la escena contemporánea.

Palabras clave: espectáculo intermedial, cultura digital, Fura dels Baus, teoría de los media.

I knew there could be light not moon-light
start light day light
and candle light, I knew I knew I saw the
lightening light,
I saw it light, I said I I I must have the light,
and what did I do oh what did I too I said
I would sell my soul all through but I knew I
knew
that electric light was all true [...]
Doctor Faustus Lights the Light!
Gertrude Stein

1.0. Prelude

Within his own lifetime, Dr. Georg Fausten (circa 1480–1540) healer, astrologer, alchemist, «magician and necromancer» (Benz, 1964: 3) became part of media history through his magical practices: his skill in handling smoke, crystal balls and other media that he used to foretell the future. The stories that were told about his deeds generated the Faust-legend that has been handed down in countless adaptations and remains active to this day. Fausten provides many starting points for a media-historical analysis because approximately forty years after his death, earlier oral accounts about Faust became the written accounts of the various Faust-stories, which were subsequently published by the typographer Spies in Frankfurt/Main as the chapbook *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* in 1587. Thanks to the infant typographic technology, the chapbook spread quickly – after the Bible it was the second most-read book in Germany – making its way to England where, as a dramatic text it became part of theatre history through Christopher Marlowe's adaptation in 1604. Marlowe started a long tradition of dramaturgic adaptations, theatre performances and puppet theatre, which two hundred years later inspired Goethe to his poetic adaptation (1790-1831). Following Goethe, the Faust material has been adapted many times in literature, theatre, the visual arts,[1] music, opera, ballet, movies and television.

1.1. Preliminary Reflections on Media Theory

There is a problem that is inherent in any historical and any theoretical perspective on media, which is the formulation of a useful and widely applicable definition of media. Current literature reveals on the one hand, occasional synonymous use of the terms technologies and media; and on the other hand, the

1. See Wegner (1962).

interdependence of various media and different art genres; or rather, a more or less effective correlation of sign systems inherent in every symbolic representation. This makes it difficult to distinguish clearly between apparatuses, art forms, and media. According to Joachim Paech, the central problem of present research in the field of intermediality is that the presentation of one artistic form in another, for example the film presentation of a novel, is nothing more than a transfer of contents from one container into another.[2] Thus, the distinction between the definitions of artistic form and medium becomes vague because it is uncertain what specific areas are covered by terms such as medium or mediality (Paech, 1998: 17). The major difficulty in defining a medium lies in the fact that «the medium as such cannot be observed since it appears only in the form that the medium itself creates» (Paech, 1998: 23).

While Paech solves this problem by developing an intermedial theory of transformation,[3] which is based implicitly on Niklas Luhmann's concept of form (Luhmann, 1986: 6-15), the German philosopher Sybille Krämer expands Marshall McLuhan's structuralist media-historic approach[4] by saying «Media function like window panes: the more transparent they are, the better they fulfil their tasks» (Krämer, 1998 *a*: 74). Thus she reformulates McLuhan's well-known dictum that the content of a medium is always another medium (McLuhan, 1964: 8).[5] However, at the same time, Krämer criticizes Luhmann's designations of medium and form – a criticism that is based on the observation that Luhmann's concept of medium is neutralized and suspended from any meaning by the medium's capacity to adopt the various forms that he ascribes to it. In addition, according to Krämer (1998 *a*: 77), the system-theoretical point of view tacitly rests on the traditional semiotic distinction between signifier and signified, which inevitably brings any media-theoretical research geared towards the language of materiality to a dead end. Therefore, Krämer suggests a two-step procedure to more adequately define a medium, which is to distinguish it both from the concept of the signifier/signified and from the notion of a technical instrument. She modifies the somewhat simplistic equation of the medium and message by following the tenets of Derrida's philosophy of writing (*écriture*), which leads her to the conclusion that if there cannot be any language that is outside speech, writing or gestural articulation because each of them leave their traces on language, so «The medium is not simply the message; rather, the trace

2. See Paech, in Helbig (ed.) (1998: 15). For a discussion of *media switch* see Balme (1999: 154).
3. «Transformations» are «forms of differentiation operating during the transfer from one form to another, so that the less advanced form becomes the medium of the more advanced one» (Paech, 1998: 23).
4. McLuhan (1964) defines a medium as everything that serves to extend one's own sensorium.
5. To explain that the medium is the message even when its «contents» hide the medium's real nature McLuhan (1964: 8-9) uses the example of electric light: light remains «pure information» without «a message» when it does not illuminate, for example, an advertisement text letter by letter, like the projection of a film where the projection surface usually remains unnoticed.

of the medium is inscribed in the message» (Krämer, 1998 *a*: 81). Furthermore, in order to grasp more clearly the instrumental dimension of the media, which assumes particular importance when media are conceived primarily as technical media Krämer (1998 *a*: 84) distinguishes between «"tools", understood as technical instruments» and «"apparatuses", regarded as technical media». However, Krämer does not consider this distinction as any sort of master plan, but rather she embraces its discontinuity. Her primary aim is to differentiate between functions: while technology understood as a tool is a labour-saving device (increasing efficiency), technology regarded as apparatus creates artificial worlds. Crucially, for Kramer (1998: 85), the function of «*world creation* is the productive significance of media technology».

1.2. Media Theoretical Reflections on Theatre

Kramer's definition is important for a media theoretical analysis of theatre insofar as it can help us to clarify the question of a mediality of theatre, which to date remains unsolved.[6] It is striking, for example, that although Joachim Fiebach in his essay on communication and theatre identifies structural similarities between theatre and other (new) media from a historical perspective, ultimately he denies theatre the status of a medium:

> A theatrical event, however, constitutes a fundamentally different reality than a media event. [...] The quasi-grounded corporeality that determines all activity in theatre creates an essentially different communicative situation and mediates different experiences than mediatizations. [...] Under such circumstance theatre could take on a potentially irreplaceable social function – as an immediate interpersonal activity, as an encounter of living bodies that communicate without any machinery distancing them. (Fiebach, 1998: 162, 167)

Here, Fiebach seems to apply an instrumental-technological concept of apparatus to define media, which amongst other things excludes instruments of world creation that are tied to the human body, such as the human voice or gestural articulation and thus automatically excludes theatre.[7] Petra Maria Meyer (1997: 115), in turn, proposes to establish «theatre studies as media studies» especially in view of the fact that – as she rightly points out – no set of analytic devices that

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6. See the most recent clarifications concerning this problem in Chapple & Kattenbelt (eds.) (2006).
7. This limited definition of media leads to the assertion that «oral culture(s) are not medial, because in their case the encounter of bodies is not mediated by an apparatus» (Fiebach, 1998: 103), which locates the beginning of the correspondence between the structural elements of theatre and media at the end of World War One and the wide spread use of electronic image media.

can be used for an intermedial analysis is available for the field of media studies. Like Paech, she resorts to semiotics[8] in her attempt to define a «general theory of medial transformations». Thus, she only partially supports her premise that the immanently «pluri-medial perspective» of theatre studies is the most adequate for a «genuine model of media studies». Her approach virtually annihilates the very «*differencia specifica* that distinguishes theatre from other media» (Meyer, 1997: 120) by theoretically conceptualizing the distinctive features of a pluri-medial theatre performance using an extended textual model of *écriture*.[9] In ascribing a literary theoretical model to an analysis of theatre Meyer turns all media operating in theatre into literature, and thus neutralizes their potential for material difference, with the consequence that theatre becomes defined as a text-based medium.

1.3. Towards an Intermediality of Theatre

When applied to theatre, Krämer's concept of media helps to clarify terminological uncertainties in the debate only as long as theatre is considered simply an «apparatus for creating artificial worlds» (Krämer, 1998 *a*: 85). However, this approach does not allow for recognition of the medial status of theatre, or for the intermedial inter-relations between the specific sign constellations that constitute theatre, to which I now turn. First of all, I suggest that it is not the medial specificity of theatre that leaves traces on the messages of theatre, but rather the interplay of multiple (constantly interchangeable) media (such as gesticulation, voice, music or dance). Second, theatre can integrate a variety of technical apparatuses, for example, film or television in order to create artificial worlds, which it incorporates without losing its status as theatre. Therefore, the intermedial components of theatre need to be analyzed more precisely.

If we start from Müller's assumption that «a medial product is intermedial when it transports the multimedial coexistence[10] of medial quotations and elements into a conceptual cooperation, whose (aesthetic) fractures and dislocations open up new dimensions of sensation and experience» (Müller, 1998: 31), then intermedial configuration becomes the aesthetic transfer of one medium into another. We can then consider McLuhan's «fundamental question» concerning the conditions of «exchange and translation» between media

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8. Compare Zima (ed.) (1995).
9. Compare among others: Roland Barthes, *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* (1953); Jacques Derrida, *Die Schrift und die Differenz* (1972); Julia Kristeva *Die Lust am Text* (1974).
10. For more information on multimedial theatre see Patrice Pavis (1996: 222), *Dictionaire du Théâtre*.

(McLuhan, 1962: 13), which is useful as it allows us to narrow down the aspect of translation in the context of theatre. Adopting an anthropological perspective, McLuhan draws a distinction between the mediality of human senses and that of technical tools,[11] which for him includes technical devices such as radio. He claims that no dynamic translations can take place between «these massive extensions of the senses» since technical devices constitute «closed systems» (McLuhan, 1962: 13). Crucially, for McLuhan (1962: 13), the human senses are able to translate experiences from one sensory field to another and therefore they do not constitute closed systems that are incapable of interplay but are open and incomplete configurations that can – due to their rationality – «mutually translate all our senses into one another». Thus, following McLuhan and Müller opens up new dimensions of sensation and experiences in an intermedial cooperation.[12] To this, I notice that theatre relies on the presence and sensorium of the human body, which is able to integrate secondary and tertiary media, and thus functions as an open, dynamic configuration of medial translations (transpositions) for its production and reception. At the same time, theatre is identical with those media[13] that organize their structural elements into a constantly dynamic process that translates countless differentiations within them. Notably, in her philosophical model of intermediality Krämer uses the metaphor of the stage as a key image:

> A medium is always preceded by something; but what precedes it is presented in another medium and never outside a medium. If this is the case, however, then intermediality is a fundamental phenomenon in the sphere of media. Media become «epistemic objects» only at the moment when one medium leaves the «stage» for another medium, which itself becomes a «form-in-a-medium». (Krämer, 2003: 85)

1.4. Theatre as an Intermedial Event and Cultural Practice

Defining theatre as an intermedial event opens up the possibility of conceptualizing theatre within a single universal and ideal framework, while

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11. In the field of communication theory, compare Harry Pross' (1973) differentiation of media into primary, secondary and tertiary media: I. Primary media: the media connected to the human body, like facial expression, gesticulation, movement, voice and spoken language. Human senses suffice to transport and receive messages. No equipment mediates between sender and receiver; II. Secondary media: they comply with the requirements of mechanical apparatuses / instruments / technologies for the production of messages: signals, optical instruments, print, typography etc.; III. Tertiary media: they comprise mediation processes that require electronic technologies such as radio, telephone or computer.
12. McLuhan (1969: 13) uses the example of language to explain this process: «Language is metaphor in the sense that it not only stores but translates experience from one mode into another».
13. These, in turn, include the questions, principles and concepts that were developed in the course of their history, each of them in their own context. See Müller (1998: 31).

maintaining an open form in all its potential configurations: as artefact or as ritualized repetition of particular actions; as pantomime or vocal performance; or as dance or multimedial spectacle. A significant component of this open concept of theatre is the assumption that «we [...] [cannot] categorize things into media and non-media» (Krämer, 2003: 83), and this assumption opens up the way for me to add my reflections on the intermediality of theatre in three important aspects:

a) Embodiment: the constitutive function of the media
b) The Performative: the phenomenalizing function of the media
c) Intermediality as an epistemic condition of media perception

1.4.1. Embodiment: the Constitutive Function of the Media

Media should not be defined in an essentialist manner but rather we should build on Luhmann's form-medium relationship understood as a potential for differentiation and as a structuring repertoire. From this perspective, mediality can be defined as the potential for differentiation and structuring, which reveals itself in the transfer process from one medium into another, during which the aesthetic neutrality (the imperceptibility) of a medium can disappear when it becomes a form: «What counts as a medium and what as a form, when a description is made completely depends on the cognitive interests and the observer's vantage point» (Krämer, 2003: 84). Notably, theatre makes this process perceivable for its audience because visible and audible phenomena reveal their medial nature when they are transferred from one medium to another, for example, when a text recorded on a tape is rendered verbally by an actor. What is decisive is that the very act of transfer shapes and delimits the media. This concept of mediality opens up a descriptive perspective on the world. The medium becomes a figure of mediation, which cannot be measured adequately in semiotic or technical terms because the act of transposition functions as an embodiment in a particular medium. The function of embodiment is a modification of Krämer's idea of the trace that imprints itself on the message of the medium. Embodiment, in turn, should not be understood as a preceding corporeality, but rather as the assumption of a form in the sense of incorporation. In the process of transformation from one medium to another, the form is not a mere container for some contents. Embodiment denotes an alteration or an undermining of the embodied in the act of transposition. One must not analyze media in the secondary sense of a sign *a priori* (as pure containers of messages) nor in the primary sense of a technological *a priori* (as

messages themselves) but rather from a cultural-anthropological perspective which shows:

> [...] how, in an act of transposition that which is transposed by media is at the same time co-created and stamped by them. It is the idea of «embodiment» as a culturally fundamental activity which makes it possible to identify «transposition» as «constitution» and to understand it. (Krämer, 2003: 85)

By guaranteeing the constitutive role of media within cultural practice the historicity of media is also guaranteed.

1.4.2. The Performative: the Phenomenalizing Function of the Media

The assumption that embodiment and transposition are performative elements allows us to consider theatre as an event where theatre is no longer merely a surface of signs that can be decoded or are hidden behind phenomena and therefore invisible. Semiotic perspectives decode and analyze theatre only as a particular form of a pre-existing (cultural) system, which within two-world ontology belongs to a different register of existence. However, an analysis of theatre undertaken from a performative perspective allows the phenomena connected with the constitution of meaning, such as speech and image, to be temporal events. Thus, theatre becomes a medium that «phenomenalizes» through its ability to make something appear and be accessible to the senses, and for this to happen it requires participation. The staging always puts «something» on stage, which must inevitably become «something else» since, «the phenomena are always richer than their conceptualization» (Krämer, 2003: 83). In other words, the performative preserves the surplus of that «something» which is performed. The essence is not invisible and situated behind phenomena. On the contrary, what is essential manifests itself in the performance event. The act of staging becomes a key component of the process of phenomenalization through transposition: «in every manner of creating, in the act of conveying that media allow and reveal» (Krämer, 2003: 85). Thus, theatre fulfils a paradigmatic function for all media theory because it provides the staging and visualization of multiple media

1.4.3. Intermediality as an Epistemic Condition of Media Perception

As media open up and stage perspectives onto the world, and since we perceive, communicate, and recognize everything within and by media, the

mediality of all existing things manifests this perspective. Accordingly, media, with their capacity to differentiate and transpose cannot be treated individually because they can only exist in relationship with other media. This observation is also true for theatre. Theatre as an intermedial event reveals and stages media, which it makes perceivable. It is only when a medium becomes a form and is able to be transposed in another medium that it may become the subject of any theoretical discussion; and so we return to Krämer's contention that «Intermediality becomes an epistemic condition for the knowledge of media» (Krämer, 2003: 82). The intermediality of theatre makes it possible to perceive the medial modalities, within which the visible and the audible, image and speech, are disclosed. Therefore, perception is a mode of theatricality, mediality and part of the epistemic conditions for intermediality.

In conclusion, we can say now that the potential for differentiation that media provide, which is based on the self-revelation of media in the very process of differentiation, should not be interpreted in terms of system construction but rather as a cultural practice. This is because media constitute something, but they do not create anything *ex nihilo* and they are no longer confined within closed systems. Media do not produce anything but they do restructure and stage new interrelations, new perspectives, and new viewpoints of the world. It matters little whether we consider theatre to be art or cultural technology; what is of utmost relevance for a definition of theatre as a medium of vision is that it is a temporal event.

2. Intermedial Faust

In the mass of literature that surrounds *Faust* it is generally accepted that Goethe's *Faust* tells the story of the modern subject of knowledge in search of meaning in an external world. Based on the theoretical background that I have outlined above, the following section concentrates on the media and their representations in this search for meaning.

Faust, the Renaissance-man, turns away from the four cardinal sciences and also from the classical media in which they are taught (namely books and optical instruments)[14] and resorts to the invisible medium of magic to satisfy his thirst

14. Compare Faust's monologue: «Woe! am I stuck and forced to dwell / Still in this musty, cursed cell? / [...] Hemmed in by all this heap of books, / Their gnawing worms, amid their dust, / While to the arches, in all the nooks, / Are smoke-stained papers midst them thrust, / Boxes and glasses round me crammed, / And instruments in cases hurled, Ancestral stuff around me jammed- / That is your world! That's called a world! / And still you question why your heart / Is cramped and anxious in your breast?» (*Faust*, V. 398-411). This and all further quotes are cited from Goethe, *Faust. The First Part Of The* Tragedy, translated by George Madison Priest, http://www.levity.com/alchemy/faust02.html, [accessed 6-9-2007], unless stated otherwise.

for knowledge. Mephistopheles, the diabolic magician, promises an instantaneous effect of the magic and augurs to overcome space and time as a quasi harbinger of electricity. In a phantasmal way, Mephistopheles puts Faust in arbitrary and sometimes synchronous worlds and sets off projection apparatuses, procures fantastic images and helpful apparitions to satisfy all of Faust's wishes for sense and sensuality. This «classical-romantic media spectacle»[15] takes place in the theatrical space of representation to which the «Prelude» of *Faust I* directly refers, and which the whole work (I and II) repeatedly question.

The central quest in *Faust* for a truthfulness of those contents that are mediated by a medium is formulated in *Geschichte der Medien* by Fassler and Halbach (1998: 35) who ask whether «[...] everything we know results from our perceptions and their transformation into knowledge, and [whether] everything we possess are "constructions"».[16]

Fassler and Halbach's query about a possible symbolic representation of the world, and the status of media as guarantors of truth or deception, reality or illusion in relation to the gaining (true) awareness and knowledge is a central topic of *Faust* that remains pertinent today. Therefore, I move now to analyze Goethe's *Faust* as a model for intermedial theatre by looking at the contemporary, digital theatre production *F@ust vers. 3.0* (1999) by the Catalan group *La Fura dels Baus*. In my analysis, I use the structural model of vision (theatre as configuration of the visual) as analogous to perception (theatre as an apparatus for world creation), with a special focus on images, stage, projection apparatus and digital technology, in order to explore the special intermedial conditions of the realm of theatre.

3. Faust on the Net: *F@ust v. 3.0* (1999)

The Catalan theatre troupe *La Fura dels Baus*[17] makes the medial discourse of Goethe's *Faust I* and *II* the central aspect of their 1999 production *F@ust v. 3.0*:

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15. In the 18th century a renunciation of typography and industrial machinery began to surface. The romantic counter-reaction helped the discovery of electricity as an instantaneous and non-linear medium. Compare Stafford (1998: 201ff.).
16. This is a question that Faust asks himself when he sees the signs of the macrocosm in Nostradamos' book, which leaves him ultimately unsatisfied because it is «human imagination not the Being itself» (Trunz, 1998: 517). Faust: «Into the whole how all things blend, / Each in the other working, living! / [...] What pageantry! Yet, ah, mere pageantry! / Where shall I, endless Nature, seize on thee? / Thy breasts are - where? Ye, of all life the spring, [...]» (*Faust*, V. 447-455).
17. For more information on the history of the troupe see Ingenschay (1994).

> Our Faust is a reading done by end-of-century-dwellers. Persons with a synchronous vision of the world, just like that which is observed when you use the television or computer channels to relate the world [...] Persons, in short, immersed in a different span of modernity from that in which Faust was born, possibly our big brother. (*F@ust v. 3.0* program)[18]

With their radical adaptation of the text[19] through fragmentation, actualization and reduction of the well-known key phrases, the troupe creates a visually and acoustically accentuated intermedial spectacle, which translates the history of the apparatuses of sense-extension: «the bloody pact with technology, the undeniable tormentor in previous eras, whether industrial or pre-industrial» (program note) into the contemporary digital age. Accordingly, the group calls this new project in which they synthesize text, music, video clips, the internet, lighting effect, actors and objects «Digital theatre» (program note). For the duration of their twenty year's history the group have never before performed in a conventional theatre, but for this performance they needed the perspective and point of view proffered by seating laid out in an auditorium where the audience views the spectacle through the proscenium arch:

> It is the spectator, who, from the theatre seat, has to decipher, within themselves [sic], the transcendence of the myth (of Faust) who sold his soul to the devil. A spectator used to the sofa at home, a television format and the infinity of channels on offer, can excitedly visit the keys to their own domestic tragedy. The channel switching will be done by LA FURA. (*F@ust v. 3.0*)

The domestic tragedy unfolds along Faust's travel into the world of the internet and is triggered by the pact with Mephistopheles – a tragedy, that is no longer based on the duality of rational and phantasmagorical knowledge and the striving for true perception by surpassing delusion and deception, but rather on «[...] the surplus of information: fragmentary information that creates the hallucination of absolute knowledge, the vertigo of a false knowledge, an encyclopaedism on a world wide scale», which addresses the inseparability of factual knowledge and phantasmagoria, and «[...] a whole fair of novelties which leads us from the Gutenberg Galaxy to our virtual era» (program).

As a consequence, the group does not categorically separate the virtual worlds of the stage and that of the video projection screen, even though the spatial arrangement of the audience consciously associates a confrontation of

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18. Program for *F@ust v. 3.0*, published by Fura dels Baus, Barcelona, 1998.
19. Gretchen, for example, opens the first meeting with Faust (originally: «My fair young lady, may I make so free / As to lend you my arm and company?» (V. 2605-2606) by saying: «Got a lighter?».

both worlds. However, there is, no imaginary fourth wall (the window that provides in-sight into a constructed illusionary space) to separate the stage and auditorium. Instead, the open, black stage is wrapped in the darkness that usually covers the auditorium[20] and reveals a huge digital screen that is separated into eight rectangular segments, which sometimes create a uniform video image and sometimes shows simultaneous fragments or sequences of images at varying speeds, or alternatively provides glimpses of the actors who perform inside single segments that are opened like doors.

One of the highlights of intermedial screen and theatre composition is the sequence in which Gretchen becomes a murderer: there is a video sequence of Gretchen; of her mother who swallows the nightcap: of watery liquid running down the screen and mixing with «blood» and a baby who is under-water. The video sequences alternate at high speed while Faust and Mephistopheles speak their dialogue and where they seem to be integrated into the screen, although one of them *de facto* is standing on stage and the other is in one of the segments behind the screen – their voices are amplified by microphone, which together with the music, form a linear plot that accompanies the fast-changing, contrasting, sometimes cross-faded images.

Ironic references to the apparatuses of the mechanistic, empirical but also the electrical and digital age that exclusively take place on stage floor indicate that the performance negotiates a confrontation between two systems of knowledge and perception as a synchronous and diachronous history of media. A variety of mechanical and electrical apparatuses, which range up to include a computer as a research tool in Faust's study become a thematic component of the stage aesthetics: a rotating mill-wheel inside a Faraday cage. In particular, the stage lighting appears as an ironically warped symbol of a «light of reason» through its provision of consistently poor lighting with flashlights and, in a few cases, with the targeted use of a spotlight that exclusively covers the faces but only partially reaches the bodies. Wagner, for example, who shows off his complacent faith in knowledge by reciting a litany of digitalization «0-1-0-1-0-1-0» and a praise of «la vida digital» (digital life), is wearing a helmet lamp, which he powers with a crank. If his eagerness to crank up the light is exhausted then Wagner is, quite literally, in the dark.

Faust's monologue of inner conflict: «Two souls alas! are dwelling in my breast;» (V. 1112) is introduced by an image that interprets his suicide attempt

20. After the DJ enters, the performance opens in complete darkness from which eventually a circling beam of light lifts like the orbit of a comet, but it soon turns out to be the beam of a flashlight in Faust's study that Faust is holding as he is pushed on to the stage tied to a kind of rotating mill-wheel in a Faraday cage.

as a result of desperation in the face of an electric age that, in 1800, was impossible to rationalize; for as he puts a cable around his neck the «cage» is abruptly pulled away from under his feet. Simultaneously, accompanied by Mozart's *Requiem*, the image of an oversized light bulb is projected onto the screen, while the background fills with countless rigid heads. At first, Faust is dangling in front of this image, but at the same time as the light bulb bursts, he falls onto the stage and starts his monologue, during which a spotlight projects his doubly conically tapered shadow onto the projection screen in the background. Only the pact with Mephistopheles removes his desperation and inner conflict, which is achieved by way of an intermedial cross-over of internet and theatre for Faust's affliction with an isolation of vision and the separation of illusion and projection comes to an end which, however, introduces further sufferings:

> The journey begins, and here La Fura proposes one of the great challenges of the performance. The spectators begin to lose contact with their theatre seats, to submerge themselves in realities beyond the stage. Through visual resources the action delves into a video game in which you can operate on a stomach, take part in a visual fight between God and the Devil via blows with joysticks and other possibilities. (*F@ust v. 3.0*)

The fight between God and the Devil, between the «divine» and the «magical eye» no longer takes place in favour of an (illusionary) distanced observer (the isolated visual sense) as guarantor of objective knowledge. Instead, Faust's entanglement «in the Net» is addressed and it becomes most obvious on the symbolic realm of the stage rather than on the screen. Following Gretchen's meeting with Faust, a gigantic net is dropped down from the fly floor, which is quickly tied to the stage floor and opens up the audience's gaze onto the amorous play of Marthe, Mephisto, Faust and Gretchen in the garden. The shadows of the four characters clinging onto the net are enlarged on the digital wall, which now serves as a double of the net. Thus, Faust's desire for sense and sensuality is visualized in an image that not only traps all characters in equal measure, but also completely abolishes the separation of projection and illusion. It was Baudrillard who characterized the effect of digital screens and, respectively, networks:

> Instead of the reflexive tendency of the mirror and the stage a non-reflective surface, an immanent surface exists where operations can unfold, the smooth operational surface of communication. Something has changed, and the Faustian, Promethean (perhaps Oedipal) period of production and consumption gives way to the «proteanic» era of networks, to the narcissistic and protean area of connections, contacts, contiguity, feedback and generalized interface that goes with the universe

> of communication. [...] Little by little, a logic of «drive» has replaced a very subjective logic of possession and projection. There are no longer fantasies of power, speed and acquisition that are tied to the object itself but in their place a tactic of potentialities [...] (Baudrillard, *The Ecstasy of Communication*, in Fiebach, 1998: 132)

Faust caught «in the Net» transmits a tactile eroticization of the gaining of knowledge that «questions the traditional access to visual space and our habitual attachment to a "point of view" by telesensoric, immediate communication» (de Kerckhove, 1997: 166).

Theatre creates a virtual world[21] that captures the computer-generated virtual world within one image and transports it into another symbolic form beyond any idea of the space of illusion. In a synaesthetic interaction with data structures, an immanent surface, the obstructed mental vanishing point of an imaginary spectator, the theatre of *La Fura dels Baus* works towards a tele sensoric image. However, because the laws of inertia and gravity must and do apply on the stage, the production stops the speed of the information-flow on the screen by reflection: the proiecere (throw forward) and reflectare (bend backward) work in opposition and the time-delay in reaction takes effect on the perception of the audience who no longer witness the simultaneous «action and reaction» that is the usual mode of operation of electronic or digital media.[22] Thus, it is the function of the stage that operates between the digital wall and the auditorium; it stops the immensity of images by integrating them into its own, mechanical speed instead of excluding them. However, in achieving this it simultaneously annuls the function of bourgeois theatre as a space of artificial illusion proffered in a linear order of representation. In this case, theatre is not the space for the rivalry of primary, secondary or tertiary medial aspects, but rather it integrates them in the mode of an intermedial transposition.

After Faust goes blind, the process of intermedial transposition culminates in the final image. On the big screen the (Faustian) heads appear that have already appeared in the suicide scene, re-appear as Faust rotates faster and faster on a metal sheet inside the «cage» that is fixed on the perpendicular central axis of the stage. This has the effect of completely dissolving a secure point of illusionary vision. Again, a fragment of Mozart's *Requiem* is played, but the (Faustian) heads do not mirror the perspective of the audience – instead they become larger and larger while they pick up speed and move forward, away from the central vanishing point and towards the spectators, as if the sublime position

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21. Compare Artaud (1958: 48): «It is that alchemy and theatre are so to speak virtual arts, and do not carry their end – or their reality – within themselves».
22. See McLuhan (1964)

in which vision is stylized in a spiritual point of distanced (self-) awareness were simultaneously the location of a black hole.

Translated by Götz Dapp

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REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS CULTURALES DE LA UNIVERSITAT JAUME I / *CULTURAL STUDIES JOURNAL OF UNIVERSITAT JAUME I*

Beyond Performance Studies: Mediated Performance and the Posthuman

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ABSTRACT: My project is not to create a model for intermedial performance analysis, but rather to set the discourse about it in a larger context. Given the rich variety of mediated performances, the notion that there is a definable and delineated act of «performance» demands methodological scrutiny because the discipline of Performance Studies has yet to find a coherent approach to a type of performance that is not grounded in the presence of the body. I suggest that the view that ties performance to individual human agency, to the performer and the body of the performer is a liability in the study of mediated performance; but also, perhaps paradoxically, that the analysis of mediated performance, once the anthropic bias is discounted, allows us to revalorize certain seemingly obsolete «humanist» categories by embracing the notion of *posthumanism*. Discussing a number of instances of mediated performance, including video, digital avatars, and CGI, the article posits that performance analysis should embrace posthumanism and models of consciousness as a way of coming to terms with the «theory machine» of digital/virtual performance modes.

Keywords: mediatized [theatre], posthumanism, performance, consciousness, methodology

RESUMEN: Mi propósito no consiste en crear un modelo de análisis de puesta en escena intermedial, sino situar el discurso sobre la misma en un contexto más amplio. Debido a la variedad de representaciones transducidas, la asunción de que existe un acto «representacional» claramente definible y demarcado debe ser abordada sistemáticamente, ya que aún está por desarrollar dentro de la disciplina de los Estudios Teatrales una línea de investigación coherente para estos tipos de representación que no se basan en la presencia del cuerpo. Sugiero que el modelo de representación actoral basado en la agencia humana individual, el actor y su cuerpo reduce el campo de estudio de la representación transducida; aunque, paradójicamente, el análisis de la transducción dramática, una vez desligada de su

condicionamiento antrópico, permite recuperar algunas categorías «humanistas» aparentemente obsoletas, mediante la adopción de la noción de *posthumanismo*. Tras el análisis de algunos ejemplos de representación transducida entre los que se incluye el vídeo, los personajes digitales, CGI, el artículo concluye que el análisis espectacular debería adoptar el posthumanismo y el circuito modelo de conciencia para reconciliarse con la «maquinaria teórica» de los modelos espectaculares digital / virtual.

Palabras clave: transducción [teatral], posthumanismo, representación teatral, modelo de conciencia, metodología.

1. Restarting the Theory Machine

One of the most difficult challenges the new regimes of performance pose to the academy is not an aesthetic or ideological, but a *methodological* one. Developments in distributed performance, immersive virtual reality environments, televisual presence, neuroaesthetics, and so forth are proceeding now with such rapidity in the practices of a significant number of performers and content creators that they outrun most efforts to map, chart, describe, systematize, and interpret them. Analogous in some ways to the unfettered vigour of the post-classical avant-garde of the 1950s to 1970s, the medial and intermedial avant-garde has not been known to wait patiently for academic analysis, which is still largely circumscribed by the cumbersome and inefficient rituals of textuality and publication.

By pointing to the many and pervasive analogies between modernist theatre and recent digital[1] performance practice, in his book *Digital Performance* (2004) Steve Dixon demonstrates that much of what is only now technically possible was already theorized presciently in the early twentieth century, although the practice itself was often lagging. However, in the realm of medial and digital performance today, theory is not clearly *a priori* or *a posteriori* to the practice, but rather emerges from a constant, and constantly accelerating, feed-back loop of theory and practice witnessed in the incessant morphing, splitting, and recombining of representational strategies. It is hardly surprising that the artists who have been able most easily to move into this theory/practice territory are dancers, who have little attachment to the theatre's metaphysics of text (and

1. I take «digital,» which is used rather promiscuously in recent scholarship, to be shorthand for new media rather than a specific technical descriptor opposed to, say, «analog». See also the remarks by Andrew Murphie (2000) cited later in the essay.

textual criticism), or its poetics and noetics of space; for they are accustomed to think of their bodies materially, energetically, kinetically, and notationally rather than as the corporeal domain of a separate psychic existence. In fact, digital, mediated, and mediatized performance, as a field and in its manifestations, has become a kind of «theory machine». Thus, writing about mediated performance (I will adopt this as the synoptic term), if it is not entirely descriptive, necessarily engages in a meta-theoretical discourse, which acknowledges that ruptures in representational practices call for the reconstellation of analytical strategies. My argument is that performance theory, because of its strong paradigmatic power remains the prevalent meta-theory, even as it undergoes a significant paradigm shift of its own.

The theatrical avant-garde that in the latter part of the twentieth century gave rise to the Living Theatre, the Performance Group, or the Wooster Group, to name only some obvious markers, concurrently pushed for the overthrow of older methods of theatrical analysis and opened the door to what then became institutionalized in the academy as Performance Studies. It is unnecessary to rehearse this history here; I only need to point to Marvin Carlson's recent seminal study of the field. The great virtue of Performance Studies became its theoretical flexibility, or what Richard Schechner called its «in-betweenness» (Schechner, 1998: 360). Poised in the liminal space in-between categories, it could absorb even radical shifts in the nature of performance practice and rearticulate them. It became the theory machine of performance. But performance theory was plagued by at least two problems: for one, the further it extended its referential reach, the more limited, paradoxically, became its capacity to respond subtly to new manifestations of performance, especially if they were in some sense intermedial. There is a problem in the potentially totalizing gesture of any explanatory paradigm; in this case the question arises, if anything is performance, or at least by inclination performative, where is the specific instance of performance in any given event?

Performance theory's second limitation, in spite of having been richly inflected by post-structural critiques of presence and embodiment, is that it has maintained an epistemic and institutional attachment to anthropology and the analysis of cultural performance, and to a point of view that might be called conservatively anthropic. Carlson, summarizing, describes performance as:

> a specific event with its liminoid nature foregrounded, […] presented by performers and attended by audiences both of whom regard the experience as made up of material to be interpreted, to be reflected upon, to be engaged in – emotionally, mentally, and perhaps even physically. (Carlson, 1996: 198-99)

I don't so much want to dispute Carlson's definition, which clearly still characterizes a certain type of performative interaction, as to extend it, because it seems to me that it has little purchase on the specific nature of performance in most mediated events, from the integration of video technology to the instrumental extension of the performing body through the internet, digital avatars, or machines, to the composited performances of virtual humans, and computer-generated imagery (CGI). Even though attempts have been made to theorize the progressive nature of performative identity, I am not completely persuaded that intermedial, or mediated, performance is easily enfolded in a stable terminology, and this slippage in the face of the plurality of intermedial practice, or its perpetual self-retheorizing is in some sense the primary virtue of contemporary performance. In the intermedial discourse, while we increasingly understand how media redefine *each other*, we poorly understand how they redefine the performer and performance itself.

Here, my project is not to create a model for intermedial performance analysis, but to set the discourse about it in a somewhat larger context. I want to suggest that the view that ties performance to individual human agency, to the performer and the body of the performer is a liability in the study of mediated performance; but also, perhaps only apparently paradoxically, that the analysis of mediated performance, once the anthropic bias is discounted, allows us to revalorize certain seemingly obsolete «humanist» categories by embracing the notion of *posthumanism*. I want to range here through a fairly wide set of mediated performances before I return to this idea.

The layering of complementary medial forms in much of contemporary performance has presented theory with a problem, literally, in coming to terms with its manifestations. Theoretical discourses are threatened with a self-recursive hypertrophy of terminology related to mediality. To cite Gabriella Giannachi as an example:

> [It] must be remembered that the medium itself always remediates. In relation to an analysis of virtual theatre and performance, this means that virtual theatre is therefore subject to a process not only of mediation but of remediation. This implies the use of a certain degree of intertextuality and metatextuality, but also of intermediality and metamediality. In other words, the medium of virtual theatre is always also its content and this content is always also inclusive of other media. It is the very metadiscoursivity about these other media that allows the work to be metamedial – about media. (Giannachi, 2004: 5)

While Giannachi's observations may all be valid they have surrendered any specific explanatory power. From some interrogatory vantage point, any performance, even the most conventional, is metamedial. I don't need to belabour the point. Of course, theatre, as «a space of illusory immediacy»

(Causey, 1999: 383) has always been subject to mediation and part of what Anja Klöck (2005: 117) has recently referred to as «a conceptual a priori mediality of all representational practices». In the paradigm of the medial a priori, she writes, «the body may no longer be defined as a place of nature. Nor can the existence of immediacy – of an unmediated reality, outside of the theatre – be assumed» (Klöck, 2005: 119-20). The anthropic strain of performance theory, often indebted methodologically to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, has sought to salvage out of the white noise of mediated transmission a kind of pure body whose salient feature was ostensibly its freedom from signifying practices; it simply was, phenomenologically, «in-the-world». It acquired a kind of categorical status marked by a determinate article, as «The Body». This categorically exalted Body, in its complete presence, was counterpoised to the constant, polymorphic semiosis of performance, especially if it involved some manner of feeding-back the living body through digital representation. It seems a logical operation to me to suggest that the binary opposition of presence and semiosis, as far as performance is concerned, collapses into a perceptual loop where signification is always marked by an overt sense of presence, just as presence is never just by itself or for itself, but rather always a sign of presence as well. Today, even without the element of the digital, the phenomenal body in the act of performance signals its own phenomenality, and so becomes mediated; not so much in itself but because it meets the consciousness of an audience whose perceptual frame is now irreducibly one of mediation. The contemporary performance context, I believe, is in fact defined by this collapse into mediation. This is, by the way, not that same as arguing, as Philip Auslander does in his *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, that there is no meaningful ontological difference between live and mediatized performance (Auslander, 1999: 38-54). Mediation changes only the perceptual, not the ontological status of the body. Even so, it seems almost wilfully atavistic to want to rescue presence from its critics by suggesting a return to a less encumbered version of the concept, as Jon Erickson has recently done. Presence in performance, for Erickson, consists of «directing and focusing the audience's attention in as strong a fashion as possible, and […] remaining as present as possible in one's concentration and being» (Erickson, 2006: 147). One could point out, among other theoretical objections, the tautological nature of this definition. But the largest problem of such rear-guard actions is that neither the performer's nor the spectator's bodies, which are the necessary constituents of such presence, quite seem to exist anymore as before. As Drew Leder has pointed out in *The Absent Body*, in daily life the body, as «thematic object of experience» tends to disappear (Leder, 1990: 1), the lived body «always constitutes a null point in the world I inhabit» (Leder, 1990: 13), subordinated or sublimated to the objects it perceives, and consequently vanishing from its own purview. Maaike Bleeker

has used the term «dys-embodiment» to reflect what she sees as «a condition of unreality brought about by experiences that point to the involvement of our bodies in the constitution of the world as we perceive it». This sense of unreality, she writes, is generated not by «the sudden awareness of our bodies, but rather the awareness of the invisibility or imperceptibility of their involvement» (Bleeker, 2006: 50). If we indeed have entered what Roy Ascott calls the «post-biological era» then bodies not only no longer represent some «natural» fixed point of the real, but on the contrary the very place (or scene) at which the real comes undone: «the site of bionic transformation at which we can recreate ourselves and redefine what it is to be human» (Ascott, 2003: 376).

2. Digital Doubling and Digital Doubt

If presence and body are already in a kind of theoretical quandary, what happens to the site of performance when video is introduced and the performer is doubled by another layer of mediation? I suggest that this is a shift not easily absorbed by performance theory. Whereas in cultural performance (in Carlson's sense) the performative can be located in a relatively simple linear transaction between performer and observer, video repositions performance in the interstitial margin, where the frame of one mediated mode adjoins and creates tension with the other. Consequently in mediated performance, as Gavin Carver and Colin Beardon write in *New Visions in Performance*:

> [even] seemingly straightforward relationships between performer and audience are subverted, and theatrical hierarchies are unbalanced in that space, sound and (projected) image are as dominant as the performer, who in some cases is not present at all. (Carver & Beardon, 2004: 181)

For the pre-electronic sphere, Meike Wagner has argued that the puppet body fulfils essentially the same function of rupture by becoming «a potential troublemaker for the apparently coherent concepts of live performing bodies versus the mediatized body» and by «mov[ing] the margins of the perceivable» (Wagner, 2006: 128, 131). This is true, and accounts for what some perceive to be the puppet's uncanniness. But in contrast to the puppet body, I think that the body on video, with its specular smoothness solicits a different quality of «attention» For example, Jonathan Crary has identified an important cultural trope of modernism in his work on the image culture of the nineteenth century and the remaking of the spectator into a detached observer. Many artists who used the medium of video, such as Nam June Paik and Vito Acconci, were aware early on of its attention-getting, performance-altering quality. Nick Kaye (2005)

credits these artists with first establishing and articulating the grammar of multi-medial performances «emphasizing processes of doubling and multiplication» that are still often the basis for the work of contemporary groups such as The Builders Association, who in their recent performances, for example *Alladeen* (2003), have explored the simultaneous location of performers in various live and mediated spaces. Commenting on an Acconci work of thirty years earlier *Theme Song* (1973), Kaye relates the artist's attempt to «play and perform against» mediation and, «to become "present to" the "private" time and space of the viewer's encounter» (Kaye, 2005: 205). While such a construction of an extensive sense of videated presence seems rather benign and playful, some critics have felt it necessary to implicate the doubling of the performer by analog or digital video as a kind of threatening «Other» in the psychic economy.

Steve Dixon summarizes this approach when he writes that «the digital double is a mysterious figure» which as the «dark doppelgänger represent[s] the Id, split consciousness, and the schizophrenic self» and invokes archaic beliefs of image magic that «cast a sinister shadow over the digital double and our fascination with mediatised reflections» (Dixon, 2004: 28-29). He echoes (doubles?) Matthew Causey's strongly articulated view that the screening of the performer is a token of «technological uncanniness» (Causey, 1999: 386), which enacts «the subject's annihilation, its nothingness» (Causey, 1999: 385). Arguing that such televisual rupture is a kind of Dionysian *sparagmos* or tearing-apart, Causey (1999: 393) writes: «the ontological shift from organic to technological, televisual, and digital beingness is tragic».[2]

This peculiar concatenation of Aristotelian, Nietzschean, and Freudian references seems to me to mark an attachment to an older discourse of performance theory. While it can be conceded that the introduction of video and other media «destabilise» (Carver and Beardon, 2004: 181) a performance situation, there is a regressive and alarmist component in some recent criticism, even as it ostensibly seeks to open up new discourses. So for instance Hans-Thies Lehmann, in *Postdramatic Theatre* (2006), a book that has become a touchstone of current theoretical discussions, offers a critique of the fascination the electronic image that, as he puts it, «lures through emptiness» (Lehmann, 2006: 171). A little further in the text, he retreats to familiar discursive ground: «Theatre is first of all anthropological, the name for a *behaviour,* […] secondly it is a *situation*, and only then, last of all, it is *representation*. Media images are – in the first and in the last place – nothing but representation» (Lehmann, 2006: 171). This spurious opposition of the «anthropological» theatre on the one hand,

2. It should be fairly pointed out that in his recent book, Dixon (2007: 155) rejects Causey's more alarmist conclusions.

and electronic media tainted by their association with the vacuous commodification of commercial imagery and advertising on the other, is finally nothing but simply binary, privileging the supposed «real» of the stage over the «unreal» or «inauthentic» electronic medium, based on a set of extraneous value judgments. Later, in a metaphysical turn that seems particularly unwarranted, Lehmann argues that electronic images are «representation» rather than «representability» (Lehmann, 2006: 172), and asserts that «*fate is another word for representability*» – thus images are a «perpetual affirmation of "fatelessness"» (Lehmann, 2006: 173). We encounter here a cultural critique of the deployment of electronic images that assumes, to some degree, that mediation always reduces or compromises human agency in performance. Although it is true that the video doubling of the performer can be thematically linked to alienation and to the uncanny, it is hardly sufficient to subject the technology itself to a categorical indictment.

If mere doubling by video is already uncanny, tragic (and in this tragic state, paradoxically «fateless»), what happens if personal agency is further reduced and control of performance is given to a computational or cybernetic system? Australian performance artist Stelarc, in recent works such as *Fractal Flesh* and *Exoskeleton*, has surrendered control over his body to remote manipulation via the internet, in some cases himself becoming the avatar of a dispersed, often chaotic, sometimes self-regulating system. The paradigm generated by these performances, as Johannes Birringer writes, are different from the role play studied by social anthropologists, because «performance is here always understood to take place in relationship to system-design which often encloses performer and interface within a physically traversable projected display or immersive environment». Such a shift creates «a fascinating re-orientation of our anthropomorphic assumptions about performance and agency» (Birringer, 2007: 28). Clearly, any such re-orientation is considerably extended with the introduction of digital avatars, humanoid simulacra designed to respond to real-world stimuli, which call in particular the idea of agency and volition, and so the nature of performance itself, into question.

In an article on her by now well-known 2001 project *Blue Bloodshot Flowers*, Susan Broadhurst describes the deployment of an avatar – a projected human head named Jeremiah – programmed with a simple «emotion engine» that registered and reacted to changes in its visual field. Not by chance endowed with the name of the bible's most apocalyptic prophet, Jeremiah liked visual stimuli; vigorous motion made him «happy», he became «angry» when ignored, etc. (Broadhurst, 2004: 50). She is careful to note that «current theory needs to be adjusted» to account for the effects of new technologies «especially in relation to the problem of (re)presenting the «unrepresentable», that is the sublime of the physical/virtual interface» (Broadhurst, 2004: 48), but she makes a

strong claim that Jeremiah has in fact crossed the boundary from representation to autonomous, spontaneous performance. «Jeremiah», she writes, «is original, just as an improvising artist is original. Jeremiah is literally "reproduced again" and not "represented"» (Broadhurst, 2004: 51). This is a rather strong ontological assertion that may not withstand scrutiny, although it is an open question at what level of autogenic behaviour in a digitally produced avatar an imaginary «Turing Test» of performance would become unassailable, that is, it would be practically impossible to distinguish the digital performer from a human performer rendered in digital form.

This problem is receiving much attention in fields not necessarily connected to live performance. Sampling some newer publications in computer graphics and animation, for instance, one can encounter attempts to create complex and subtle facial expressions and resolve emotional contradictions in digital embodied agents. Catherine Pelachaud and Isabella Poggi expend considerable ingenuity and computational energy on constructing expressive algorithms in avatars that take into account «power relationships», «degrees of certainty», «types of social encounter», among other dimensions. In their work, they tellingly give this experiment to synthesize a human «integrated perception and knowledge process» the label «belief networks» (Pelachaud and Poggi, 2002: 301).

In another case, the authors are concerned with giving virtual humans not only the capability of perceiving and remembering information, but also of forgetting it (Strassner and Langer, 2005). In other words, programmers are trying to de-digitalize the stringent and limiting capacity for perception, action, and expression still typical of most digital avatars in the pursuit of a kind of imperfect digital consciousness. Between the growing complexity of believing and/or forgetful avatars simulating the fuzzy logic of neural systems and the use of human brainwaves to create neuroaesthetic representations, a site of convergence in the human-computer interface (HCI) is slowly coming into view where the manifestation of mental images and the emergence of a digital *imaginary* (also in the Lacanian sense) may in fact coalesce and finally nullify the distinction between real and virtual – a scenario already envisioned in the 1980s by cyberpunk literature.

3. Performance from Almost Nothing

How far can the idea of performance without human agency be extended? In an article entitled «Humanoid Boogie» (2006), Philip Auslander made an argument for robotic performance, and it is worth dwelling on briefly. His principal example is Sergei Shutov's installation work *Abacus* at the Venice

Biennale in 2001, consisting of «over forty crouching figures draped in black, which face an open door and pray in numerous languages representing a multitude of faiths while making the reverential movements appropriate to prayer» (Auslander, 2006: 87). Auslander (2006: 88) answers the question whether such an installation of automata constitutes performance in the «affirmative». His argument revolves around the assertion that performance is constituted primarily by two sets of skills, technical and interpretive. Conceding that robots lack the latter (in fact, that deficiency is to Auslander the «crucial distinction between robotic performers and human performers» (Auslander, 2006: 91)), he determines that the fact that such automata technically appear as «metaphoric humans» and can be given the simulacrum of human activity is sufficient for performance to occur: «Because it is not necessary that they actually pray (whatever that may mean), only that they appear to do so, their actions […] may be treated as non-matrixed and task-based» (Auslander, 2006: 95).[3] Apart from the fact that he doesn't distinguish meaningfully between robots and automata, Auslander's retreat to such categories as «skill» again seems strangely reductive. More curiously, he does not emphasize that underlying the installation's «performance» as a simulacrum of human activity is an entirely unilateral model of communication akin to what Jon McKenzie (2001: 95-99) has termed «technological performance», and it is incidentally through this tightly rationalized mode of performance that *Abacus* is more closely aligned with the unrelenting efficiency of the animatronic figures at Disney World than with the theatre.

Mentioning Disney, a corporation whose subsumption of avant-garde modes of performance has been rather systematic, creates a useful segue for pursuing a final venue of virtual performance where the anthropic bias of performance theory is challenged: computer animation, or CGI. CGI is troubling to performance theory because it both disperses the performing subject and it situates itself outside of the spatio-temporal axes of most other digital performance. All of the forms I have discussed in this essay exhibit some kind of spatio-temporal continuity, even if their ultimate fragmentation is thematic to the performance. They exist, if not in a «here» and «now», then at least in a «then» and «there», indexically linked to a present time and place. The categorical difference of CGI is that it is the performance of no-body emanating from no-space in no-time. The space of CGI is purely ideational; the result of infinitely complex algorithms that

3. I need only briefly invoke theatre history's most notorious simulated prayer, Claudius' abortive entreaty in *Hamlet*, to show that «whatever that may mean» is precisely the crux of the matter; Claudius' prayer is a doubled performance which, to the observing Hamlet, who sees interpretive skill and intentionality, is deceptively successful, while Claudius, knowing of its merely technical provenance («Bow, stubborn knees […]», he says), considers it no performance at all.

frame, render, shade, texturize, etc. That is, it is purely digital, paradoxically perhaps more so, the more it mimics real space. (Traditional animation retains a referent in the spatial real, since it is basically the photography of two-dimensional objects). In the no-time of computer animation, a pure temporal illusion devoid of temporality is created. While any mediated, or videated performance, and indeed any performance on traditional audiovisial media such as film, is «ghosted» by the actions of the performer between the frames or scans – actions no less real for their absence, CGI renders only the frames necessary to sustain the temporal illusion; there is nothing between the frames. Or, as Hans-Thies Lehmann (2006: 171) might put it, the electronic image «*lacks lack*, and is consequently leading only to – the next image […]». Such is the stringency of this illusion that any instant when a CGI character ceases to move between two adjacent frames spells instant «death». As John Lasseter (1994) of Pixar puts it, «in 3-D computer animation, as soon as you go into a held pose, the action dies immediately. […]. Even the slightest movement will keep your character alive». Not only have the spatio-temporal categories been radically altered in CGI, the identity and subjectivity of the performer is dislocated, dispersed, and finally re-composited in a painstaking and lengthy process out of innumerable discrete elements both digital and human. Procedurally and structurally, CGI is in fact a vast hypermedium. As Katherine Sarafian remarks, CGI performance is a performance out of almost nothing:

> The artists' interactions with tools of the new technology are such that they experience the actual manifestation of their creative energy and output incrementally, as lines of code compute or as frames render finally in completed form. The reward for this delayed gratification is the performance created from almost nothing – not motion-captured from live movement, and not the result of an automated, programmed task list in the computer. (Sarafian, 2003: 215)

CGI opens up a site of performance between live and digital not yet fully understood or theorized. The paradoxical project of computer animation, at least in its commercial and mass-medial manifestations such as Pixar, has not been to push the boundaries of animated performance into the realm of the nonhuman, to animate the inanimate, to create sophisticated object performance, or even to escape entirely from a dimensional representation of the empirical world into pure digital visualizations. On the contrary, as rendering and simulation programs have become infinitely more efficient and versatile, computer animators have largely abandoned their earlier experiments with animated desk lamps and tin toys, entities easily constructed from simple geometry, and have gravitated towards the photo-realistic representation of the humanoid and human actor in specific social environments. Consequently, the work of composited

performance has become increasingly naturalized, increasingly transparent. As a result, animators have developed an understanding of performance that eludes human actors:

> Human actors study the motivating details of a character, then they might improvise the acting once they are «in character». Computer animation characters, by contrast, are always in character. They were born in character. Animators need to finesse certain details and make the acting seem improvised, matter-of-fact, *natural*. (Sarafian, 2003: 215)

4. Strange Loops and the Posthuman Turn

Samuel Weber reminds us that such naturalness and the transparency of the medium has always been both an illusion and an ideological problem in theatrical performance, beginning with Aristotle's attempt to claim theatre as a purely *synoptic* medium that is principally «a means of perception, of vision, and of understanding» (Weber, 2004: 101). Weber points to Walter Benjamin's essay on radio which argues that the quality that most distinguishes this 'new medium from an antiquated, bourgeois, *Gesamtkunstwerk* notion of theatre is its *Exponiertheit*, that is, its very different social and technical mode of exposure, but also its contingency and riskiness. Brecht's epic theatre, which Benjamin reads through the lens of another medium, film, is similarly exposed by its structured interruptions and discontinuities, its *a priori* citational quality, its refusal to be merely transparent. For Weber, it is here that the discourse of mediated theatre begins:

> [What] emerges is a reiterative singularity that is no longer taken for granted as the transparent medium of identification, of recognition, but that becomes identifiable and recognizable only through the «trembling» of an irreducible alterity. […] The interruptive gesture [of epic theatre] calls this precedence into question, even as it questions the notion of performance and performativity, at least as teleological processes of fulfilment. (Weber, 2004: 117)

Such a reiterative singularity of mediatized theatre substitutes for the false concept of a closed-off, self-reliant, autonomous individual – the vision of an individual himself open and exposed, or, in Benjamin's phrasing, «man in our crisis» (Weber, 2004: 115).

Just as our new media have surpassed radio and our modes of performance have rendered epic theatre historically contingent, this exposure has occasioned a new terminology that would have eluded Benjamin or Brecht: *posthuman*. Therefore, I want now to return to my original idea that performance studies may

have to look to a posthuman ethics to liberate itself from a threatening critical impasse. As Steve Dixon writes in *Digital Performance* «There is a real danger of theoretical imperialism, of certain modes and analytical world views colonizing, civilizing, and trivializing digital performance […]». Posthuman and cybernetic perspectives, he argues, offer «a more specific and rationally considered analysis of the field» (Dixon, 2007: 156). Like Dixon, I understand the term posthuman here in the non-dystopian sense proposed by Katherine Hayles, who asserts that:

> the posthuman does not really mean the end of humanity. It signals instead the end of a certain conception of the human, a conception that may have applied, at best, to that fraction of humanity who had the wealth, power, and leisure to conceptualize themselves as autonomous beings exercising their will through individual agency and choice. (Hayles, 1999: 286)

Hayles' posthuman human is essentially the millennial version of Benjamin's «man in our crisis». But how does a posthuman ethos function in the creation and reception of performance? For one thing, posthumanism dispenses with the categorical separation of «body and world» or «self and other» that constituted an older model of performance premised on presence. As Robert Pepperell writes:

> *The human body is not separate from its environment*. Since the boundary between the world and ourselves consists of permeable membranes that allow energy and matter to flow in and out, there can be no definite point at which our bodies begin or end. Humans are identifiable, but not definable. […] The notion that each of us is a discrete entity can be called the «boxed body» fallacy. (Pepperell, 2000: 13)

It is easy to see that a boxed body fallacy would in turn give rise to a performative fallacy that privileges notions of agency, semiotic transactions, and of being *present to*. In fact, if «the body» was the locus *sine qua non* of performance studies, the locus for posthuman performance theory is consciousness. Consciousness has been described as *emergent*:

> Given the right combination of genes, tissues, nutrients, chemicals and environmental conditions the property we know as «consciousness» emerges. We cannot precisely define what this quality is, where it occurs or how it might look in isolation from those conditions – *it is a consequence of all those conditions*. (Pepperell, 2000: 14)

Similarly, performance, especially in mediated events, is not so much the result of a clearly defined transaction as an *emergent structure* that becomes extant under certain conditions. The analogy is here to the kind of trans-

subjective mode of consciousness in cyberspace that William Gibson (1984: 69) famously defined as a «consensual hallucination». How might those performance conditions be described? We could perhaps say that they entail an element of reflexivity that opens up a virtual space – usually technologically mediated – that in turn inflects the «real» space in complex ways, and vice versa. The performance manifests itself (if that is the word) in this iterated and reiterated inflection of the real by the virtual, creating what Ascott terms a «double consciousness»:

> The state of being that gives access, at one and the same time, to two distinctly different fields of experience: psychic space and cyberspace, the material world and the virtual, in an artwork and outside of it. (Ascott, 2003: 377)

If that description sounds flatly dialectical (and so indebted to older analytical modes), it should be noted that the process of perceptual reiteration «trembles», in the sense of Weber's singularity, and the double consciousness of perceiver and perceived, of spectator and spectated, in the emergent structure of performance, becomes a double helix of consciousness, or perhaps a «strange loop». This last phrase I owe to Douglas Hofstadter, who uses it to characterize the formation of consciousness and «I-ness» by observing that consciousness is not some pre-existing Cartesian object located in the brain, but the result of the gradual «locking in» of passive mental epiphenomena «in the feedback loop of human self-perception [so that] causality gets turned around and "I" seems to be in the driver's seat». Hofstadter refers to the «strange loop of selfhood» (Hofstadter, 2007: 205), and it is perhaps fitting in this context that he uses video feedback loops as a rough analogue of this process. Applying this notion to performance, one might agree with Birringer who writes about the «emergent» or «liquid» situation of virtual reality (VR) digital performance that human performers are not separate from the software system or programming environment; «the entire interface environment can be understood as digital performance process, as emergent system» (Birringer, 2006: 44).

I hope it is clear from the above that the particular quality of performance I am describing is not merely to be thought of as an instrumental extension – digital or mechanical – of conventional human performance, much less its substitution, as in Auslander's automata. The transition into posthuman performance is to be found where digital media are transformed from simply providing channels streaming a version of physical reality to being harbingers and constituents of a new «condition of virtuality», to invoke another of Katherine Hayles' coinages. Andrew Murphie has best characterized the crucial distinction of digital and virtual:

> It is the digital that makes things certain but the virtual that raises a very productive doubt. […] As we tire of looking at our fingers on keyboards and on all the other indexes of the digital that surround us (the hyperlinks, hypertexts and so on), we shall gradually awaken to the dawn of the virtual in all its sublime horror and all its beauty. For while the current digital conversion is exhaustive and reductive and, despite the abstraction, almost always ends in a re-extension of the known, the virtual is intensive and, though particular, always alive to something else. (Murphie, 2000: n.p.)

In virtual reality, CGI, and other mediated performance environments it is this «something else» that performance theory has yet to come to terms with. It seems that we are at a transitional moment where even «posthuman» and «virtual» are merely convenient placeholders for whatever the post-posthuman has in store; at the same time, as Susan Melrose observes sceptically, performance criticism still works in «conventional registers»: «Performance *writing* persists in reproducing the materially grounded constraints applying to writing, even on-line, at precisely that moment when a writer thematises the virtual» (Melrose, 2006: 11).

As I said at the outset, coherence in mapping the varieties of mediated performance may be elusive, but that is a problem only insofar we value the conceptual and categorical qualities of academic discourse over the theory machine of the performance itself. It seems possible to me that mediated performance can get past the ostensibly «tragic» rupture in the subject caused by digital doubles and other challenges of virtuality and recuperate some of the anthropic categories of performance theory, such as the value of bodies in space or the status of narrative, without being wedded to outmoded schemata. Dixon indeed emphasizes that most «digital/posthuman performers» aim not for chaos but «cohesion, for meaning, for unity, for intimate cybernetic connections between the organic and the technological» (Dixon, 2007: 155). Thus, Susan Broadhurst (2004: 55) concludes her discussion of the Jeremiah project by stating: «[…] it is my belief that technology's most important contribution to art is the enhancement and reconfiguration of an aesthetic creative potential which consists of interacting with and reacting to a physical body, not an abandonment of that body». And Johannes Birringer, in a recent article, cites Cynthia Hopkins' multimedia operetta *Accidental Nostalgia* «a heightened concentration of many perspectives, rhythms, voices, and polyphonic energies» with «continuous transfers between film, dance, music, and computer-assisted montage» as «live digital art at its best, reviving narrative traditions» (Birringer, 2007: 35). I sense that in such utterances, and in the performances they aim to evoke, «body», «presence» and «narrative» are not simply offered as retrograde categories tinged with nostalgia for a pre-digital world, but instead consciously (even

provocatively) deployed as the very anthropically charged terms of Performance Studies, but with a posthuman turn. You can go back, they might argue, only as long as you understand that there is no going back.

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REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS CULTURALES DE LA UNIVERSITAT JAUME I / *CULTURAL STUDIES JOURNAL OF UNIVERSITAT JAUME I*

Towards Intermediality in Contemporary Cultural Practices and Education

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ABSTRACT: Asunción López-Varela Azcárate and Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek discuss how intermediality may influence negotiations of culture and education, and how, in turn, cultural and educational practices can employ new media, with the result of an increase in social impact and significance. Intermediality refers to the blurring of generic and formal boundaries among different forms of new media practices. Intermediality means the employment of theoretical presuppositions in application together with the application of new media technology in action for the betterment of society against essentialisms and towards inclusion and interculturalism. Thus, the notion and potential of intermediality is associated with the incorporation of digital media in a wide variety of loci and spaces of representation and production that deal with the transfer of information and the creation of knowledge in an inclusive society. The trajectories of intermedial spaces between new media and the proliferation of texts, intertexts, hypertexts, and similar acts of remediation, transmediality, multimediality, hypermediality, etc., reveal and offer possibilities about how culture can be negotiated in the context of social and technological change.

Keywords: intermediality, interculturalism, education, globalization, civic education, citizenship.

RESUMEN: López-Varela y Tötösy exploran cómo la intermedialidad puede influir en las negociaciones entre cultura y educación y, paralelamente, cómo las prácticas culturales y educativas pueden utilizar los nuevos media para lograr un incremento del impacto y significación sociales. La intermedialidad significa la utilización de presupuestos teóricos de aplicación vinculados con nuevas tecnologías en acción con el propósito de mejorar la sociedad, evitando los esencialismos y a favor de la

inclusión y la interculturalidad. Por lo tanto, este concepto queda íntimamente ligado con la incorporación de los medios digitales en una variedad de *loci* y espacios de representación y producción que gestionan la transferencia de información y la creación de conocimiento en una sociedad incluyente. La trayectoria de los espacios intermediales entre los nuevos media y la proliferación de textos, intertextos, hipertextos y actos similares de transducción, transmedia, multimedia, hipermedia, etc., presentan un amplio abanico de posibilidades sobre cómo puede negociarse la cultura en el contexto del cambio social y tecnológico.

Palabras clave: intermedialidad, interculturalidad, educación, globalización, educación cívica, ciudadanía.

The theme of our article is the emergent field of intermediality and its relationship to cultural and educational practices in an increasingly digital world; that is in the Western world. The notion of intermediality raises a number of issues including social and cultural practices, education, aspects of globalization and the cultural industries. The theoretical background of our study is based on the framework of comparative cultural studies, a theoretical and methodological framework built on tenets of (radical) constructivism, interdisciplinarity, and the contextual and empirical study of culture (Even-Zohar, 1997; Schmidt, 1997; Tötösy, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2007). It is, indeed, a «puzzling paradox» that neither social theories concerning modernity, modern publicity or the media, nor humanities theories regarding different cultural forms, types of texts or genres have paid significant attention to the fact that «the past and present of contemporary culture and media are indeed part and parcel of multimodal and intermedial culture and media» (Lehtonen, 2001: 71). It is important that the processing, production, and marketing of cultural products such as music, film, radio, television programmes, books, journals, newspapers and digital media determine that today almost all aspects of production and distribution are digitized. Thus, culture is indeed multimodal as it makes use of technology as well as symbolic forms that employ simultaneously several material-semiotic resources (Lehtonen, 2001: 75). Intermediality, then, is about the relationships between the employment and practices of multimodal media. Does intermediality represent the potential for innovative artistic creation, publishing, and education? Or, on the contrary, is it an attack on aesthetic purity and academic rigour? How can we get the best of intermediality in contemporary cultural practices and in education?

First, we propose that intermediality can be defined as the ability to read and write critically across varied symbol systems and across various disciplines and

scholarly as well as general discursive practices. Rodowick (1991) has explained that thought is concerned with primarily linguistic expression and that even if we live in/with sophisticated visualities in contemporary Western culture, the shapes and processes of the discourse, as they are shaped in and through new technologies, are crucial for understanding symbolic exchange and cultural interaction. As such, intermediality is related to critical media literacy (López-Varela, 2006 *c*). Lehtonen (2001) has explained how intertextuality is a type of first-level intermediality as its narrative structures transgress medial borders (López-Varela, 2005). Therefore, «intermediality is intertextuality that transgresses media borders» (Lehtonen, 2001: 76). Through the notion of a medium, the centrality of the material, its technological dimensions, mode of transmission and related cultural aspects becomes imperative for the understanding of intermedial dynamics as McLuhan (2003: 9) introduced. A medium serves to mediate signs between people:

> A medium is that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of the real. A medium in our culture can never operate in isolation, because it must enter into relationships of respect and rivalry with other media. (Bolter & Grusin, 1999: 65)

The sense and practice of agency and the very notion of mediation implies that media studies and related disciplines, such as comparative cultural studies, cannot continue to be seen as isolated monads but need to become part of more complex research networks, which will work both in scholarship and education, as well as in cultural practices in general: «Studying intermediality questions academic disciplinary boundaries» (Lehtonen, 2001: 82) and «If media (and also "media-texts") are to be located in changing relationships, if their function also depends on historical changes of these relationships, then we have to conclude that the idea of isolated media-monads or isolated sorts of media has to be abandoned» (Müller, 1997: 297-298).

At a time when communication and media studies and (comparative) cultural studies – to name disciplines employing the proposed ways of thinking and study, although the impact of the notion of intermediality impacts on all disciplines of the humanities and social sciences – are defined as processes of multi and intermedial construction and interaction, then the development and study of their encounters takes on a primary relevance to the academic community. Furthermore, these loci and spaces, where intermediality and interdisciplinary study touch and then withdraw themselves from definite territorial demarcations as their points of encounter constantly shift, require a more complex theoretical understanding of intermedial processes. Thus,

research has oriented itself in its pursuit as work by such as: Lehtonen (2001); Wolf (1999); Helbig (1998); Müller (1997); Wagner (1996); Chapple & Kattenbelt (2006); López-Varela (2005, 2006 *a,b,c*, 2007) and Tötösy de Zepetnek (2001, 2003, 2007 *a*, 2007 *b*); amongst others, demonstrate. Here, we focus on the practical cultural implications of intermediality based in new media for its users.

1. Intermediality, Cultural Practices, and Social Contexts

Intermediality has become a Western-based phenomenon with global impact and the ability to create new forms of artistic and critical innovation; to find ways for their distribution (i.e., open access to scholarship published on the World Wide Web); to link cultural communities in cyberspace; and to be applied as a vehicle for innovative educational practices. Today, discursive practices, including visualities, form a complex intermedial network of signifying practices that construct realities rather than simple representations of them. Socially constructed meaning or what we call «culture» takes place through processes of the negotiation of stories, images, and meanings, that is, through jointly-constructed and contextual agreements, power relations, and their authorisation, and legitimation of social positions and loci. Therefore, the ways intermedial discursive practices are produced, processed, and transmitted are a relevant and important area of research and practice (Semali and Pailliotet, 1999). We would like to add here that while outside of the Western world access to and the use of new media – and thus the potential of intermediality – is severely compromised because of economic inequalities, its impact is, nevertheless, felt globally. Public discourse and communication are achieved by institutionalized means of transmission that always precede the content of what is communicated. Individual and social identities are developed – at best – by dialogue (Pellizzi, 2006; Tötösy, 1998, 2003) communicated through a given set of practices – mainly spoken, written, and visual communication, and inscribed in supporting materials that change over time and can be manipulated in their own distinct ways. The most relevant supporting material is human memory, including that which is processed and «archived» through books, television, cinema, software, and digital media that provide long-term storage (López-Varela, 2006 *a*). Technological changes affect the way information is transmitted, emerge in particular cultural conditions, and, in turn, result in new social and cultural situations. Technologies produce relational positions of greater or lesser privilege through regulating the flow of intermedial discourse in particular ways. The materiality of media is already culturally encoded and bears a certain institutional validation prior to specific content being transmitted. In this way,

people's lives are spent shaping and responding to new material media and artefacts. New media do not replace or substitute prior technologies but it creates new intermedial configurations of the whole social and economic system of media. Thus, the internet and the World Wide Web have not replaced broadcast media or printed books, while it is causing the re-evaluation and reinterpretation of these media systems and practices. More often than not, the information and communication possibilities of the internet are parasitic of broadcast-mediated communication, as the growth of companion websites which accompany media organizations, newspapers, consumer products, theatre productions, sporting events, etc., demonstrate. However, knowledge sharing is what culture is all about and new media have the potential to be more than just distribution channels for established cultural industries.

Information and the processing of information is the communicative vehicle of culture today. The concept, knowledge management, and uses of information are linked immanently to education, knowledge, creativity, innovation, democratic participation, civic education and citizenship. Technological applications and intermediality play an important role in developing educational and cultural policies and practices; expanding the stock of shared heritage while maintaining cultural diversity and the multiplicities of identity formation. However, the large intermedial capacities of new media, such as the internet and the World Wide Web present problems in need of solution. One of these is related to the processes of distribution. The amount of information generated on the World Wide Web is so large that the organization of knowledge has become an important part of cultural work for the cultural industries. The digital preservation of cultural heritage is as important as establishing criteria for deciding which information is relevant and ensuring free access to digital archives and online documents, an issue linked also to educational aspects (for more on the preservation of culture in the digital age in the EU see <http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/soccul/cult/index_en.htm>). In addition, in many cases new technologies are only providing information, such as giving access to government documents and open-access educational sources, however, most websites do not facilitate interaction that would allow the exchange of ideas and provide cross-cultural relationships and linkages: a matter particularly important in education (López-Varela, 2006 *b*). There is also the question of the digital divide we referred to previously and that is not only a matter of accessibility or purchasing power (Norris, 2002: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>).

Another important issue is electronic publishing, which began some fifteen years ago but it was not until the turn of the twentieth century that it began to gain more importance, especially with regard to peer-reviewed, full text, but open-access publishing of scholarship (Tötösy de Zepetnek, 2007 *a*, 2007 *b*). The establishment of copyright is believed to serve the greater public interest

because apart from guarantying a just reward for the author, it is considered to be an incentive for further creativity and a guaranty for quality. The privileged bond between author and his/her creation as a relation between a point of origin and its demarcated dissemination; the notion of artistic and scholarly work as somehow a fixed and stable entity: these symptoms of modernity helped to reinforce the myth of separate and sustainable media and art forms with their own inner definable essence. However, since open access to information is a precondition for fulfilling the right of any citizen to freedom of expression (protected under the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights), there is a growing need to secure a balance between respect for authors' rights and the need to provide free access to as many users as possible. (This can be seen in the *IFLA Position on Copyright in the Digital Environment*, issued in 2000 <http://www.ifla.org/ipubs.htm>). The greatest risk is the growing economic focus of cultural and new media policies; the fear that only marketable cultural products will find their way to the general public: «Commodification intensifies intermediation» (Lehtonen, 2001: 78). Intellectual property and its tracks of distribution have become concentrated in only a few multinational companies and therefore only those profitable products will find their way into the market (Yúdice, 2003). It is necessary to stimulate and create structures and the logistics of production and diffusion other than those of multinational companies, and to create circuits of communication for international intercultural cooperation. In this sense the debate on open-access publishing on the World Wide Web becomes particularly important. The preservation of the public domain is a crucially important aspect. Thus, the future of the information society depends on achieving a balance between commercial and non-commercial initiatives.

Besides problems of publishing, accessibility and media literacy there are socio-cultural issues related to the changing nature of modern societies, which in turn relate to intermedial issues. The massive increase of (im)migration and movements of people have radically transformed the context in which cultural activities are developed. It has been proposed that the national objectives of cultural cooperation, mainly diffusion of historical and artistic patrimony and the strengthening of national identities and the expansion of their markets need to be oriented toward intercultural co-production (García Canclini, Rosaldo, Chiappari, López, 2005; García Canclini, Yúdice, Ashley, 2001). All cultural aspects are now conditioned by a growing non-territorial transnationalism, which develops from the increasing movement of people across the globe, and thus the study of culture needs to be networked in order to facilitate intercommunication among different cultures. In this new panorama of shared cultural products intermedial technology becomes particularly important. The question concerns not only the unfair distribution of technological products

within 20% of world population taking up 90% of internet access (97% of African people do not have access to new technologies, while Europe and the US concentrate almost 70% of internet users. Ibero-America, with 8% of the world population participates only in 4% of internet access) [see García Canclini, Rosaldo, Chiappari, López, 2005]. The Unesco *Proceedings on eCulture and Cultural Policy* (2005) demonstrates that public policies cannot bridge the «digital divide» by focusing solely on the provision of good ICT infrastructure and that educational strategies, which aim to enhance technical literacy, thus facilitating access to cultural literacy by helping people to relate critically and self-critically to other cultures are needed. There is a further need for special measures to level inequalities owing to geographical location, gender, age, education, and position in the labour market; there is also a need to take into account special groups such as ethnic minorities, (im)migrants and refugees, leading to the formation of open-access civil networks.

However, it appears that the growth of new media technologies, and what makes them marketable, responds to three central values of (post)modern society: mobility, communication, and individualisation; and these values are related to a key aspect of intermedial loci and spaces, namely the fact that they are designed to be permanently active. The most popular application of the internet is its interactivity because it can produce immediate feedback (Ryan, 2001). The interactivity inherent to the internet is often felt as a process of interchange and cooperation/collaboration – a dialogue which can promote a sense of connectedness. Thus, (im)migrant communities across the globe choose, where possible, to use the internet in order to find a space of social belonging in their struggle to produce new identities while in diasporas (Doody, Aizlewood & Bourdieau, 2003: 43-56). However, research has also shown some of the paradoxes of connectivity, for instance the fact that an excessive use of net technologies may disconnect the individual from the active political sphere of real space and from embodied interactions surrounding her/him, which has the effect of diminishing their sense of social and personal responsibility to others (Wellman, Quan-Haase, Boase, Chen, Hampton, Isla de Díaz, Miyata, 2003; López-Varela, 2006 *c*). The more individuals look to (new) media for acquiring cultural identity, the less they look around for social solidarity. The paradox of increasing mobility is the greater individualisation it creates, as people can communicate and interact at a distance regardless of their physical situation. Even more than mobile telephony, the internet enhances this individualisation by providing means of fast asynchronic communication (Langer, 2003). In political terms, new media allow the expression of public opinion while lacking the possibility of real direct interaction, and very often massive control of the media by private interests distorts systematically the content of public discourse.

In territorial terms, the developed world is experiencing a shift from communities based on small-group-like villages and neighbourhoods and towards flexible partial communities based on networked individualism where people have multiple and shifting sets of «glocalized ties» (Quan-Haase, Boase, Chen, Hampton, Isla de Díaz, Miyata, 2003). This is owing to the fact that people bare in increasing number multiple locations of residence and citizenships and thus multiple cultural allegiances (Appiah, 2006; Kymlicka, 1995-2004). But it is also that the public/private distinction, which prevailed before the extension of private control in modern capitalist societies is disappearing. Hence the argument that intermediality is helping public discourse to colonize the confined spaces of the home where individuals gain access to the public sphere through the internet. With more and more companies offering their workers tele-work options, the household unit becomes a primary cell of modern public relations. In this context, the generalized interactivity of the internet, along with the ability of anyone with access to put forward their own views in any of a range of forums poses a threat to the distinction between public information – epitomized in the notion of journalistic objectivity – and personal opinion, a distinction central to the formation of the imagined community of the democratic nation-state. Nor surprisingly, geographic and kinship ties of family, local neighbourhood, and nation are yielding new ways of «imagining» (Anderson, 1983) social and national spaces, with individuals becoming dependent on media and the hyperspace to acquire a sense of belonging and attachment to others.

Intermediality contributes to globalization in the sense that it helps the mobility of culture in its crossing of virtual borders. Does it, however contribute to semantic and civic standardization? If not, as recent research shows (Rifkin, 2004), how can we speak across semantic borders? «For a people who are neither Spanish nor live in a country in which Spanish is the first language; for a people who live in a country in which English is the reigning tongue but who are not Anglo; for a people who cannot entirely identify with either standard (formal, Castilian) Spanish nor standard English, what recourse is left to them but to create their own language?» (Anzaldúa, 1987: 55) The question it raises is how do we cross-over? How do we make the gap become «a chink a window through which I can observe the world» now that «the apertures of perception have widened […] just as the number "2" implies all other numbers, so a bivalent consciousness is necessarily a multivalent consciousness». (Hoffman (1989: 272) and Jim Rosenberg's (2004) work on spatial hypertext describes an enormous range of possible types of linkages, where linking is not limited to the binary either-or commonly understood as hypertext, but can be thought of in terms of modes of «gathering» through set and category relations). How do we provide interdisciplinary intermedial bridges? How do we use new technologies,

oriented towards growing individualisation and detached multiculturalism, to create an intercultural, inclusive, and non-essentialist society through comparative approaches in (comparative) cultural studies and with a focus on dialogue?

2. Interculturalism, Intermediality, and Education

Intercultural situations are influenced by negotiation between several, sometimes competing sets of views. Interculturality in the sense of inclusion requires mutual (ex)change in/of both the (im)migrant groups and the larger society. We have already mentioned that, despite the digital divide, (im)migrant communities across the globe co-opt the internet increasingly to find intermedial spaces of social belonging in their struggle to produce and/or cope with new identities in their new loci/space. The state of exilic and diasporic location and existence often strengthens ritualistic, religious, and ethnic identities, and diasporic communities located in democratic nation states often have to confront their local visibility through public acts and demonstrations of the hospitability of their home culture in their struggle for enhanced citizenship rights (Kymlicka, 1995-2004; McClennen, 2004). In order to become a participatory citizen it is relevant to provide positive contributions to the public sphere and exercise civic responsibilities. Therefore, the mechanism of social control is placed inside people's subjectivity so that conforming behaviour is produced voluntarily. In general, people cling to the products of hegemonic/essentialist culture that produce and reinforce the dominant ideology and, in order to fit into the centre and avoid marginalized positions, people will draw upon the dominant discourse to legitimate their claims of entitlement (Foucault, 1980). The internalization of feelings of marginality may lead to passivity instead of participation in the development of sustainable agreements. The main criteria used to justify inclusion and/or exclusion in a given society continues to be that of identity, with a generalized «failure to acknowledge hybridity […] a political point whose ramifications can be measured in lives» (Pieterse, 2001: 224; and Heidegger (1957) had already questioned this idea of identity, a thesis continued by Derrida (1967) and Deleuze and Guattari (1968) that Brillenburg-Würth (2004) has developed in relation to the concept of intermediality). Slavoj Žižek (1997), among others, has gone even further in holding that this kind of managed encounter with otherness indicates multiculturalism's complicity with the cultural logic of late capital. As Rickert puts it, «otherness can only exist, true difference can only maintain its status, insofar as it accepts a priori a benign, pluralist, universal framework» and he adds that «this framework is already disempowering because it reduces otherness and difference to the benign

framework of tolerance» and hides violent resistances and conflicts that stage underlying traumatic logics. We should be encouraged «to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or *processes* that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences». (Rickert, 2007: 132; author's emphasis):

> The in-between spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular and communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation in the act of defining society itself. It is in the emergence of interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference – that the intersubjective and collective experiences of nationness, community interest or cultural value are negotiated. (Bhabha, 1994: 2)

The question is: How can contradictory codes and conflicted discourses, which find a new vehicle in intermediality and thus are always caught up with non-rational and affective influences buried in language, find a way to consensus? Which are the «in-between» mechanisms of authentic mediation? Can virtual mediation contribute to remediate the situation?

Mediation contributes to the creation of an atmosphere where problems become «shared problems» and in which the expression of emotions is acceptable under the foundation that symbolic consistence and subjective identity are achieved by means of affective processes. As Eva Hoffman puts it

> like everybody, I am the sum of my languages, the language of my family and children, and education and friendship, and love, and the larger changing world – though, perhaps I tend to be more aware than most of the fractures between them, and of the building blocks. The fissures sometimes cause me pain, but in a way, they're how I know I'm alive. (Hoffman, 1989: 272)

Emphasis on the emotional may also lead to uncovering underlying resistances to cooperate and participate. People need to be engaged in social action and (im)migrants should be empowered to do so. However, there are certain social positions that may not entail full participation as a legitimate social agent. Social needs and entitlements are constructed in discourses quite differently with regard to gender, culture, social class, or race. They are assumed within relational contexts, in contrast with interests that are internally referenced to the individual psyche. (Im)migrants, in particular, may feel a lower degree of entitlement to certain social needs. How can we use new media and its intermedial possibilities in a constructive way to build platforms from which migrants can be heard and get involved in joint social action?

The influx of (im)migrants in European countries has brought about structural changes at every level of the educational system. There is at present a social consensus that the main «political» problem (in the sense of building citizenship) is the result of demographic decline in most of developed nations and the entrance of (im)migrants and the subsequent effects on the (sub)systems of production, culture, and education. Mobility and (im)migration are favouring the development of new forms of political administration based on citizenship, with the subsequent acceptance of cultural pluralism, in detriment of national models, even if simultaneously these continue to grow in different parts of the world. Global displacement, together with the growing use of networked communication, which employs forms of intermediality, could be affecting a socio-cultural revolution towards the belief in multiple citizenship definitions. Intermediality shows reality as a changing and dynamic process where the individual is defined within a plurality of times and spaces – genre, language, group, etc. – multiple and intercultural. Therefore, all understanding of cultural change is seen as open to contacts and interferences, crossroads, and meeting points within a dense network of informational structures and reminiscences. The feeling of belonging not to a single space, but to a dynamic network of translations and cultural hybrids is, we argue, mediated by technological changes and media structures that offer possibilities of network and intermedial representation and production.

Ideology is inscribed in every aspect of the pedagogical situation, not only through the authority of the instructor at all levels of the curricula but also in such factors as the classroom layout, the educational institution's structure, the evaluation system, the ways education is valued socially, in the systems of social and individual group interaction, etc. Established since the formation of nation states, one of the goals of education is to provide competent and responsible citizens who understand their obligation and their right to insist that economic, social, and political power be exerted in the best interests of the community. Thus, in recent years, educational (radical) constructivist approaches that inspire European educational convergence have recovered the humanist tradition that focuses more on quality and the development of abilities and attitudes, that is, the «how» of education (Riegler, 2007). This has been due to the need to accommodate greater flexibility, mobility, and tolerance in European systems in order to work towards an educational convergence that has been encouraged from the economic point of few for several reasons. First, we can mention the compromise achieved with regard to the free movement of workers within the community after the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and economic considerations meant to encourage a flow of investment and the free movement of capital. A

further reason was the pressure that came from the ideal of a hypothetical cultural unity of Europe. *The Janne Report* (1976) was the expression of this vision of a European society whose cultural memory could be built on the basis of its educational system and the «glocalized» teaching of history, literature, languages, etc. The 1988 *European Educational Policy Statement* and the *Maastricht Treaty* of 1992 continued to reinforce the central value of the European dimension in education (Commission of the European Communities (1973; on community policy in education [the *Janne Report*, see *Bulletin of the European Communities,* supplement 10/73 Brussels European Commission; Council of the European Communities, General Secretariat (1987), *European Educational Policy Statements***,** 3rd ed., Luxembourg Office of Official Publications of the European Communities. Supplement to the Third Edition, 1990, 19-21; *Treaty of the European Union* 1992, Article 126, 2). Finally, there is the immanent pressure when work mobility was delayed owing to the incapacity of the European community to reach consensus in the recognition of professional qualifications and when student mobility flourished in the 1980s (Lenearts, 1994).

Parallel to these moves towards European unity, collaborative learning spaces and the moving away from hierarchical notion in the teaching and learning processes, has been a growing interest in the use of computer-mediated communication, networked, and internet-based applications in educational environments (López-Varela, 2007; Gómez Peña, 2005; McLaren, Hammer, Scholle, Reilly, 1995; Sleeter, 1999). Present-day students working in various modes of media and communication (visual, audio, and verbal/textual) require them to engage in productive tasks and activities in a variety of modes. These environments (virtual trips, webquests, miniquests, etc., (López-Varela, 2006 *b*) offer new possibilities to educational institutions not only in the form of on-line instruction (courses, lessons, tutoring, etc.) but also in the form of multi-institutional project collaboration and professional activities employing new media technology online (i.e., intermediality in education and scholarship). They seek not only to treat information, that is, question, research, the finding of meaning, the developing of ideas, analysis, evaluation, synthesis, the solving of problems, etc., but also to communicate, transfer information and to use such in making decisions in an effective and responsible way, by applying it to concrete social situations. Hypermedia, as an online learning resource, is only given shape and meaning through user interaction. In this way, autonomy, the key to future responsible citizens, is not taught theoretically but achieved through experiential learning, becoming a course strategy that concerns the entire curriculum, its materials, tasks, and learning arrangements with and via dialogue between instructor and students along with their cultural and spatial contexts.

3. Conclusion

Intermediality, intertextuality, and related cultural terms such as hybridization, border-crossing, interculturalism, and collaborative learning pervade contemporary critical media and culture theory and practice. The variety of terms and taxonomies stems from the once heterogeneous theoretical approaches rooted in different fields such as literary studies, linguistics, (comparative) cultural studies, sociology, cultural anthropology, media and communication studies, education, etc., in an attempt to draw interdisciplinary bridges in their response to the growth of virtual environments and their merger in intermedial networks and practices. We would like to emphasize the potential of intermediality to serve as a model that not only increases our understanding of the mechanisms of media convergence, but also applies to parallel phenomena in intercultural and educational contexts. We propose that the basis for a constructive conceptualisation of social change is mediated through technology and that the application and practice of intermediality as a vehicle for socio-cultural needs to be further explored, both theoretical and practically, in its aspects of production, distribution, and usability. In addition, the understanding and implementation of cultural policy in different parts of the globe needs to be understood as mediated and re-mediated by public as well as scholarly discourse. As scholars and educators, our efforts ought to be directed not only upon our students, but also society at large, aware of the cultural codes and the competing discourses – of race, class, sexual orientation, age, ethnic, and gender formations, for example – that influence our positions as subjects of experience. Thus, future research should extend even more to explore intercultural intermedial pedagogic methods in order to investigate how cultural beliefs, values, and cognitive styles influence the development of intergroup interaction (Tötösy, 2007) so that passive and excessively individualistic positions can be overcome. The classroom should be used to show students the dynamics of discursive positioning and train them to think and perform differently, while at the same time achieving a way to consensus. As Nafisi puts it

> an absurd fictionality ruled our lives. We tried to live in the open spaces, in the chinks created *between that room*, which had become our protective cocoon, and the censor's world of witches and goblins outside. Which of these two worlds was more real and to which did we really belong? We no longer knew the answers. Perhaps one way of finding out the truth was to do what we did: to try to imaginatively articulate these two worlds, and through that process, give shape to our vision and identity. (Nafisi, 2003: 26)

If modernity turns to essentialist notions, postmodern media power has given way to a certain sense of futility of critique that undermines any attempts to change the world substantially for the better. Passivity, irony, and cynicism are common not only in the classroom and academe but in society in general. Both resistance and participation – as proposed here with both theoretical and applied intermediality – should replace resignation. Intermediality and the supplementary relation between subject and media always hinges on the notion of becoming. Becoming holds an «in-between» space, a gap between absence and presence that invites an analysis to the process of intermediality in terms of philosophies of difference (Derrida, 1967) as an opening up but also a crossing-over. Comparative bridges to cross over from the theoretical development, with its contingent application of intermediality to cultural remediation and back towards interculturality would advance society in all its contexts and processes.

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Intermedial Practice and Analysis

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Remediation of Moving Bodies: Aesthetic Perceptions of a Live, Digitised and Animated Dance Performance

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ABSTRACT: This article discusses the dance performance project *Interface 2,* which involved live dancers, animated computer projections (remediated creations of the live section), and the interface of live dancers with dancers on film. It analyses the responses and perceptions of an audience to the changing transformations of the media and the staging of the dance performance. Alongside these responses, I compare and contrast some of the philosophical and aesthetic debates from the past three decades regarding dance and technology in performance, including that of the tension between the acceptance or rejection of «unnatural» remediated bodies and «natural» live bodies moving in the stage space.

Keywords: Dance, Remediation, Live, Film, Computer animated.

RESUMEN: Este artículo aborda el proyecto de danza *Interface 2*, que agrupaba bailarines en directo, proyecciones animadas por ordenador (creaciones transducidas de la sección en vivo) y la interfaz de bailarines en vivo con bailarines filmados. Se analizan la respuesta y percepciones del público hacia las transformaciones continuas de los medios tecnológicos de la puesta en escena de la danza. Igualmente, se comparan y contrastan algunos de los debates filosóficos y estéticos de las últimas tres décadas en relación con la danza y el uso de la tecnología en la representación, en particular el referente a la tensión entre la aceptación o rechazo de la falta de «naturalidad» de los cuerpos transducidos y la «naturalidad» de los cuerpos en vivo moviéndose por el espacio escénico.

Palabras clave: danza, transducción, representación en vivo, medios fílmicos, recreación por ordenador.

In the opening of her book *Dance, Art and Aesthetics* Betty Redfern states: «during the twentieth-century, developments in the dance as an art form have been on an unprecedented scale» (Redfern, 1983: 3); and that expansion has certainly not slowed down in the last twenty-five years, with developments in computer and digital technology and «other media» being «a significant feature» (Chapple and Kattenbelt, 2006: 11) in live theatre, dance and performance – much of which can be read about in Steve Dixon's comprehensive historical study *Digital Performance* (2007).

In the 1990s, scholars and dance critics debated the then new developments in dance for camera/video dance and questioned whether this innovation was «dance». Francis Sparshott in his second book on the philosophical understanding of dance writes of how «dance on TV or film necessarily lacks presence» (Sparshott, 1995: 444), even going as far as a commenting that because of the digital tricks and special effects possible «patterns are created in which life is cancelled» (Sparshott, 1995: 449). He considers both sides of the debate, however, by noting that the use of video technology could «revolutionize dance-making» (Sparshott, 1995: 448), partly as a means of recording/notating creative materials, but also by becoming a creative medium of its own:

> the uses made of video as an adjunct to choreography merge into uses of video as a medium of its own […] the electronic manipulability of the video image is not governed by rules susceptible to visual intuition, as film is; its transformations have topologies of their own. (Sparshott, 1995: 449)

Equally, in 1994, in response to the *Dance for Camera* season on television in the UK, Robert Penman criticised this new medium because, while there were many film and editing techniques evident, «dance of any established movement vocabulary was distinctly lacking» (Penman, 1994: 1172). However, just a year later, and with more familiarity with the new medium, he was able to write about Elliot Caplan's filming and editing of Merce Cunningham's *Beach Birds for Camera* (also televised) that it allowed «the choreography to speak for itself» and that the effect of technical skill of film and editing was to «submerge [the] process within the flow and line of the choreography so that it reveals the essence and richness of the work» (Penman, 1995: 1139). Similarly, we have moved from the position adopted by critic Judith Mackrell writing that «the camera can't record dance in ways that are both interesting *and* faithful» (Mackrell, 1997: 236) to Fiona Burnside writing that: «it was not wonderful choreography, wonderful dancing or even wonderful camerawork which held the attention. It was the combination of these elements which came together to create something different» (Burnside, 1994: 15). It seems clear then, that time and increased familiarity with something technically and aesthetically new

enables us to change our views and perceptions of it. In the space of seven years, what has variously been called «dance for camera», «video dance», and/or «film dance» has not only found a more acknowledged label – «screen dance», although some continue to debate the use of this term, or chose not to use it – but this new form has also made critics and other commentators turn from denouncing its place and value in the field of dance, to authors such as Sherril Dodds and Katrina McPherson establishing principles for what makes this medium «good», and how the viewer can best appreciate the qualities and meaning of the works.

Moving on from screen or video dance, within the latter part of the twentieth century– the explosion of pop videos, MTV and other music and dance channels; the expanded capabilities of cable, satellite and digital TV; the variety of uses of mobile phone technology; and the general shift to a screen/visual-based culture – present the possibilities of integrating dance and the new technologies in exciting new practical as well as more critical challenges. Already Apple are selling video iPods, an innovation which suggests that perhaps the dance students of dance today will be the dance artists of tomorrow, experimenting with new performance spaces beyond the theatre, the gallery, and the studio, to the small performance screen of the iPod. Certainly, artists have always been open to exploring different inventions and how they may use them separately, and/or together, to create something new. For dance artists that may have been point shoes, machinery on stage, electric lighting, projection, film, TV, or photography – so it is not really surprising that when people today can surf the net, e-mail, and text messages that dance artists should seek to embrace not just the digital camera but the computer as well, and all that it involves in terms of projection, interactive installation with motion-sensing software, virtual reality, avatars and biotechnology, or bioart (Broadhurst and Machon, 2006). Interestingly, Kent De Spain remarks in his essay on dance and technology, especially computer technology, that «dance has always used the ultimate technology – the human body – to create magic through movement» (De Spain, 2002: 2). In fact «dance artists, have played a pivotal role in using *new media* and their displays, software and interfaces on stage. Dance, it seems has become the ultimate multi-media avant-garde theatrical form», states Peter Boenisch (2006: 151). Yet, despite developments in computer technology, the use of the human body in dance is not going to be replaced. For example, Paul Kaiser, virtual dance collaborator with Merce Cunningham and Bill T. Jones, responds to a question as to whether virtual dance will replace or diminish *real* dance:

> The more we embellish dance with technology, the more we'll start longing to see the real thing again – real dancers in real time and real space with no distractions. But it is also true we can never turn back the clock. (Kaiser, 2002: 112)

To my mind, the issue is not one of whether digital dance and dancers will replace live dancers. There should not be any techno-phobic fear of a purely post-human art form arising from a «take-over» by computers, akin to the general fear of computer technology taking over humanity in the twenty-first century; but, as Hansen reminds us, «from the very beginnings of critical engagement with computer technology, concern has been voiced about the potential, feared by many, celebrated by some, of the end of humanity» (Hansen, 2006: xv). Our concern should be with how we will *see* these new art forms, and analyse and appreciate them. Söke Dinkla, writing on dance and technology, asserts: «our current challenge is […] to see digital media as a cultural technology that has already transformed both our view of our world and our body image. In this situation, an intermediate art form between dance theatre and the fine arts can provide models for allowing us to test out strategies for redefinition» (Dinkla, 2002: 14). Kent De Spain likewise notes: «The philosophical and aesthetic challenges presented by some of the work now combining dance with new technologies can be so profound that critics, scholars, and even artists themselves will be forced to redefine and reassess how they understand and interpret dance» (De Spain, 2000: 3). Susan Broadhurst and Josephine Machon go further in their emphasis of the issue and comment that the «quintessential features» of the new digital performance media «*demand* [my emphasis] a new mode of analysis and interpretation which foregrounds and celebrates the inherent tensions between the physical and the virtual» (Broadhurst and Machon, 2006: xvi).

It would seem that much of the debate re-opens the old question «what is dance?» While many agree it is not a word that can be easily defined (Best, 1974; Beardsley, 1982; Sparshott, 1988; McFee, 1992; Alter, 1996); it did not seem too incongruous for me to present my own model of dance, remediated by technology, to an audience and ask of them «So is this dance?»

The audience for *Interface 2* was comprised of university dance students, dance colleagues, retired school teachers, and colleagues from administration and service departments from within the university (some of whom admitted to regularly seeing dance performed in a theatre and some never having seen «dance art»). All were aware that they would be asked for a response to what they saw performed. In the past, as Alter reminds us in *Dance-Based Dance Theory* (1996), writers such as Selden (1935) and H'Doubler (1940) advocated the need for critics and dancers to «educate» audiences in being able to understand «dance, as art». However, I felt that as there were many dance artists experimenting in this field (including, for example, Troika Ranch, Merce Cunningham, Sarah Rubidge, Bill T. Jones) and many dance practitioners calling for the need for theorists to redefine the dance in this new medium and to present a new model for analysis – so there was a need also to seek to ascertain just what

an audience thinks and feels before they were «educated» by critics. Audiences or «people are very suggestible» says Sparshott (1963: 11), and I wanted to find out what they felt and thought before they were «told» what to experience or think.

The *Interface 2* project was designed to create a dance work that used computer-animated dancers and a film of dancers alongside live dancers. As a dance artist, I am interested in the interface where technology and live dance meet and combine to create something new through their interaction. For very practical reasons, mostly time considerations, the computer dancers did not get to interface with the live dancers in this version. The work as performed is approximately ten minutes in length, with three sections, which on the day of the performance were presented as computer dancers, followed by live dancers, and ending with a combination of film and live dancers. I chose not to describe the work as «screen dance» because both the computer and the film dancers were shown on a screen and I did want to differentiate between them.

The computer software used was *Kandle*. It is designed to assist in movement analysis, mostly by Physical Education teachers and coaches, to help perfect the movement action, for example, in a tennis shot, a golf swing or a high jump. I wanted to work with computer animation because, somewhat like Merce Cunningham (De Spain, 2000: 8), I feel that technology has great potential for enhancing the visual, and I see dance as visual in terms of space, time and energy around and between performers. The *Kandle* animation programme has the capacity to create stick figures over film of the human form for the purpose of biomechanical analysis. When I first saw it being promoted, parts of it reminded me (in a rudimentary way) of parts of Cunningham's *Biped* (1999), and I thought that perhaps it had the potential to by-pass scientific analysis to become part of the creative element of choreography, although with a restricted animation capacity. The other feature that attracted me was its relatively low cost – if it could successfully be used as a creative animation tool, it could become something to integrate into my undergraduate module on technology, because it would be something that students could afford themselves after graduation, should they want to pursue similar creative experiments with animation and dance.

The process of animation involves three stages. First the live dancers are filmed and edited to produce a movie. Then, frame by frame (the 1-minute, 15-second *Kandle* animated dance had 1688 frames) the graphics animation is applied. It takes nine clicks of the mouse to put the dots on the arms and torso, and another eight to do the legs. This is not a time-effective software package, although I do hasten to add that it was never designed to do what I was asking of it.

Image 1

Finally the contrast and background colours are altered (to black) so that the coloured stick figure animations are highlighted. I began to enjoy dismembering the stick figures so that sometimes they had only one arm, or sometimes only torso and arms no legs. At first this was a time-driven decision brought about by the length of time it took to animate each dancer frame by frame; but later it became an artistic one, over which limb/body part/dancer I would actualise (make visual) or exclude so as to make an impact, or shift of emphasis on the screen. In time, I started to learn how I could make figures slowly disappear by the elimination of a dot and a line to a leg and/or arm, frame by frame. As I began to see it, I was in effect re-choreographing the original film of the live dancers for its new representation, of coloured lines and dots: a remediation of the original into a computer dance animation for screen.

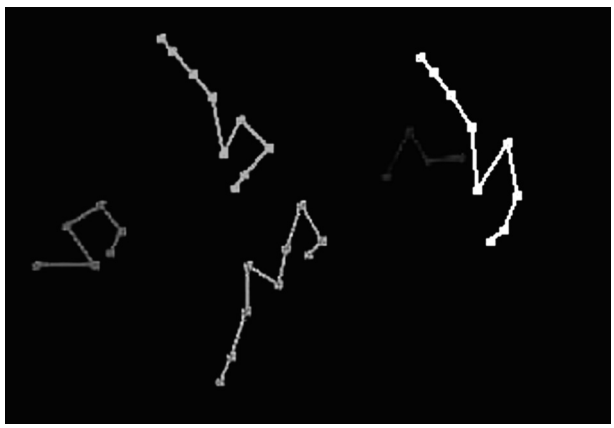

Image 2

The audience were not given the information about how all the stick figures started as real dancers dancing in real time, before they were manipulated on a computer to coloured stick animations. Therefore, perhaps it was not too surprising that some of them saw this animated dance just as shapes – not dance, but only computerised movement. They did not perceive the manipulation of live bodies in motion; they only saw coloured lines and «squiggles». However, although initially when I looked at the stick figures I saw the original dancers, increasingly I began to see something new.

In their written responses on the questionnaires, some wrote that they thought the animations «worked well as an accompaniment to dance», but that if not shown as part of a dance show, that «section one» would seem «to be just a digital image representing the timing of the movement». Some wrote that they thought the animations «interesting» and that they saw how «it related to the dancers»; and one audience member wrote that «as a standalone piece it had the beginnings of beauty, but lost that once the live dancers began».

The starting point from which all sections grew was the section with the live dancers. The main motif came from human exploration in time and space, based on the idea of being confined in a restricted (tubular) space from which the desire is always to escape. The dance is largely an abstract piece, which has as its focus making connections between the dancers, either physically, or between their gestures, actions and energy in the stage space. At times it is layered and complex, but like the music (Bach's *Violin Concerto No 1 in A minor*), it has moments when all come together in unison to allow the eye some respite. The third section, from which the dance gets its name, *Interface*, concerns the interaction between the live dancers on stage with the dance video projected on the cyclorama. Computer software has enabled the digital video to be manipulated so that bodies are reversed or disembodied, movements are repeated or blurred, slide effects have been used to alter the sense of reality, and time has been slowed or paused. Through improvisation with the dancers, choreographic decisions were made to create connections and interactions between the live and digitised dancers; some of the connections were very obvious and others more subtle.

The more obvious connections involved the mirroring of the actions of the dancers on the film by the dancers on the stage:

Image 3

or the response of the live dancers to actions by the filmed ones – such as the live dancers visibly turning their heads to watch the digitised dancers on the film exit off the screen:

Image 4

In «A New Place for Dancing» Bob Lockyer (2002: 160) comments on how «hard it is to make non-narrative material work on the [television] screen». Similarly, Litza Bixler explains how for a new work for television «we deliberately decided to have a clear sense of narrative […] we didn't want to alienate people; rather we wanted to draw them in» (McPherson, 2006: 5). In much the same way, I felt that clearly evident links such as mirroring were more in the «narrative», or easy-to-make-sense-of-realm, and would help the audience connect with the integration of the media. As one audience member said, «I like the way they connected with the same movements». These obvious connections

were in contrast to the more abstract or ambiguous images, or more subtle connections, and required less of a passive viewing from the audience. Such a range of integration gave, I felt, a greater texture to the interface, even though a member of the audience wrote that «it was difficult to follow when it didn't match».

Some of these more subtle interactions involved body parts shown on the film leading and informing the focus of the choreography of the live dancers; for example, below you can see two frames from the beginning «arm section»:

Image 5

Image 6

From previous works using live dancers in interaction with projected images, I have learned that some audience members unused to this visual media

say they find it difficult to «watch both at the same time». Clearly, the more opportunities they have to experience «challenging» visual performances, the more familiar they will become with multi-perceptual presentations, and the more open they may become to seeing that part of the demands placed upon audiences is that they make choices about what to give their attention to at any given point in time; just as they are asked to do in a live dance theatre work by Pina Bausch, or in life when they are walking down a busy street.

In addition to a post-performance discussion, the audience were asked to complete a questionnaire that included open and closed questions to gain quantitative and qualitative responses. The results of these showed that 63% said they had seen dance performances using technology before, but only 38% had done so when it had been using computerised technology. Over a half of the audience, 57% saw all sections as dance; 33% did not see all sections as dance; and 10% were undecided. Generally the «No's» felt that the computer movement was not dance, but more like «shapes» or «disembodied squiggles», and here they were actually not far wrong. One respondent said that it made her question «what is dance?» and some felt that it could be called «digital dance» because it did not show any emotion, but that when the live dancing began, they were able to make some sense of the digital elements.

A general view was that live dancers «show emotion», «are more passionate» and «connect with the audience», making the audience involved in the performance; in contrast, they felt that «computers are just blank and expressionless» and did not have the capacity to make such connections with an audience. In response to a question asking which section they most enjoyed watching, the live dancers received 81% of the votes for being most liked; the next «most enjoyed» was section three, which was the interface of live dancers with the filmed dancers 55%; and the «least liked» was the computerised section. Some, however, did find the computer digitised, or animated section «interesting to watch» and «would like to see more», because «it was different» especially the «not actual dancers» (echoes here of Paul Kaiser's «not real dance») «going into live and filmed dancers».

This last comment gives a more positive response to the work as a whole, and the way that each section approaches technology and dance is perhaps indicative of one way in which to introduce digital dance to new audiences, or to those who are resistant to technology and dance. The interface of the two media was said to be «engaging» because it allowed the audience to «see different angles of the movement at the same time» or because it was «interesting to see the connection between the two» and that «it provided more movement and was clear and engaging». Conversely, some found the interface section visually challenging because it was «too busy» to have both forms (film and live) and they «did not like to chose between which one to watch». Some

audience members felt detached from anything that was not a live body dancing because «deep inside I have a leaning towards live dancers because of the aesthetics of the form». One audience participant wrote: «I enjoyed the live dancers more as it felt more personal and I felt more involved in the performance. It was the first time I have seen digitised dance, so although I enjoyed the new form, it was hard to fully appreciate it».

The tensions between live and digital dance in the responses of the audience seem to reflect previous dichotomies found throughout theoretical writings about dance. In the past, these have been about expression and abstraction, «mind and body, emotion and reason, conscious and unconscious, active and passive […], art and craft, subjective and objective» (Alter, 1996: 4). In my performance, technology was given the «negative» adjectives of the reasoned, unemotional, inexpressive «mind» in contrast to the live dancers (the «body»), which were linked to the more positive terms: passionate, emotive, more real, more sensual. Such dichotomies are in line with the comments of Kerstin Evert in «Dance and Technology at the Turn of the Last and Present Centuries» that the «tension between acceptance and rejection of new technological developments remains pertinent to dance right to the end of the century» and leads to the perceived dichotomy «between the *unnatural* technology and the *natural* body» (Evert, 2002: 38, 44).

The director Elliot Caplan says of artists: «you go out into the world and you try to realise an idea. You struggle with it, you wrestle with it, you try things – it works or it doesn't work you try again» (McPherson, 2006: 2). Caplan's process is what working on *Interface 2* has been for me; a process of trying things, some of which have worked, and some of which have not – but they will serve as a learning experience for the next work with digital and live dance. As the creator, I agree with the audience member who said that «as a standalone piece it had the beginnings of beauty, but lost that once the live dancers began». If continuing with more computer animation, the first section has either to be shown separately, in perhaps a non-theatre setting, perhaps projected in a gallery or on a computer or on the web; or the live and digitised animations have to be integrated with the live dancers in the choreography. Much more has to be explored regarding the manipulation of the lines or «dismembering» of the live figures, as well as allowing them to slowly appear and disappear, so that more can be made of a new visual image, so that it becomes less an animation of live bodies and more fully an exploration of the potential of animated movement on a computer screen. I agree with what Paul Kaiser, from his great experience in virtual dance manipulation, asks: «Is there beauty in motion seen all on its own, without seeing the body that created it […] the more realistic the appearance, however, the more artificial the feeling. […] Doesn't what you leave out of the picture show as much as what you put in?» (Kaiser, 2002: 108-109). Greater

consideration of these visual elements would further change the features of space and time in the animated section one, and could help to vary the dynamics of the animation more, something that was lacking in this initial exploration.

Artists using technology need to consider carefully the space and environment in which their work is shown. As Evert asserts: «coming to terms with new technological instruments and learning how to use them artistically takes time to develop» (Evert, 2002: 54). So none of us should expect to «get this right» in the first exploration. The more artists explore working with technology the more effective they will become at using it. As Joanne Frieson explains in her article *Perceiving Dance* «the aesthetic quality of a dance is also affected by its technical competence» (Frieson, 1975: 100). While she is referring to the skill of the performer, I do feel that the same can be said of the use of technology. In my instance, back-projection of the images during performance meant that the size of the projections was too small, and this lost the impact the filmed dancers had created during rehearsals with the live performers because we had been working with a projections two to three times that size. Haffner notes that imbalance between projection and live action is «a problem frequently discussed with the use of media technology within a performance» (Haffner, 2002: 106). I have also learned from this project that for an even greater interface between live and digitised dancers, projections of images onto other parts of the stage, beyond that of just onto the cyclorama, must be explored. Of course, this development means greater technical support and increased budgets (more projectors, more laptops), which could put more creative explorations with technology out of the reach of some artists. However, more effective skills in the use of technology will mean better quality dance and technology work; but until that happens, appreciation of a medium that is still learning how to interface with technology, with performers, with space and with the audience, cannot be anything but hesitant. There is also a need for a period of reflection by writers before comprehensive analyses are made because it needs time «for identifiable patterns to emerge before aestheticians or dance theorises can analyze them» (Alter, 1996: 3). In the next decade, we will see those informed analyses and interpretations of what are now the new digital dances of today.

In the twenty-first century, dance artists will continue to explore new technological frontiers and the art form will grow to become even broader, richer and more diverse than it did in the twentieth century. New performance spaces will need to be designed to better accommodate the new technology for both dancers (live or digital) and audiences (be they purely spectating or interacting in the performance), so that the potential of going beyond the centuries-old format of theatres and audience-performer relationship can be breached. Such

architectural change does make it more likely that digital dance will be confined to smaller or more intimate spaces, and thus in the realm of the small-scale rather than large-scale artists and companies.

Sean Cubitt feels quite differently in response to the development of digital arts and space, perhaps more akin to the use of the web, the iPod – «The combination of intimacy and publicity is the space of dance […] the new spatial arts of movement will be global, increasingly so» (Cubitt, 1998: 121). However, it is not possible to make comments about those developments yet to unfold. In saying this, I am reminded of Sparshott, who quite rightly said of the writer, the aesthetician and the critic «who necessarily know art only as it already exists [:] what do they have to say to the artist, whose task is precisely to produce the art that does not yet exist?» (Sparshott, 1963: 7). The more opportunities audiences have to see dance with technology, the more some will grow to appreciate it. To borrow from Myron Howard Nadel and Constance Gwen Nadel, who were writing about the avant-garde modern choreography of the 1960s, and the challenges posed to the audiences by those choreographers, audiences should «not expect to be pampered into happiness» but rather they need opportunities to «see dance in a new way», all making «unheard of demands on [their] level of involvement in the total dance experience» (Nadel & Nadel, 1970: 215). In fact some of the audience on *Interface 2* said much the same themselves: «it was the first time I have seen digitised dance, so although I enjoyed the new form it was hard to appreciate [it] fully»; «I found it all interesting as it was different to anything I have watched before»; «I preferred the live dancers, but perhaps that is because I am more used to watching live dancers».

It is clear that if dance as an art form is to continue to reflect our human existence, it cannot ignore the new technology that has become, and is becoming, so much a part of our lives. As one of the audience members wrote on her questionnaire: «I don't think anything will ever take away what I feel when I watch a live dance, but I do think that live dance can evolve to include other things».

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Convergence and Creativity in Telematic Performance: *The Adding Machine*

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ABSTRACT: Between December 2005 and March 2007, the Department of Theatre Arts and the Multimedia Program at Bradley University, USA; the University of Waterloo, Canada; and the University of Central Florida, USA developed a unique theatrical enterprise that encompassed four creative artists, over one hundred students from seven academic departments, and an array of sophisticated rendering and communication technology. The fully mediatized production of Elmer Rice's expressionistic play *The Adding Machine* integrated virtual scenery, live, real-time telematic performances facilitated via Internet2, recorded composite video, avatar performers, photographs, graphics and sound.[1] This paper reports and analyses some of the artistic, dramaturgical, and technical discoveries made from the production and offers some theoretical insights about convergent telematic performances.

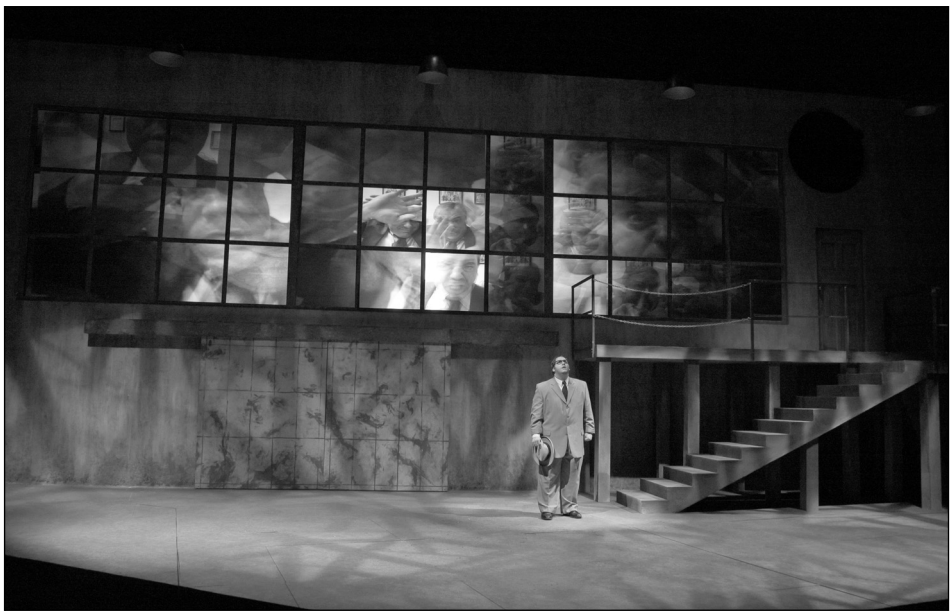
Keywords: Telematic performances, teleconferencing, virtual theatre, intermediality, new media dramaturgy, theatre technology, DVTS (Digital Video Transfer Systems), telepresence

RESUMEN: Entre diciembre de 2005 y marzo de 2007, el Departamento de Arte Dramático y el programa Multimedia de la universidad de Bradley, la universidad de Waterloo y la universidad de Central Florida desarrollaron un acontecimiento teatral único que agrupaba a cuatro artistas, alrededor de cien estudiantes de siete departamentos universitarios y una ingente cantidad de tecnología de la comunicación. La versión completa de la representación transducida de la obra

1. For more information on this production see the Bradley University website: http://addingmachine.bradley.edu/

expresionista *The Adding Machine*, de Elmer Rice, integraba decorados virtuales, actuaciones telemáticas en vivo y tiempo real a través de Internet2, grabación de vídeo analógica, actores digitales, fotografías, gráficos y sonido. Este artículo presenta y analiza algunos de los descubrimientos artísticos, dramatúrgicos y técnicos realizados y ofrece una reflexión teórica sobre las representaciones telemáticas convergentes.

Palabras clave: representación telemática, videoconferencia, teatro virtual, intermedialidad, nueva dramaturgia digital, tecnología teatral, DVTS (sistemas de transferencia de vídeo digital), telepresencia.



Murder Montage Composite Scene with Thomas C. Lucas as MR. ZERO and John Wayne Shafer as THE BOSS. Photo by Duane Zehr of Bradley University

Written in 1923 by Pulitzer Prize winning playwright Elmer Rice, *The Adding Machine* is one of America's first expressionistic plays. From a dystopian perspective on technology, the play takes a look at the dehumanization of society in a technocratic age that is both funny and terrifying. The play's anti-hero, Mr. Zero, is a downtrodden wage-slave who is sacked after 25 years of loyal service as a bookkeeper. Angered by having been replaced by an adding

machine, he subsequently murders his boss. He is tried and executed for his crime. After his death, Zero reaches the Elysian Fields – an idyllic countryside, unbounded by the prison walls of human conventions. But Zero has no use for unlimited freedom, so he jeopardizes his chance of happiness with his devoted co-worker Daisy and opts instead to work in a «celestial repair shop» for worn-out souls. There, he works diligently on an adding machine for what he expects to be eternity, but after 25 years he is again sacked and sent back to earth where he will become an even sadder cipher.

The Adding Machine provided a wonderful vehicle to explore the creative potential of the new digital media in theatrical terms through the convergence of theatre performance, production, and dramaturgy, with multimedia and streaming video technologies. This paper reports and analyses some of the artistic, dramaturgical, and technical discoveries made from this production, as well as from several other productions on which we have previously collaborated.

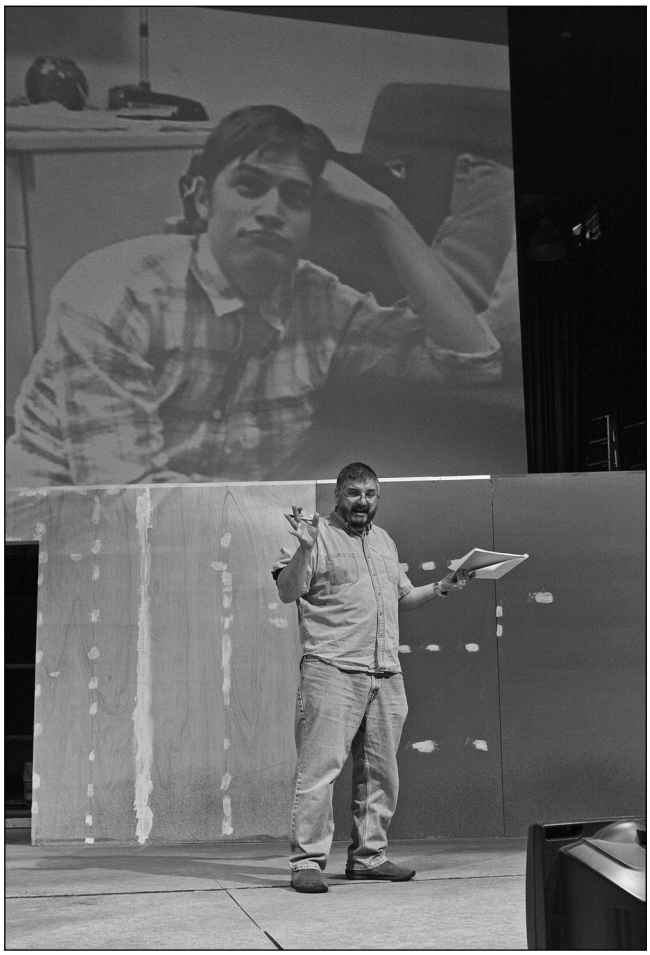
In the space of convergence in which intermedial theatre is created, we have discovered that it is imperative to work with both halves of the brain simultaneously: creative problems needed technical solutions and technical problems needed creative solutions. Consequently, in what follows we will be navigating between the two, discussing technical and logistical as well aesthetic and dramaturgical issues.

Fully cognizant that the technical and dramaturgical complexity of this staging of *The Adding Machine* would justify the discussion of many production facets – conceptualization, collaboration, mediatization, processes and pedagogy, to name just a few – here we will focus on those aspects which appear to us the central ones: the technology involved in telematic performances and the nature, problems, pleasures and justification for digitally enhanced and facilitated performance.

Geographically, Bradley University served as the primary performance venue for the production, where some 3000 audience members watched the production unfold. There were three remote sites that fed telematic performances into the primary performance venue:

1. The University of Central Florida (1100 miles away), where our colleague John Wayne Shafer performed from his office;
2. The University of Waterloo (800 miles away), where theatre student Brad Cook performed in a studio theatre with a local support crew;
3. An additional studio had been set up for local actors to be included telematically in the production, which was situated less than 100 feet from the main stage on the Bradley campus.

In addition, there was a remote audience observing a live video stream of the performances, via Polycom, in a media room at the University of Waterloo, albeit with no live local actors present.



Rehearsal shot with George H. Brown (Director) in Peoria IL and, on screen, Brad Cook as SHRDLU in Waterloo, Ontario. (Rehearsals facilitated via a Polycom videoconferencing system). Photo by Scott Cavanah of Bradley University

To create the virtual space required for telematic collaboration we needed significant amounts of internet bandwidth to stream video signals. For this we utilized Internet2 in the USA and the CANARIE network in Canada. Internet2 is a consortium of 300 member institutions, including leading U.S. universities, corporations, government research agencies, and not-for-profit networking organizations working to develop and deploy advanced network applications

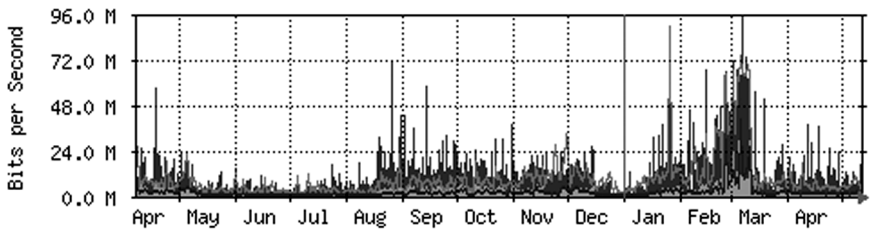
and technologies.[2] Collaborating with over 50 international organizations and networks, Internet2 has established global partnerships to help ensure interoperability and connectivity.[3] CANARIE Inc., Canada's advanced Internet development organization is a corporation supported by its members, project partners and the Canadian Government. Its mission is to accelerate Canada's advanced Internet development and use, through facilitating the widespread adoption of faster, more efficient networks; and by enabling the next generation of advanced products, applications and services to run on them. It is supported by the Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION).[4] Serving as the backbone for Internet2 in the U.S. is the Abilene Network, with a data transfer speed of 10 gigabits per second and a goal of offering 100 megabit per second connectivity between every Abilene connected desktop.[5] The speed of the Abilene Network enables the real-time connectivity necessary for telematic performance.

Rehearsals and production meetings for *The Adding Machine* were facilitated through various videoconferencing technologies including Polycom and Apple Computer's iChat. For final rehearsals and the actual performances, however, we used a recently developed software program called Digital Video Transport System (DVTS), which enables digital video and sound distribution on the Internet.[6] DVTS is an open-source program that runs on various operating systems, though we did have trouble running it on a Mac. By connecting DV cameras through Firewire interfaces to PCs running DVTS it is possible, with very little investment, to distribute high-quality images and sound. The systems function uni-directionally, so it is necessary to have both a send and receive unit to create a two-way video connection.

For *The Adding Machine,* each partner institution was responsible for acquiring the necessary computers, monitors, and cameras to create the Digital Video Transport System. At Bradley, the system assembled consisted of four recycled PCs with Pentium 4 processors running on the Windows XP platform. Firewire cards were added to hook the computers to the video switcher. Similar computers were utilized at both Waterloo and Central Florida to complete the system. These eight computers, four at Bradley, two at Waterloo, and two at Central Florida were networked through Internet2 and CANARIE to create four send/receive video systems, which interconnected the remote performance sites with the main performance venue at Bradley. Combined, the four systems

2. «Internet2: About Us», <http://www.internet2.edu/about/>, [8-6-2007].
3. «International partnerships», <http://international.internet2.edu/index.cfm>, [8-6-2007].
4. «Canarie», <http://www.canarie.ca/about/index.html>, [8-6-2007].
5. «Advanced Network for Leading-edge Research and Education», <http://abilene.internet2.edu/>, [8-6-2007].
6. «DVTS Consortium: What's DVTS », <http://www.dvts.jp/en/dvts.html>, [2-5-2007].

required 30 megabits of bandwidth each. Since there were times when the production required up to 120 megabits of processing speed, we did experience occasional video latency or break-up. To resolve this we capitalized on the play's episodic structure and alternated our connection to receive signals either from Florida or from Waterloo. This kept the performance operating at around 90 megabits:

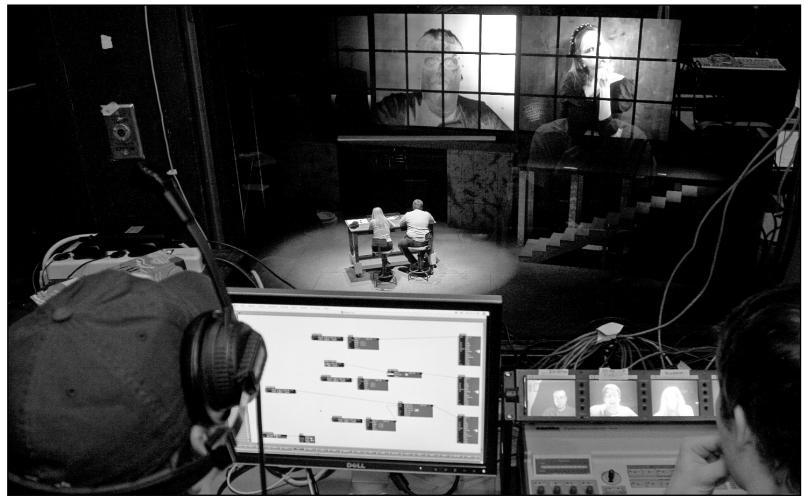


Graph of Internet 2 bandwidth usage. Peak usage during Jan – March reflects production of *The Adding Machine*. At times during the process, over 120 megabits of bandwidth was required for the production

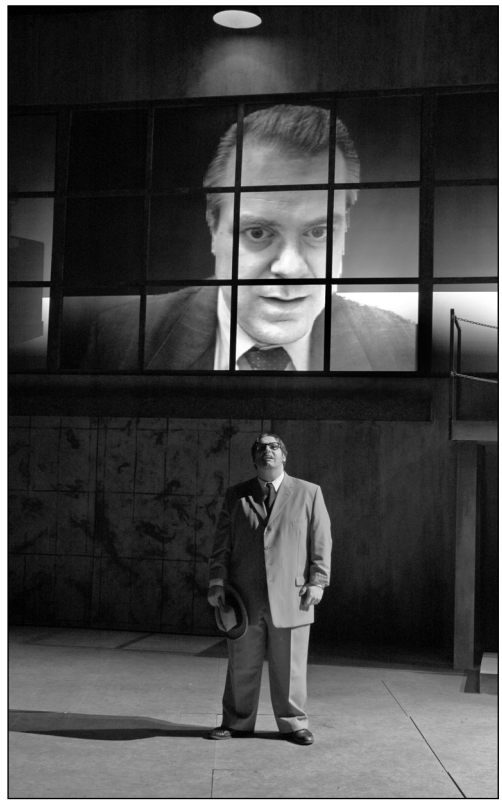
Video quality was central to the aesthetic appeal of production. Because all telematic performances were played in front of a green screen the streamed performances were keyed mechanically into the graphic backgrounds designed by Jim Ferolo, the director of Bradley University's Multimedia program, and his team of multimedia students. These were high-quality composite video pieces that required months of development and rendering time. One video sequence that served as the transition into the Elysian Fields took over 100 hours to render on an array of some 35 computers. A planning bid for the project submitted to a commercial rendering firm estimated the cost at over $100,000 for this sequence alone.

Directorially, we shared the belief that honouring the integrity of the play was paramount. Consequently, all choices relating to mediatization and telematics were made with the support of, and in support of the text. Thus, the authority figures in the play, for example, appeared on screen, oversized in scale to Zero, the insignificant protagonist.

Similarly, the character of Shrdlu, lost in his isolated, angst-filled world, existed only in the virtual world of the production, while Zero's companion Daisy, who perpetually longs for the warmth of human companionship, had a physical presence on stage. In terms of colour design, the dramaturgical choice was to present all screened performances, with the exception of the Elysian Fields scene, in black and white, symbolizing Zero's drab life. For the scenes in the Elysian Fields we transitioned to full colour in all the media elements in order to represent a joyous paradise – an environment totally unfamiliar to Zero.



Rehearsal shot from Control Booth with crew running Video Mixer and Isadora Software. Photo by Scott Cavanah of Bradley University



DVTS Cyberperformance Scene with John Wayne Shafer in Orlando Fl as THE BOSS and Thomas C. Lucas in Peoria IL as MR. ZERO. Photo by Duane Zehr of Bradley University

Integrated Composite and DVTS Cyberperformance Scene with Brad Cook as SHRDLU in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, and Thomas C. Lucas in Peoria IL as MR. ZERO. Photo by Duane Zehr of Bradley University

Integrated Composite as Background with Thomas C. Lucas as MR. ZERO and Lindsey Schawahn as DAISY. Photo by Duane Zehr of Bradley University

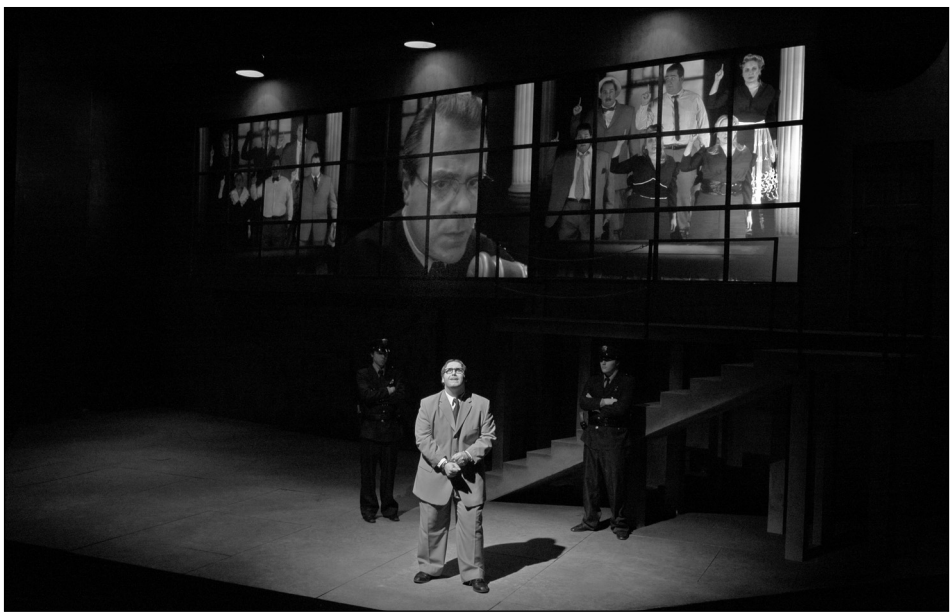
The transition to a new world was mirrored through the costumes as well. Designed by Becki Arnold, identical garments were created for the actors, with one outfit in a dark pallet for the drab world of Zero's daily life and the twin costume in white for the Elysian Fields. In this way, the production team was able to blend the virtual world of the telematic space with the physical world of the theatre, merging stage craft with mediatization.

As with all telematic technologies currently available, we did experience occasional latency of image transfer lasting up to three seconds. As latency is based on the time it takes a video signal to travel the fibre optics system and return, there is always some delay; even the speed of light takes one whole second to travel around the world seven times. Latency is determined by numerous factors: transmission speed, bandwidth, the number of switches the signal has to travel through, and is still largely unpredictable. In fact, we had lower latency between Illinois and Ontario than between Illinois and Orlando, while we had better video quality between Illinois and Orlando. We solved the problem by incorporating latency into the characters, for example, Zero's Boss became continually preoccupied with his work and had difficulty remembering names or facts. His «sluggish» perception and «delayed» responses highlighted his preoccupation and even created a comic effect.

One significant DVTS issue that plagued this production was the persistent presence of audio loops. When a performer at a remote site spoke into a microphone, audio signal was streamed via the DVTS over a thousand miles to the performance site at Bradley. The signal was then amplified and broadcast throughout the Bradley theatre sound system so that both actors and audience could hear it. Unfortunately, the microphones used at Bradley to send actors' voices to the remote sites also picked up the locally amplified voices, creating a sound loop that repeatedly echoed across the continent. Since we were unable to resolve the sound loop issue in the DVTS application, we solved the problem by having actors in the remote sites use ear buds to break the loop, even though they would still hear themselves, and then used electronic equipment such as a gate and a ducker to make the microphones at Bradley sound cancelling. The solution worked sufficiently well that the audience in Peoria did not notice a problem but it forced the remote performers to deal with significant audio difficulties.

One additional technical area that influenced the aesthetics of telematic performance was the limitation of current projection technology to create a three-dimensional space. We do not live in a 640 by 480 pixel two-dimensional world. The flatness of images projected onto traditional screens, no matter how ingeniously the screens are integrated into the stage scenery, work against the dynamics of human movement and the sculptural qualities of the human body. Significant collaborative discussions took place concerning the placement of projectors and screens to overcome this limitation. Erich Keil, the scene and

lighting designer, created multiple designs, many of which were rendered in 3D for review. Choices were also affected by budgets and real-time issues concerning rendering time. Ultimately, we chose to create a factory-like environment with large «windows», which served as a 36-ft wide projection screen. The windows could be subdivided into three large 12x12 ft sections, each of which could be further divided into 9 squares, providing a multitude of differently-sized projection units. To minimize physical comparisons of dimensionality, the screen was placed above the actors on stage and most virtual characters were projected at larger than life scale, which added to the theatricality of the piece.



Integrated Composite and DVTS Cyberperformance Scene with John Wayne Shafer in Orlando FL as THE JUDGE and Thomas C. Lucas in Peoria IL as MR. ZERO, the 12 members of the Jury all played by Thomas C. Lucas and Michelle Ziccarelli, and THE POLICE played by Devin Kelly and Sean Cummings. Photo by Duane Zehr of Bradley University

Ultimately, regardless of the technology we used in mediatization or telematic performance, the focus was always on the story. Almost every significant choice made in presenting *The Adding Machine* was based on considerations relating to Elmer Rice's script. In many respects, we attempted to make the technology invisible, not in a stylistic or physical sense – in the expressionistic and theatrical nature of the production it mattered little if the audience saw the cameras and projectors – but rather as the result of a high degree of integration into the production; to a point where the technology

became both intrinsic and necessary to the telling of the story. Janet H. Murry explains it in her book *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of the Narrative in Cyberspace*:

> Eventually all successful storytelling technologies become «transparent»: we loose consciousness of the medium and see neither print nor film but only the power of the story itself. If digital art reaches the same level of expressiveness as these older media, we will no longer concern ourselves with how we are receiving the information. We will only think about what truth it has told us about our lives. (Murry, 1997: 26)

In reality, we used technology in the same way as earlier innovators of theatre when they first employed the *mechane* or the electric lamp as tools to enhance the story. But in view of the 2,500-year history of successful story-telling through non-mediatized theatre and the gargantuan technological efforts it took to stage this production, one is justified in asking, «why bother?» Canadian writer, director, designer, actor, and artistic director Darren O'Donnell hints at one possible answer. In *Social Acupuncture* (2006), O'Donnell paints a dire picture of the viability of theatre in an age when «theatre has been eclipsed by […] other time-based representational forms: film, television and now gaming and other online activities» (O'Donnell, 2006:16).

Conventional theatre practitioners have tried to hold on in a variety of ways to the cultural relevance of the art form as an active part of a civic discourse, but O'Donnell suggests it «is more or less finished» (O'Donnell, 2006:16). He concludes that:

> Theatre is caught in an eddy, in a redundant conversation with itself, out of the loop of the cultural, philosophical, political and aesthetic development in other forms. Information-age capitalism, with its demand that cultural products be digitized and circulated via electronic networks, has left theatre gasping for intelligence, relevance and currency. (O'Donnell, 2006: 17)

Even though O'Donnell (2006: 16-17) considers the technological advancements of the past century a major perpetrator of theatre's demise, the other being theatre's inherent resistance to commodification on the same scale as film, television, and the internet, it is, ironically, in the new interactive media and in novel ways of involving the audience in a more productive manner where he finds the most creative experiments and the most innovative performances.

While one may take issue with O'Donnell's thesis, the figures relating to ticket sales in the United States tend to support his assumption that theatre is losing out to other media performances for well over 1.3 billion tickets are sold to moviegoers annually, which is an average of five tickets for *every* American,

whereas only 0.23 tickets are purchased by theatregoers. Even more striking is the fact that by age seventeen the average American has spent 15,000-18,000 hours watching television, compared to 12,000 hours spent in school, and just a few hours watching live theatre (Downs, Wright, and Ramsey, 2007: 28). The numbers for many other western nations, one may assume, are not substantially different.

These numbers, of course, do not tell the whole story since new forms of theatrical, or quasi-theatrical performances have emerged, which bridge the tradition of representational theatre with the new interactive media to create live experiences that capitalize on the inherent strengths of both. Part of this shift is economic – it is cheaper to make a modest film or video and have it shown around the world on *YouTube* than to produce a play for the local fringe festival. The other part of it is cultural – the explosion of interest in «reality shows» and «docudrama» for example, *The Amazing Race, Survivor, Train 48*, *Flight 93*, *Bowling for Columbine*, *Sicko*, *Spellbound* and dozens of others, which allow audiences to partake in the questionable illusion of the tribulations of real people. While film, television, and the internet profit from this fascination with «real» experiences, it is, paradoxically, in live, real-time, interactive *theatre* where «the real» can be generated *for real,* no matter if it is mediated according to conventional paradigms or mediatized through the diverse paradigms of the new interactive media.

Ironically, the idea that the theatre's liveness is – in itself – a virtue and a source of automatic, unearned moral superiority to film and television has been exposed by theatre scholars Peggy Phelan, Denise Varney and Rachel Fensham as «sheer bourgeois sentimentality» (Varney and Fensham, 2000: 91). Banal as it may sound, there is a perception that the theatre may have to be brought to the people if the people don't come to the theatre; and one of the best ways of doing that is to utilize the multitude of available popular media, singly or in combination, to create live, real-time, interactive theatrical experiences.

The question that poses itself at this juncture, and which appears to get asked every time theatre embraces one of the latest technological developments is whether we are justified in calling this type of telematic presentation theatre. Our argument is that it must have something to do with theatre because telematic performances tend to happen in theatrical spaces, involve actors, use dramatic scripts, connect with past theatrical practice, and form part of the academic discourse of theatre studies. However, some purists might refuse to recognize it as theatre because it contravenes, or ignores, some of the most revered assumptions about theatrical practice: actors and audiences occupying the same physical space, for example; the possibility of haptic exchanges and interactions amongst actors, which can play such a crucial part in establishing characters and their relationships; the often very subtle interactive and reciprocally affective

responses on the part of both actors and audiences, which contribute towards the ephemeral nature of the theatrical event, and which, in the opinion of Peggy Phelen constitutes the ontology of performance (Phelen, 1993: 146).

So what can we call it? Cyberperformance? Cyberformance? Hyperperformance? Hyperformance? Distributed performance? Multi-point videoconferenced performance? Telematic Performance? Distance Theatre? All of these labels have been attached to the type of telematic performances we have created over the past five years. We wonder if it is necessary to label the creation and if it is deemed necessary then who would benefit? If it is for advertising purposes the label might be rather wordy, for example: «a fully mediatized, multi-locational hyper drama with virtual performers in cyberspace by Jane Doe» is unlikely to be effective at attracting an audience. Similarly, in the arena of critical discourse academics will deconstruct any attempt at categorization. Therefore, instead of trying to pin it down semantically or typologically, it might be more fruitful to ask why we choose to make theatre that inhabits the realm of intermediality – where all concerned are located quite literally «in-between media» as performers, technicians and inter-active receivers.

There is a long list of benefits inherent in teleconferencing technology, which makes this technology a very desirable and remarkably reliable resource for both facilitating and researching theatrical activities. To begin with, and speaking purely logistically, teleconferencing can be useful in facilitating auditions and early dramaturgical brainstorming sessions, and in rehearsing and designing a production with theatre artists who are committed to engagements in other locations. Auditions, rehearsals, and all of the conceptual and dramaturgical discussions between the collaborators on this project were facilitated through telematic technology.

A more significant reason is that it allowed us to explore, *in theatrical terms,* the range of communicative choices provided by this particular technology and its associated media (video, sound, etc.). Theatre has always embraced the latest technological advances, and following Bolter and Grusin's persuasive historical approach in *Remediation* (1999), we argue that almost any technological manifestation has been utilized for creative expression. The lead pencil, after all, represents a technological advance over wax stencils or stone carving instruments and was not originally designed specifically for Dürer to create his drawings. Nor were BMW automobile parts created for Bruce Gray to make sculptures out of them. Telematic performances (let's agree to call them that for now), provided us with the opportunity to explore the creative potential inherent in teleconferencing technology.

In this we were guided by the well-known aesthetic paradigm that Michelangelo was merely an excavator who found the shape of David in a block of marble in which David had resided all along. To us, teleconferencing

technology had something of that block of marble from which we hoped to excavate many things of beauty. Furthermore, in the generation of the frequent-flyer business types gripped by fear of air travel in the post-9/11 world, the popularity and quality of image and sound production and distribution of teleconferencing technology has advanced at breath-taking speed. It has developed into a vehicle for human-to-human and human-to-technology interactions, which provide such a high degree of realism in image and sound reproduction that, as Theresa Ditton, Mathew Lombard, Carlton Reeve argue, it can provide an extremely strong sense of presence through «the perceptual illusion of non-mediation» (Lombard and Ditton, 2004).

Multi-point telematic productions like *The Adding Machine* have the potential to be interactive on a global scale that is truly inter- and cross-cultural. They transcend limitations of space and time in an unprecedented manner and at very limited expense; they have the potential to synchronize and synergize with the full range of filmic, digital, phono-digital, and cyber-spatial opportunities available. In conjunction with some of the latest developments in computer-generated special effects, telematic performances facilitate the real-time co-existence of live performers, with mediated performers and digitally generated avatars; they can be streamed live onto the web to audiences counting in the millions; and they enable theatre researchers to access an unprecedented amount of data to back-up their theoretical meditations on as yet unresolved questions in performance and reception studies, and thus lead to the advancement of a truly global approach to theatre and performance research.

Telematic performances become truly intermedial when streamed onto the web, with the potential to reach an audience of millions that are not a passive audience but who can actually interact with the performers through the employment of «remote approbation feedback interfaces» which are being developed at the University of Waterloo. In addition, they may also introduce the *YouTube* generation to theatre sites on the web, which, sadly, they are not keen on visiting in actuality.

As always, there is an economic argument to be made here as well: telematically generated theatrical interactions are extremely cost-effective – essentially, the cost of electricity to run a computer, sound equipment, and camera; they facilitate meetings, discussions, improvisations, *and* performances without the expense associated with travel and hire rental of theatres.

Finally, teleconferencing technology has the capacity to support one of the most striking developments in video-transfer technology – the projection of three-dimensional full-sized holographic images of real people into a (potentially) unlimited number of locations through «Teleportation». For example, the New York City-based 3-legged Dog Theatre Company recently

used the Musion Eyeliner projection system to create holographic avatars on stage for their production of *Losing Something* in the spring of 2007.[7] The same system was used to allow the animated musical group GorillaZ to serve as the back-up band for Madonna at the 2006 Grammy Awards.[8]

However, we recognise also that all of this good news is laden with more questions, in particular, the issues that relate to dramaturgy. For example, are there particular genres of plays that lend themselves to this form of intermediality? or does the use of telematic performance depend on the conceptual approach on the part of the director?

Here we may think of the work of the Belgian director Guy Cassiers and his production of *Rouge Décanté*, which used live video transfer on stage and begin to wonder how we may evaluate these types of performances. Can *Iphigenia* partake in a 21st century rave from a remote location, as is suggested in Caridad Svich's rave fable *Iphigenia Crash Land Falls on the Neon Shell that Was Once Her Heart?* Might it be possible to take a hypertextual environmental drama like *Tamara* by John Krizanc and Richard Rose and make it linear through the use of multi-screen presentations, and if so, then what would be the value of such a project?

In essence, having successfully proved to ourselves that telematic performances are possible, we need now to question the performances of *The Adding Machine* in relation to «real» theatre – as defined by the theatrical action taking place in real time, in front of a live audience in the real space of the here and now. This raises the following questions:

1. How much of the affective theatre experience do we loose by replacing human-to-human interaction with technologically-enhanced collaborations in rehearsals and live productions?
2. How can telematic performances respond to the subtle shifts in audience reactions, when audience members are thousands of miles away or partaking in the presentation sitting alone at their home computer?
3. How can the experience be real, complete, or authentic when, as is often the case, flawed connectivity or qualitatively divergent infrastructures or dialogic responses are delayed, and where synchronicity between voice and gesture is inconsistent and movements are devoid of their natural fluidity?

It seems to us that the questions ask us to compare apples and oranges. Yes, on the one hand, teleconferenced theatre can be studied in terms of the generic dramaturgical parameters we associate with regular live theatre – after all, the

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7. See «Current Productions», <http://3leggeddog.org/mt/>, [28-8-2007].
8. See «gorillaz & madonna - grammy awards 2006», <http://www.eyeliner3d.com/gorillaz_madonna_grammy_awards.html>, [28-8-2007].

two share many elements and creative objectives; on the other hand, such a discussion is preordained to focus on the perceived shortcomings of teleconferenced theatre vis-à-vis the exclusive standards set by a reductive, purist notion of what constitutes «real» theatre. Some of these shortcomings are, after all, not insubstantial:

1. Actors and audience members do *not* share the same space; actors address cameras in order to establish eye contact with a partner instead of looking at that partner directly;
2. Actors participating from remote locations appear only two-dimensionally and have no opportunity for haptic interaction with local actors;
3. At this stage in the development of the technology, data transfer limitations can still cause latency in dialogue, jagging of movements and lack of synchronicity between the two.

Together, these «flaws» are perceived by some as alienating for an audience and anathema to the experience of intimacy, immediacy, simultaneity, believability, and the resulting sense of presence we commonly associate with conventional theatre. In spite of the gravity of these reservations, however, this line of argumentation seems short-sighted to us, partly because we cannot blame the technology for something it was not originally designed to do; just as we cannot blame the *mechane* in Greek theatre for not bringing the gods on stage in a less obtrusive way; and partly because the development of the technology is still in its infancy; there is strong evidence that some of these technical shortcomings will be overcome before long. At the same time, it is important also to point out that some of the technical limitations will never be resolved because they are inherent to the medium. Crucially, however, it could be considered cavalier to fault telematic theatre exclusively on its failure to replicate a form of theatre that is based on the naturalistic model, while other modes of producing and presenting theatre exhibit a much greater openness to this technology. Take, for example, the work of Robert Lepage, which includes many instances of his interest in telematics, as well as other forms of digital technology, because they suit his multi-layered, non-linear narratives. Consider also Robert Wilson's image-driven theatre in which video technology allows him to give expression to the enormous scale of his images.

What is more pertinent to us is that part of the fascination of teleconferenced theatre is that it challenges old ways of performing; it deconstructs conventions, and leaves us with the joyous wonderment of how it all comes together as an affective experience. Because the method of creation may alienate us from conventional modes of representation and perception, it actually makes us more aware of the creative process *per se* and the paradigm shift in the convention. No

theatrical or quasi-theatrical representation has much value unless it engages an audience in some way. What theatre – like any other art form – is *really* about, says Darren O'Donnell in *Social Acupuncture* «is generating affect, and that's it. Feelings. And, if things go well, quickly following feelings will be thoughts» (O'Donnell, 2006: 19).

We know that the audience's capacity for having feelings and generating thoughts is crucially connected with its willingness to suspend its disbelief. In this context it is necessary to ask whether or not telematic theatre has the capacity to make an audience suspend its disbelief as willingly in the virtual space, as it does in performances where actors and audience share the same physical space. We believe that the audience response to *The Adding Machine* confirmed that audiences are more than willing to embrace the telematic illusions in virtual space, largely because: «theater [...] *is* the original virtual reality machine» (Reaney, 1996: 38), but also because in the last few years society generally have become so accustomed to experiencing things in a virtual manner, that the two have become increasingly intermingled and have turned out to be experientially similar. According to University of Kansas researcher and virtual scenographer Mark Reaney, both theatre and virtual reality allow audiences to «visit imaginary worlds which are interactive and immersive» (Reaney, 1996: 28). The degree of familiarity with a particular medium either encourages, or discourages a sense of presence and generates a greater or lesser degree of comfort with its operational specificities.

Lombard and Ditton conclude that it is not the characters, storylines, or actors that affect a sense of believability but the behaviour of the medium. The experience of *The Adding Machine* bears this out. After some initial hesitation and uncertainty, the actors accepted very quickly the limitations of the medium: delayed immediacy of response; inconsistent synchronicity of voice and movement; diminished fluidity of motion and quickly found a way of making the medium serve their acting needs. They succeeded in creating the illusion of non-mediated exchanges, and indeed, the success of this adaptation to the perceived shortcomings of the medium gave them great satisfaction and enhanced their perception of the «reality» of their exchanges. Experientially, the actors appeared to feel little difference between performing with remote partners in a virtual space and performing with real partners in a real space, in spite of a certain loss of intimacy, spontaneity, and immediacy. Thus, telematic performances like *The Adding Machine* problematized anew the aesthetics of reception in the theatre – one dictated and honed by the increasingly pervasive intermedial experiences – with critical receptors that are decidedly different from those fine-tuned by conventional theatrical practice. They remind us also to consider the concomitant difference in audience experience – an experience that may be, simultaneously, more solitary and more communal; one that

presents both performers and recipients with a very different sense of their engagement in a performance.

In conclusion: a word of warning. Historically, we are still at the very early stages of a technological revolution, which will very likely change the face of live theatre over the next couple of decades, and much of what seems valuable or exhilarating today will fall by the wayside, only to be replaced by something that is perceived more valuable, more relevant, or more exhilarating. We must acknowledge also that some of us are still too infatuated with, or too dismissive of, the new worlds of virtual reality, intermediality, cyberspace, or hypertext to see them for what they truly are. However, once our infatuation or dismissal matures into a real understanding of their innovative and challenging prospects, we may find ways of expressing ourselves through them, which we had not considered before – imperfections notwithstanding. This is why it is incumbent upon us *now* to gain the best possible understanding of the language of this revolution: its syntax, and its poetry, regardless of whether we wish to conserve ferociously the theatre of old, or if we wish to invest it, or even supplant it, with these new prospects. Most likely, teleconferenced theatre will never replace live theatre as we know it, and there is no reason why it should or would. It is simply a response both to the art of theatre, to which it is next of kin, and to the new medium which parented it, from which the art of theatre has a lot to learn. Our hope is that one will invigorate the other.

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From Intermedial Music to Interactive Multimedia Event: the Performance of Ravel's *Miroirs*

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ABSTRACT: The intermedial interplay between music, image and text in French Impressionist music has the potential to fuel original and innovative multimedia performances, but the contextual and theoretical analysis of the multimedia reformatting of such traditional concert repertoire has yet to be made. Addressing problems of musical ontology and musical hermeneutics which are at the heart of today's contemporary classical music performance culture, I focus on the aesthetic consequences of a move from implicit intermediality to explicit multimediality in the performance of Ravel's collection for piano solo, *Miroirs*. So doing, I seek to redefine the artistic function of the performer and sow the seeds of a theory of the multimedia piano recital.

Keywords: multimedia, performance practice, music, intermedial, Impressionism, Ravel.

RESUMEN: La interacción entre música, imagen y texto en la música impresionista francesa tiene el suficiente potencial para originar representaciones multimedia innovadoras, sin embargo, queda aún por hacer el necesario análisis contextual y teórico del reformateado multimedia de tal repertorio clásico para concierto. Partiendo de cuestiones de ontología y hermenéutica musical que constituyen el eje central de la cultura de la interpretación musical contemporánea, se exploran las consecuencias estéticas de sustituir una intermedialidad implícita por una multimedia explícita en la interpretación de la colección de solos para piano de Ravel, *Miroirs*. De esta manera, se intenta redefinir la función artística del interprete y sentar las bases de una teoría multimedia para los conciertos de piano.

Palabras clave: multimedia, práctica interpretativa musical, intermedialidad, impresionismo, Ravel.

1. Introduction

> When I hear of a director speaking glibly of serving the author, of letting a play speak for itself, my suspicions are aroused, because this is the hardest job of all. If you just let a play speak, it may not make a sound. If what you wish is for a play to be heard, you must conjure its sounds from it.
>
> Peter Brook

The classical piano recital is probably one of the most well-defined artistic events in contemporary performance practice. Very rarely do musicians depart from the traditional formal concert format, i.e. a musical performance in which the pianist is expected to solely play the piano and the audience, to listen intently to the music being played. The darkened confines of a concert hall make it so that the very space of the performance itself is negated. The music, and the music only, is the focus of attention. In this context, «music alone» (Kivy, 1990) reigns supreme, as, in true 19th Century fashion, absolute music, or «abstract concert music» as Cook (1998: vii) will term it, is still widely thought of in terms of being the «purest» form of musical expression there is, when compared to programme or descriptive music, deemed trivial or superficial because relating to *extra*-musical elements. Suzanne K. Langer (1951: 242), for example, considers the titles, which lead the audience to listen imaginatively, as being helpful but non-essential «crutches» for those listeners incapable of enjoying the music as it should be, i.e. for itself and in itself. These extra-musical elements are thus often played down in performance. The titles of the pieces are rarely presented to the audience as part of the performance itself, but merely as adjuncts, written on a programme which nobody can read in the darkness of the concert hall. Similarly, a pre-concert talk is not a multimedia event as such: it is usually marketed as an optional extra, an educational lecture for those who wish to attend an informed presentation about the music, its history, its context and it is usually separate from the performance itself. It has the same role and function as the programme notes. A lecture, even within the context of a lecture-recital alternating speaking and playing, is still not performative in the way a multimedia rendering of the piece would be. Unlike the other traditional performing arts, theatre, ballet or opera, which are multimedia in essence, an instrumental recital is not. Indeed, etymologically, the word «multimedia» refers, in a given artwork, to the *concomitant* presence of the different raw materials, or, «media», which are used in each art form. Our attention is thus split between the different media of the work, the acoustic (or musical) medium,

the visual medium and/or the linguistic (or literary) medium, all contributing equally to the effect of the performance as a whole. In a traditional piano recital, the visual is restricted to the physical appearance of the performer on stage and is very much perceived to be secondary to, and distinct from, the music being performed, even though some aspects of the performer's appearance can contribute to the general ambience of the event. The artist's stage presentation, facial expressions and clothing, including concerts performed in period costume in historical locations, could contribute to a (limited) multimedia *mise-en-scène* of the persona or figure of the «musician», but not of the music itself.

This does not mean, however, that the music performed is not potentially multimedia in its own right, if only from its intermedial qualities. Whereas the term «intermediality» describes an implicit cross-pollination or an explicit presence of several media within a work of art (Wolf, 1999: 46-47), the word «multimedia» refers exclusively to a work of art which draws explicitly on multiple media. In such a way, multimedia is necessarily intermedial but intermediality is not always multimedia. Very often, the *matière première* of instrumental music, the musical scores, are not simply pages of musical notation but also contain non-musical elements such as titles, poems and extra-musical references, which give an extra-musical meaning to the music but are often dispensed with in performance, even though such intermedial features are intended to enhance the listener's experience of the music. Much of the French Impressionist piano repertoire, for instance, with its rich and varied literary or pictural associations, would give itself readily to a multimedia performance, but even so, the performance itself of such music has only recently started to become multimedia in its concert presentation, be it a live event or a televised broadcast, with varying degrees of success. Multimedia recitals which engage the audience on a visual plane as well as a purely musical plane within a multidimensional performance space, are the exception rather than the norm, despite the fact that our society is more and more dominated by the visual, and despite the fact that the opportunity and scope for a multimedia reformatting of the traditional piano recital are considerable, in particular when the music itself programmatically draws on intermedial principles.

Surprisingly, no critical analysis of the emerging concept of «multimedia recital» has been attempted and it seems that, very often, these events are initiated as one-off performances by musical practitioners – the concert managers, festival directors, performers and artists – , and have, as yet, to be the focus of a critical analysis by musicologists and philosophers of music. Theoretical studies of the concept of musical multimedia focus, for the most part, on the role of music in film or video, such as Nicholas Cook's (1998) study of «musical multimedia», whilst the widespread study of «intermediality» in music is

concerned primarily with textual analyses of the relations between words and music in vocal scores such as song or opera, and rarely ventures into the domain of the actual performance of these genres. A study and theory of the more problematic multimedia reformatting of performances of the traditional instrumental repertoire has yet to be made.

I propose to analyse the aesthetic modalities of this new performance practice and sow the seeds of a theory of multimedia piano recital. The problems I shall be investigating are central to today's contemporary «classical» music performance culture. Addressing questions of musical ontology as well as musical hermeneutics, I will focus on some aspects of the performance of Maurice Ravel's collection for piano solo, *Miroirs* (Mirrors), in order to redefine the artistic function of the performer so that he/she may better address the realities of an ever-shifting social context which has undergone, in recent times, a dramatic cultural change. I will be looking in particular at the ways one can transform an intermedial piece of music into a multimedia performance.

2. The Context: Multimediality and the Popular Visual Culture

Before we may speak of the actual format of the multimedia instrumental recital, we must ask ourselves what the aesthetic consequences of a move towards a multimedia performance are, by defining more clearly why and how, in today's cultural context, we listen to classical music, and what we expect from a musical performance. Only then will we be able to explore the ways musicians may redefine the modalities of live performance in order to revitalize the music scene and make the live classical music experience more significant in today's society.

The music industry and new technologies have undeniably affected our experience of live classical music today, but this is rarely taken into account in contemporary classical music performance practice. Whereas live «background» music has always existed to a certain point – from the private orchestras providing dinner entertainment in Europe's royal courts to dance music, military music or even fairground music, the advent of the gramophone, record player and now, the all-pervading digital multimedia technologies, make music all the more accessible in more and more varied contexts: from the piped Mozart piano concerto at the local restaurant to the classical music used on film soundtracks, and the portable MP3 players we listen to while we work, we are getting used to continuously hearing music within a multimedia context, when, until very recently, music was meant to be only heard on its own, in recitals and concerts. As a consequence, music is increasingly relegated to a background role,

hovering on the very edge of our conscious minds while we go about our daily activities. The sonic is no longer sufficient to maintain our full attention as its role is now to fill in the underlying silence of our primarily visual lives, becoming a pleasant accompaniment but not a finality in itself. As Hanns Eisler already remarked in 1935, at the very start of the audio-visual revolution,

> the crisis in modern music has been brought about mainly by the growth in technical devices. The radio, gramophone and sound film have created a completely new situation. The concert compared to the sound film is just as old-fashioned as the mailcoach compared with the airplane. Sound film and radio are destroying the old forms of music listening. (Eisler, 1996 [1935]: 167)

And this, even more so, today. This leads us to ask, what place does the traditional classical piano recital have in this cultural context? How can we redefine the concert platform to create music for the eyes as well as the ears? Paradoxically, we rate music according to an «ideology of musical autonomy» (Cook, 1998: vi) even though musical autonomy is no longer viable in today's visual musical culture. As Cook (1998: vii) has pointed out, «the truth is that music is booming: but it is booming outside music theory» – and we may add, outside the traditional concert format –, in the multimedia context of popular culture.

3. The Problem of the Musical Artwork in Performance

Needless to say, to speak of a musical «artwork» is a problem in itself, and one which has elicited many debates as musicologists and musicians have endlessly argued as to what, in fact, is the definitive musical artwork: the silent music of the score (the only token of the usually long-dead composer's intentions), or the audible performance of this score, which can only happen through the bias of a potentially unreliable third party, the performer (Kivy, 2004: 78-93). The question of the ontological status of the musical «artwork» is at the crux of our study.

Only a few listeners have the skills which allow them to silently hear the intricacies of a whole symphony by simply reading the score. For the majority, music is undeniably meant to be heard and therefore, performed, and the interpretative decisions of the performers are, at best, to be tolerated, as they can only approximate the composer's intentions. A catch-22 situation if any: if we dispense with the performer, we cannot hear the music, but if we wish to hear the music, we need the performer. However, one usually speaks of a «good» performance as one which is not only true to the composer's intentions (as they

appear in the first instance in the score, but also in the paratextual evidence, in our knowledge of stylistic trends and historical performance practice, for instance) but still brings the music to life, makes it speak so that it makes sense to us, and ultimately, makes us listen. As such, the *performance* of music is inscribed within a contemporary cultural context, even though the music itself may belong to a different cultural context. The music (and the musical performance) is, after all, destined to be heard by «us», the audience, here and now. The performers have a crucial role in this process as only they are attuned to the contemporary aesthetic dynamics of the collective cultural consciousness of which they themselves are a part. Only they can make «us» listen to the music of the past. The performers find themselves torn between their responsibility towards the score, written at a given moment in time, within a given social context with its own aesthetic conventions, and their responsibility towards an audience whose tastes and expectations vary greatly from decade to decade. It is on this delicate interface between score and performance, composer's intentions and performer's interpretation, that one should question the aesthetics of contemporary multimedia performance practice.

If we are to address the problem of what Tagg (2000: 164) has described as the increasing «petrification» of the traditional piano recital format, the result of an ultra-conservative «institutionalization» of conservatoire training, we need to work out how to move away from the traditional concert presentation of what have become culturally and socially alienated «deep-frozen [...] sacrosanct works» (Tagg, 2000: 165) towards a socially contextualized, up-to-date multimedia re-interpretation of the canon, thus shifting the critical focus away from the musical «text» towards a musical artwork whose essence lies in its performance. In the domain of literary aesthetics, Wolfgang Iser (2001, [1980]: 180) described the literary «work» as situated within a «virtual» space between the author's «text» and the subjective «actualization» or «realization» of this text by the reader. In the case of music, this «virtual» space is undeniably that of the performance itself – a three way interaction between score, performer and audience. The musical «artwork» is eminently «virtual» as it cannot be reduced to a single, simple entity: it is multidimensional and multimedial and it is in constant flux as it evolves on the very threshold between past and present (see Figure 1 below). Only by reinterpreting classical music within a contemporary audience-performance dynamic will the classical music scene live on into the 21st Century.

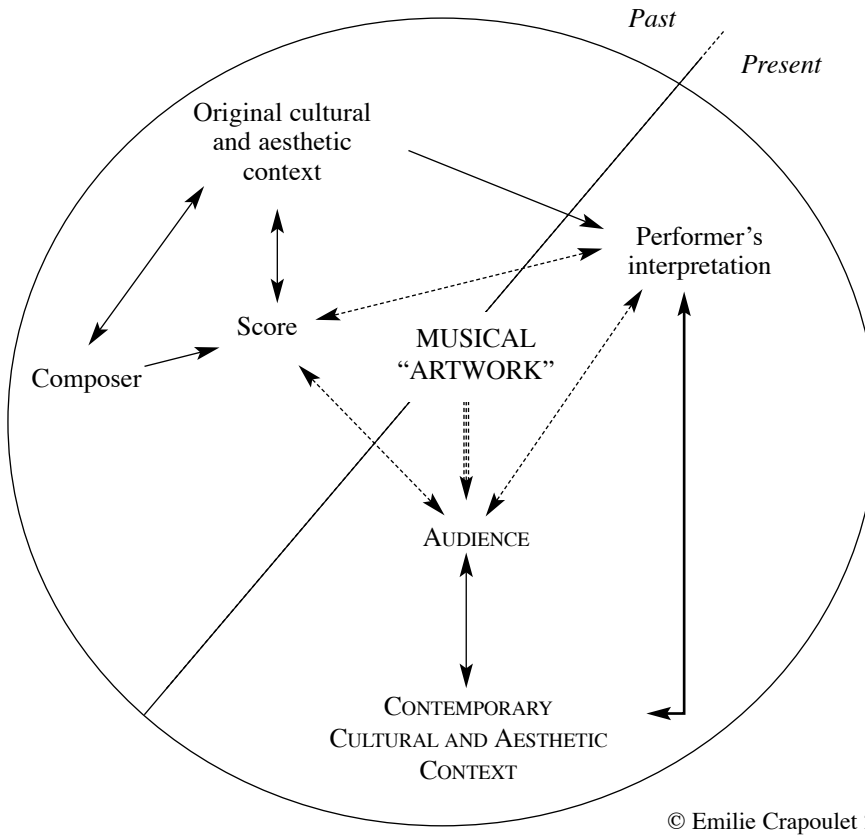

Figure 1. The musical artwork as performance

More often than not, multimedia works are contemporary creations and the result of a collaboration between an artist, a performer and a living composer, the work conceived from the start with a multimedia performance in mind. One such work is *HPSCHD*, a collaboration between John Cage and Lejaren Hiller, for 7 harpsichords, 51 tapes of computer generated sounds, 5000 slides of abstract designs, and twelve film projections, all «performing» simultaneously (Sitsky, 2002: 208). More problematic is the case when performers seek to bring to life non-musical or programmatic aspects of music which was not conceived in a multimedia way in the first place. The final multimedia result departs necessarily, from the composer's original intentions (especially if the work was composed at a time when the concept of «multimedia performance» hadn't yet come into practice). In the first case, the medial facets are conceived interdependently, collaboratively, with the final effect in mind from the very beginning and the final work would not make sense without the presence of all

its medial facets. In the second case, we are dealing with an association of media which are in themselves not necessarily primarily meant to be performed together and which can be appreciated in their own right on their own, and as such, are dispensable in relation to the original non-multimedia work. Before undertaking a multimedia performance of a non-multimedia work, it is therefore essential to ask ourselves what the role of these associated media is. To complement each other, to reflect on each other, or, as Nicholas Cook (1998, vi) posits, to diverge? And where would the «work» be situated? To «whom» should it be attributed – the original composer or the performers and artists who are, in fact, freely «interpreting» the composer's intentions? In a context of a multimedia performance of a piece written originally for piano solo, for example, it would seem that the pianist's interpretation of the score would therefore be merely one version of the score: medially, the acoustic version. It would rest with a narrator or a visual artist to explicitly bring to light the (implicit) intermedial qualities of the music: their interpretation would thus become a non-acoustic version of the score, be it visual or narrative (linguistic and literary), of the same performative value as that of the pianist. Would we then need to entitle such multimedia events as «Ravel's *Miroirs*, in an interpretation by pianist so-and-so and visual artist so-and-so», in a sort of *mise en abyme* of an increasingly elusive work of art, in constant mutation as we witness multiple, superimposed «versions» of the score: the performer's, the artist's, the musical, the visual, the multimedial, our own? What would be the aesthetic repercussions of such a move?

Undoubtedly, for many composers of programme music, the function of the title was to facilitate an imaginative response to the music, to make the audience hear the pieces in terms of images, scenes and narratives. As such, its function was very much intermedial but the multimedia aspects remained implicit –the music, with or without the title, was enough to create a visual or emotional response to what are in fact, medially, only acoustic phenomena. In today's visual culture however, faced with music only, many would feel lost in a concert situation and would need to be prompted to listen with such imagination. If Eisler (1996 [1935]: 168) could say in 1935, at a moment when film was hardly the mass-produced, easily accessible product it has become today, that «sound film is making the masses unaccustomed to listening to music in the abstract but accustomed to seeing pictures of real life while they hear music», where does that leave us today? Contemporary musical culture is increasingly determined by our cinematographic experiences of music, and influenced by the multimedia presentation of the video clips of most popular music (Aufderheide, 1986; Frith, 2004). It is creating a visually determined culture of musical semiotics. For many, listening to a classical concert today is very much like looking at a film without being given the images – quite absurd, if one thinks of it in those terms.

Indeed, the music known as «programme music» is also called «descriptive» music and as such, is very close to being film music without the film, i.e. music with a non-musical subject, which can suggest a narrative, a scene, an atmosphere. «Programme» music can roughly be defined as music which has a title, a story, a poem, an image, a musical quotation or any other reference in the score itself, or in the author's stated intentions as to that score, to an extra-musical element to be taken as an indication of the meaning or purport of the music, usually in relation to the type of atmosphere, the mood or the scene which the composer was seeking to evoke.

Very often, the extra-musical references in programme music are complex and function on multiple levels which are rarely brought to light in performance and consequently go unnoticed by the audience, even though the performers themselves are well-aware of their aesthetic significance. Such extra-musical elements could, however, easily be the basis of a multimedia performance. Ravel's *Miroirs* and Debussy's *Préludes*, are examples in case. Both books contain pieces with titles and other extra-musical elements which suggest going beyond the musical towards visualizations. Only by starting to question what the intermedial nature of these pieces is, can one start to conceive of a multimedia interpretation of them. We need, in particular, to ask ourselves, what the aesthetic function of the titles is. To whom are the titles, attached poems and extra-musical elements addressed, the performer or the audience? To what extent should the audience be told about the music's visual, narrative or emotional associations indicated by the extra-musical elements; and to what extent should the performer take into account the *intertextual* references of the titles' literary allusions? For example, the title of Debussy's fourth prelude from Book I, «Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir» is taken from Baudelaire's poem, «Harmonie du Soir», but the whole poem is not given to us. Should the performer make references to the whole of Baudelaire's poem in this case? On the other hand, Aloysius's Bertrand's poems, «Ondine», «Le Gibet» and «Scarbo», taken from his 1845 collection *Gaspard de la Nuit – Fantaisies à la manière de Rembrandt et de Callot* are all printed in full alongside Ravel's musical triptych, *Gaspard de la Nuit*. To what extent do these extra-musical elements belong to the performance as does the music itself and to what extent are these simply indications which are intended to help the performers shape their own musical interpretation? In which manner can the extra-musical elements be brought to light in a concert situation? And finally, what is the potential for a *performative* presentation of the extra-musical elements which would suggest to the audience (new) ways of listening to the music rather than telling them how to listen as do the programme notes, pre-concert lectures or lecture-recitals?

4. Through the Looking-glass: from Intermediality to Multimedia Performance in Ravel's *Miroirs*

Maurice Ravel's collection of piano pieces, *Miroirs* (1904-1905), appears at first view to make very good multimedia material. It has the visual, the narrative and the musical elements all already present within the very score. How could these intermedial aspects be brought to light convincingly in a multimedia presentation of the collection?

Miroirs is a collection of five pieces. Programmatically, they are quite unrelated, from the first, «Noctuelles» (Moths), to «Oiseaux Tristes» (Mournful Birds), «Une Barque sur l'Océan» (A Boat on the Ocean), «Alborada del Gracioso» (Morning Song of the Jester), and finally «La Vallée des Cloches» (The Valley of the Bells). Each piece is very distinctive and the music clearly relates to the title. The relation between music and other artistic media was undoubtedly in Ravel's mind as he dedicated the pieces to members of the group of artists known as the «Apaches», including a painter (Paul Sordes), a poet and a writer (Leon-Paul Fargue, Michel de Calvocoressi) and a composer and a pianist (Maurice Delage, Ricardo Viñes). The second piece of the book, «Oiseaux Tristes», which Ravel (1928: 30) thought was the most «typical» of his new style, and the last piece, «La Vallée des Cloches», could both be said to be painting in sound. They both have a particularly distinctive programme based on a musical rendering of (non-musical) sounds: «Oiseaux Tristes» is an evocation of mournful birds, and indeed, the repeated opening arpeggiated right-hand figurations are similar to a pianistic transcription of a melodic, and to our ears, mournful-sounding, bird-song (see figure 2, bars 1-3). One thinks here also of Messiaen's *Catalogue des Oiseaux* (Catalogue of the Birds), composed 1956-58, in which he literally transcribed for piano different existing birdsongs. Ravel's figuration is not as «scientific» in its handling but is nevertheless recognizable as birdsong. In fact, many people would not even need the title to recognize such a reference to birds. In the paratextual material, another extra-musical allusion extends and develops the descriptive indications of the title. Ravel (1928: 30) is indeed known to have said in his recollections that he thought of this piece during a walk through the forest of Fontainebleau, adding that he wished to evoke «birds lost in the torpor of a very sombre forest, during the hottest hours of summertime». The isolation of the birds is emphasized throughout by the repetition of individual song-patterns. The mournfulness and sadness of the atmosphere is furthermore conveyed by musical motifs which are traditionally associated with melancholy and which a musically cultured Western audience would easily identify: minor keys, dissonance, falling minor thirds, chromaticism, etc. The slow tempo and the continuous and quasi-static bass pedal note are suggestive of motionlessness and torpor, and the continuously

alternating seconds in the central voices (figure 2, bars 4-8) create a close breathless atmosphere. In the score itself, Ravel writes of the final chords, *sombre et lointain*, dark and distant, a further indication of the mood he wished the performer to achieve.

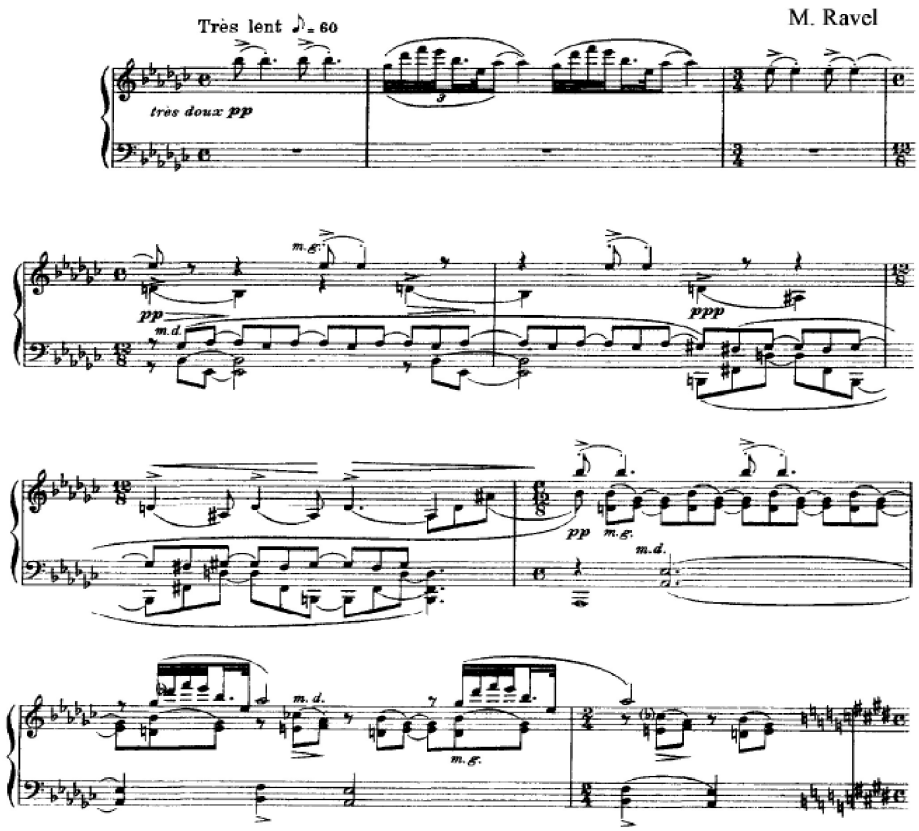

Figure 2. Maurice Ravel, «Oiseaux Tristes» (1904-1905, 1986: 49, bars 1 to 9)

«La Vallée des Cloches», on the other hand, takes advantage of the piano's bell-like sound qualities to suggest a counterpoint of bells as they echo and intermingle through the resonant space of a valley whose very space is made «visible» by the fact that some bells sound closer (louder), some more distant (softer), and others echo away from us into what seems like the distant depths of the valley. «Noctuelles» and «Une Barque sur l'Océan» («A Boat on the Ocean») share another typical musical «image» - that of waves: the flight of the moths and the boat bobbing on the swell. Waves are not literally present in the music but they are suggested by traditional musical symbolism and extra-

musical allusions which bring the image of waves to mind, and can be analyzed so as to explain why they resemble a wave: the title, «A Boat on the Ocean», suggests water – we therefore expect to hear wave-like motions in sound, the arabesque on the score visually looks like a wave, and the sounds themselves, ascending and descending arpeggios, mimic the motion of waves. In the case of «Noctuelles», waves of water have become waves of air. Ravel quotes a line above the score from a poem by Léon-Paul Fargue: «Les noctuelles d'un hangar partent, d'un vol gauche, Cravater d'autres poutres» (the moths in a barn take off in awkward flight to cluster round other beams) – and again, the wave-like motion of the flight of the moths, their «perchings» on other beams is suggested by the music, an alternance of quick ascending figurations and sudden periods of stillness and silence. The combination of the descriptive music and the explicit title makes us clearly «see» moths in the music. «Alborada del Gracioso», on the other hand, is strikingly different from the other pieces inasmuch as it draws on yet another medium: the literary. More than simply an evocation of atmosphere, the music tells a story, that of a jester, appearing on the scene and briefly dancing (first section), followed by a moment of calm while he sings his song (central melodic section significantly marked «*expressif en récit*», recited with expression), then dancing off in the third and final section. The syncopated dance rhythms, the «saeta» melody, the castagnettes-sounds and the guitar strumming, all suggest a Spanish background.

So far, we have shown how the music functions on the visual as well as the acoustic level, from a purely intermedial perspective. However, the fact, often overlooked, that Ravel's *Miroirs* are meant to go beyond these representative elements, must, crucially, be taken into account if the multimedia performance of the music is to be convincing, or else the associated medial presentations will remain superficial and simplistic. Indeed, mirrors do not only reflect, they also distort and alter the images, and one may choose to go through the looking-glass into a world of translucent shadows, colours and shapes. The title *Miroirs* thus paradoxically puts into question the more visual aspects of the very music it is referring to. The fascination of most artists at the turn of the XXth Century for reflective surfaces is well-known. Many paintings of the period capture the interesting mirror-effects of water, the most famous of which are Monet's «Water Lilies» series whose focus is less on the realistic representation of waterlilies than on the interplay of the shapes, colours and textures of the reflected clouds, trees and waterlilies, which also serve to make visible the very surface of the water itself and give depth and perspective to the whole painting (figure 3). If one looks at Monet's «Water Lilies» – one may choose to see the water, the lake, the lilies, the trees on the banks and the reflected clouds, but one may also choose to go «through» the looking-glass, and appreciate the patterns of colours, lines and textures. In the same way, music has the ability to be both

descriptive and non-descriptive and Ravel's choice of title, *Miroirs*, mirrors, is particularly revealing: one minute we «see» the moths flying up towards a beam and gently alighting, we feel the swell of the ocean's waves, the loneliness of the birds lost in a forest, the depths of a narrow valley and we are even transported into a sunny Spanish village at dawn. The next however, we hear pure sound, textures and sonic colours and enjoy them for what they are, a fascinating abstract kaleidoscope of sound.

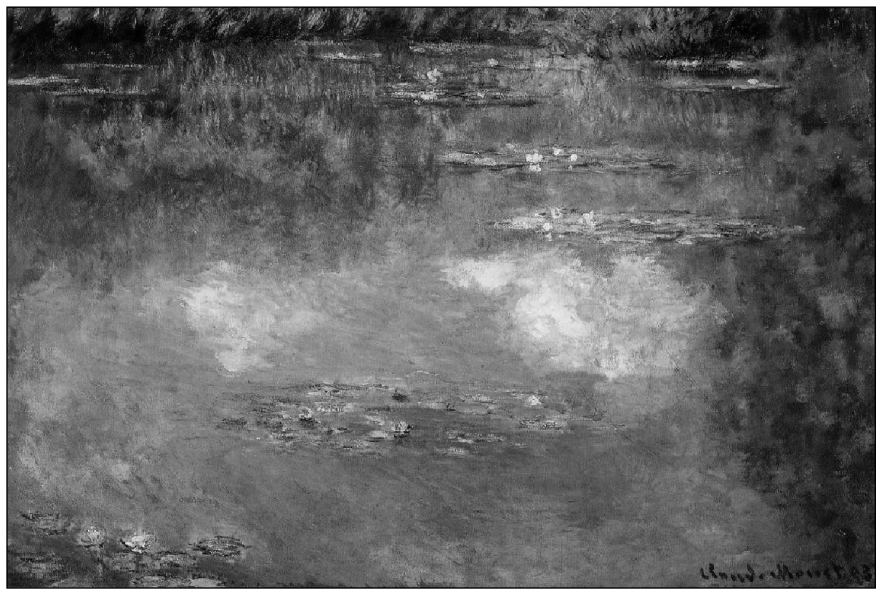

Figure 3. Claude Monet, *Water Lilies (The Clouds)*, 1903; Oil on canvas, 74.6 x 105.3 cm (29 3/8 x 41 7/16 in); Private collection

This duality in Ravel's music between the representative aspects and the abstract qualities of the music is what makes these pieces so special, as we can freely move our attention from the «visible» – the images and the narrative - to the purely musical – the textures, sounds and rhythms - at will. In such a way, a literal translation of the programmatic elements of the music into other media may not be satisfactory as we would be emphasizing the visible over the musical, even though the first, and most obvious way which many performers transform these pieces into multimedia productions, is by playing the music whilst projecting or exhibiting paintings (usually taken from French Impressionism) and reciting (Symbolist) poems. But will not a juxtaposition of paintings/poems and music only serve to emphasize the *representative* aspects of the piece to the detriment of the more abstract sonic qualities of the music? The

visual, in particular when it is representative, because it is obvious, always has a stronger impact on our imaginations than the acoustic, and the danger is of the music becoming the accompaniment for the visual representation.

To test the value and role of the visual in a multimedia performance of French Impressionist piano music, I conducted the following experiment:[1] I performed three pieces of different styles, genres and purport: a Bach «Prelude and Fugue», Chopin's *Fantaisie-Impromptu* in C minor, and Debussy's «Jardins sous la Pluie» (Gardens in the Rain). The first two come from within a tradition of absolute music and the last is quite obviously programme music. I did not tell the audience anything about the pieces, they did not have programmes – they knew neither the composer's names, the styles nor the title, in the case of the Debussy. The audience was then asked to write down their thoughts as to their response to the music. My interest, of course, was in their experience of the Debussy and strangely enough, even though most of the participants were not familiar in any way with this music and did not know the aesthetic and cultural context in which it was composed, they still responded visually, and in some cases actually «saw» waterfalls and rain when listening to the Debussy. Several of them, however, also felt the energy of the piece, the life and vitality of the rhythms, the varied textures and musical colours – in fact, they heard it as absolute music, as pure pattern in sound, to be enjoyed as such. I then gave them the title, the context, the associations, both literary and musical, and I played the piece again. Interestingly, whilst some of those who heard it in terms of abstract patterns could now «see» the water and the narrative elements as well as the abstract qualities, others felt very much constrained by their knowledge of the programme because it literally «deafened» them to the purely musical qualities of the music. As a result, it appears that the performer needs to find a compromise – a way to guide those whose listening experiences come from a culture of hearing film music towards listening with imagination whilst not upsetting the ones who are used to listening to music, and who may do so in a purely aesthetic manner.

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1. This experiment was conducted within the context of the *Learning for a Complex World: Facilitating Enquiry Conference*, 2007, hosted by the University of Surrey SCEPTrE Centre (Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education) with the title: «Music as a stimulus for enquiry, a concert pianist's perspective: A musical experience combining recital with enquiry-rich conversation with an approach to visualise the collective consciousness». I gratefully acknowledge the participation of Dr. David Hay (Kings College, London), who helped with the «concept mapping» which was used to bring to light the response of the audience. Further details of this event can be found on the conference's «wiki»: <www.complexworld.pbwiki.com>.

5. Conclusion

A multimedia recital of French Impressionist piano music would need to emphasize the concrete/abstract duality so that the effect of the whole expresses the very essence of the music. The audience must feel that by going beyond the visual, they are one step closer to an essence hidden behind the appearances, an essence which transcends traditional representation. Why did Ravel write a piece about moths, about birds, about bells or boats? Why did Debussy compose preludes about heather, mist and fireworks? These subjects were taken as mere pretexts, tokens of a reality hidden behind the superficial appearances of our everyday life, a reality which we, as individuals, create in our own imaginations.

A multimedia work should stimulate our imagination by suggesting ways to go beyond the obvious, beyond the appearances, and as a consequence, any visualizations must also go beyond their representative nature to reveal, as the music does, the tension between concrete and abstract – the effable and the ineffable. Music, by its very nature, «suggests» and rarely «shows» whereas the visual «shows» and rarely «suggests». A multimedia production must base itself on this very duality, the revealing *versus* the hiding, the showing *versus* the suggesting. This makes it difficult to give a «recipe» for a successful multimedia interpretation of Ravel's *Miroirs* but I would paradoxically suggest that rather than juxtaposing works of art or literature with musical compositions and calling this a «multimedia» performance, we should reflect instead on how the dynamics of the abstract qualities of the music, rather than the all too overpowering representative aspects, can be enhanced and brought to light with the help of other media in performance. Only then would we be truly able to listen to the music with our ears and our eyes and our imagination.

Wolfgang Iser, in a text about communication in literature, spoke of reading in a way which could be applied to the dynamics of an interactive, multimedia piano recital:

> What is concealed spurs the reader into action, but this action is also controlled by what is revealed; the explicit in its turn is transformed when the implicit has been brought to light. Whenever the reader bridges the gaps, communication begins. The gaps function as a kind of pivot on which the whole text-reader relationship revolves. Hence, the structured blanks of the text stimulate the process of ideation to be performed by the reader on terms set by the text. (Iser, 2001 [1980]: 182)

Replace «reader» by «audience», and «text» by «multimedia performance», and we have here an aesthetic approach which would involve today's increasingly passive audience in the very act of performance through an interactive imaginative response. As the director and scenographer Robert

Wilson (1996 [1983]: 385) perceptively said, «it's very difficult to see and hear at the same time and mostly we do one or the other. What I try to do in all my work is make a balance between what you hear and what you see, so that perhaps you can do both at the same time».

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Posthuman Perspectives and Postdramatic Theatre: the Theory and Practice of Hybrid Ontology in Katie Mitchell's *The Waves*

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ABSTRACT: Drawing connections between the theories of Hans-Thies Lehmann's postdramatic theatre and N. Katherine Hayles's presentation of posthuman ontology, where each responds to technologically-conditioned ways of knowing, experiencing, and being, this article interrogates changing models of theatrical forms and subjectivity. It argues that Katie Mitchell's 2006-2007 National Theatre production of *The Waves* constructs a particular kind of posthuman subject who is materially instantiated and formed by emergent processes. This hybrid being replaces the dualistically conceived sovereign subject/hero of the liberal humanist model typical of traditional drama, and articulates a world built of flatter structures of mutuality.

Keywords: posthuman, postdramatic theatre, Katie Mitchell, *The Waves*, ontology, subjectivity.

RESUMEN: Partiendo de los paralelismos entre las teorías del teatro postdramático de Lehmann y la presentación de la ontología posthumana de Hayles, que responden a los condicionamientos tecnológicos en las formas de aprehender la experiencia, el ser y el conocimiento, este artículo interroga los modelos cambiantes de la forma teatral y la subjetividad. Se sugiere que la producción de *The Waves* por Katie Mitchell en el National Theatre, UK, durante la temporada 2006-2007, construye un sujeto posthumano peculiar que se forma y sustancia materialmente por medio de procesos emergentes. Este ser híbrido reemplaza el concepto dualista sujeto / héroe del modelo humanista liberal típico del teatro tradicional y articula un mundo construido sobre estructuras de interdependencia no jerárquicas.

Palabras clave: posthumano, teatro postdramático, Katie Mitchell, *The Waves*, ontología, subjetividad.

British theatre, viewed normatively and unexceptionally, comes out of a tradition of the dramatic conception of the play text and its live, embodied enactment on the stage. The drama performed typically posits a hero centre stage who, reminiscent of the liberal human subject, is required to overcome personal flaws and challenge Fortune through a carefully and teleologically structured plot. However, a society implicated by technology and media is now changing that model, inside and outside the theatre, rendering it inadequate and inaccurate to lived human experience. The posthuman theoretical perspective is that technology is transforming the human into the posthuman – a being ontologically indiscrete and hybrid: a human-technology cyborg. For some, the posthuman continues to operate dualistically, formed of immaterial informational pattern (which replaces mind or soul) and prosthetic body. For others, being posthuman means a materialistic and embodied ontology where consciousness, formerly the foundation of the human subject, is rendered epiphenomenal, a «bit part» in a larger system of cognitive distribution. Both kinds of posthuman are becoming visible on the British stage, although the *embodied* posthuman is the figure chiefly to interest this study.

Hans-Thies Lehmann (2006: 182) contends, meanwhile, that the traditional theatrical form of drama is weakening, that it is no longer «in tune with our experience» of being and living in the world today, and that the rise of a new paradigm – that of *postdramatic theatre* – is a necessary response to the modern mediatized world in which our relationship to the world and to each other, and our *perception* of each, is changed. The form of postdramatic theatre shares with posthumanism a more chaotic and emergent structure than is known by either drama or humanism. The purpose of this study is to ask first, in consequence of changing epistemological models, what the implications of the new structures might be for the (post)human theatrical figure. Furthermore, where postdramatic theatre locates film and voice-altering techniques in juxtaposed and equal roles with the live presence of the performer on stage in ways that hybridize and re-formulate the (post)human subject, the question arises as to what, precisely, are the new ontological formulations being conceived? Should we celebrate such emergence, or insist on the order and integrity of meaning constituted in humanism and teleological drama?

The study operates out of posthuman perspectives, drawing significantly from the work of N. Katherine Hayles, and the theory of Hans-Thies Lehmann's postdramatic theatre, which are employed to interrogate the British theatre director, Katie Mitchell's 2006-07 production of *The Waves*.

1. Posthuman Perspectives

N. Katherine Hayles, in her seminal work, *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), articulates the posthuman as a point of view constructed within and by historically specific and emergent configurations of embodiment, technology, and culture. The following list of assumptions, which she itemises as indicative rather than definitive of the posthuman, serve as a convenient jumping-off point, not only for their significant epistemological denotations but for their contradictions and cross-fertilisations of supposedly dichotomous concepts, which implicitly inhere in the terms of humanism and its *post*. Hayles writes:

> First, the posthuman view privileges informational pattern over material instantiation, so that embodiment in a biological substrate is seen as an accident of history rather than an inevitability of life. Second, the posthuman view considers consciousness, regarded as the seat of human identity in the Western tradition long before Descartes thought he was a mind thinking, as an epiphenomenon, as an evolutionary upstart trying to claim that it is the whole show when in actuality it is only a minor sideshow. Third, the posthuman view thinks of the body as the original prosthesis we all learn to manipulate, so that extending or replacing the body with other prostheses becomes a continuation of a process that began before we were born. Fourth, and most important, by these and other means, the posthuman view configures human being so that it can be seamlessly articulated with intelligent machines. In the posthuman, there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernetic mechanism and biological organism, robot teleology and human goals. (Hayles, 1999: 2-3)

This view of the posthuman illustrates some crucial similarities, as well as some radical breaks, with that of the human, where orientation for the human subject derives from the tradition of liberal humanism. Hayles's first and third characteristics operate out of a dualistic and hierarchical ontological model, one that positions insubstantial information and cognition over and above materiality, including the body, which is conceived as unintelligent stuff occupying the role of object. Here the liberal human subject's conception as a mindful and intelligent being, autonomous and sovereign, is preserved, albeit in a technologically and imaginatively new posthuman form. Hayles's second assumption, however, seems to operate differently as it relegates consciousness to an epiphenomenal status that functions according to deterministic and physical processes originating in embodied subjectivity. In this model, the posthuman is precluded any possibility of free will or agency as consciousness is posited as a small subsystem «running its program of self-construction and self-assurance while remaining ignorant of the actual dynamics of complex

systems» (Hayles, 1999: 286) behind and beyond it. Finally, the fourth assumption of the posthuman tradition listed by Hayles explicitly posits the potentially disturbing conception of the human as «seamlessly» configured with intelligent machines, which not only threatens the liberal human subject's boundaries but also his/her claims to autonomous will. It is this, perhaps, more than any other potential transformation of human ontology, which is viewed with unease, if not fear: the possibility that we, humans, will lose our centre stage and sovereign role to become ontologically equivalent and forced to share the world stage with intelligent machines. Composed of machinic and organic parts, where agency is multiple and variously located across formerly discrete borders, the human is replaced by the cyborg, and claims to hero and protagonist status, are withdrawn.

The implications of these characteristics are significant to our subjective evolution, to the question of how we are (becoming) posthuman in the Western world. In terms of British theatre and, more specifically, in *The Waves*, their ramifications are not merely observable in the *content*, but also as formal innovations, evolving the very *structure* of «plays» and their correlative relationship with audience reception.

2. *The Waves*: a Posthuman Analysis

The theatrical production under discussion, *The Waves* is remarkable for its departure from the normative British theatrical tradition, and for its interrogation of posthuman ontology. Not so much a play as a performance piece, it was collaboratively devised and adapted by Katie Mitchell and her ensemble of performers, from Virginia Woolf's 1931 novel of the same name, and performed at the Cottesloe Theatre in December 2006 – February 2007.[1] The focus of this discussion is the production's posthuman and dispersed presentation of subjectivity, where the unified and sovereign liberal human «hero» is replaced by a hybrid and ambiguous figure formed by multiple and separate machinic assemblages across language, technology, and embodiment. *The Waves* is concerned with going beyond representations of the world that already exist, towards possibilities that are as yet unknown, virtual, and unchartered to offer new ways of seeing and being. So, what posthuman hybrid becomings are being imagined here, and what methods does Mitchell employ to achieve them?

The Waves tells its narrative by means of the modernists' technique of stream of consciousness, a stream which meanders, irresolutely, from one

1. I saw Mitchell's production of The Waves at the Cottesloe Theatre on 19th December, 2006.

character's point of view to another. Six characters, all friends, utter their ceaseless fragments of thoughts, which take us from their childhood to maturity. These thoughts are often unlinked, uncontextualised, apparently unstructured, and only punctuated, on occasion, by short, and apparently arbitrary, extracts of authorial commentary and description. We don't know why the characters are articulating their stories; they just *are*, and although their language is sensuous and evocative, this is anti-narrative and so void of dramatic tension or shape: apparently borderless.

The methods employed to articulate the stories are various. Having remediated the text from novel into theatrical form, and thereby directly implicating the «speaking figures» into new intermedial terrain, Mitchell next produces a sense of hybridity and fluid identities in her employment of set: a black box stage, with tables, chairs, microphones, a screen for projections, cameras, and objects for making sound effects, all of which conjure mixed contextual associations including those of a radio studio, a film studio, and even a panel for reading or discussion. This ambiguous space, and its use, functions to foreground not merely the material facts and devices of *theatrical* production (where these devices are traditionally employed by drama to create illusion), but also of our worldly processes of meaning-making. Performers, meanwhile – constantly substituting for each other – narrate Woolf's novel into microphones, which they read from the physical text – a text that is lit by a lamp and is thus positioned as an «actor» or participant in its own right in the production. The performers are not simply readers, however; they are also producers of sound effects, models, costume fitters, stagehands, filmmakers, and dancers, all of whom perform actions that apparently cohere to produce the «illusion», sometimes in the form of a radio production and sometimes in film, of the virtual and imagined world created by Woolf's text. For example, as the words on the page - those of the «character»- are read into the microphone by one actor, another actor performs the said character's actions while someone else produces visual effects (such as «rain» sprayed from a bottle onto a sheet of Perspex), all of which is filmed by other actors and projected live onto a screen. To this, music and attaching sound effects are overlaid to create the illusion of a totality. However, what this production highlights is that any suggestion of a totality is in fact actually a composite of quite disparate elements, which are only perceived as cohering as a result of convention, and have therefore become naturalised as such.

The first major point of interest in *The Waves* is how, while foregrounding consciousness as the very ground and subject of the piece; presenting it as thoughts in language tied to six voices, it actually functions to interrogate consciousness in its traditional form as immaterial and transcendental origin of an ontologically unique human subject. In place of a liberal humanist

perspective, the production postulates a hybridized subject, apparently devoid of mindful foundation but composed instead of multiple «parts, "schizzes" or impersonal and mobile fragments» (Colebrook, 2002: 5), which are generally misperceived as cohering. This posthuman subject is *not* a psychological type: the body of the performer is foregrounded and separated from any illusion of an essential identity or self. Bodies are coded and identities recognised according to what the body *does*, not what it *is*. This is not, however, to claim transcendental status for the body in place of the mind – a status that would have the body constituted as *the* constant or foundational element – because that would mistakenly conjecture a real-representation binary that *The Waves* actively rejects. Rather, Mitchell proposes, by the deconstruction of the subject (the separation of character/human elements - body, voice, sound), a *schizo* subject. She shows that human beings and the world have no ground, no originary or meaningful foundation, which is an idea that is tied to the piece's derivation; for the novel originates in the imagination of a writer who comes to us from the discourse of history, whose words function as text for a performance that aims to demythologize human subjectivity and the human's relationship to the world, and so manages to desubstantiate Woolf herself as an essential being or author of «the world». In this way, the borders between virtuality and reality are evaporated. There is no transcendental starting point; there are only ceaseless and singular becomings which form repeated machinic assemblages. As such, *The Waves*, by means of apparently autonomous and multiple sign systems (language, gesture, sound, film, music, and so forth), which operate independently of, but simultaneously with, each other, articulates a subject constructed and composed of paratactical codes, or parts, that are utterly inessential.

The second and related significant element arising from *The Waves* is the means by which technology refigures and reconstitutes the human into the posthuman subject, formulated within, against, and in-between media. Catherine Waldby's argument regarding the openness of the human «to modes of engineering and techno genesis» offers a persuasive theoretical starting point for exploring the import of intermediality to human ontology. She contends that «the point of human origin […] is susceptible to technical production» and that technologies render «the human not as inventor but as invention», crucially concluding that «the very category "human" owes its coherence to technologies which configure bodily morphology according to the medium-specific qualities of the archive itself – the book, the photographic archive, the computer archive and so forth» (Waldby, 2000: 161). On this view, any change in technology - its form or its function - where that technology is «employed by» or in some way images, formulates, or explains the human subject, serves to actively (re)configuration the human being. The consequence of this to the human subject in theatre can be illustrated in the specific technologies utilised, including, importantly, that of

language and its form, in the different models of theatre. Whereas the dramatic play text functions to locate human form «in» words and dialogue where the intended material instantiation (of performer) is substitutable, open, and secondary to the primacy of mind, the postdramatic text can be theorized as positing a materially significant and specific manifestation of human ontology that refuses a foundational premise. In postdramatic theatre, the technology by which the human subject is mediated renders it/him/her hybrid and open to new ontologies. In the chora-graphic space of *The Waves*'s stage, bodies, voices, gestures, movements, looks, and postures are all ripped from their spatio-temporal continuum and «newly connected, isolated, and assembled into a tableau-like montage» (Lehmann, 2006: 151). The electronic manifestation of the language in amplified voice and dubbed over the film image tears voice from presence and language from human being, resulting in the creation of a kind of «voice mask that "ghosts" the "character" and renders him/her a spoken "it" as opposed to a speaking "I"» (Lehmann, 2006: 10). Language is rendered akin to an exhibited object as it is read over a microphone, amplified, and translated into a kind of specific physical and motoric act and thus «an *unnatural, not self-evident* process», provoking by «bringing to light that the word does not belong to the speaker. It does not organically reside in his/her body but remains a *foreign body*» (Lehmann, 2006: 147). Furthermore, when the filmed image of the body is overlaid by the autonomous voice, so the human body is re-articulated as a kind of de-psychologized speaking machine, rendered coherent and unified only by the spoken text. By such methods of technologically mediated disunification of human embodiment into separate parts, the comprehension of subjectivity is changed, as formerly «natural» bodily coherence is ruptured into pieces at the same time as these pieces cross ontological borders from the organic to the technological. As such, the human form loses its borders, its uniqueness, and is opened up to hybridity and shared ontology: rendered a posthuman cyborg.

The third discussion point located in the production's interrogation of the process of meaning-making: epistemological models are «played» with as the audience is encouraged to reflect on its processes of reading and knowing, by means of the production's formation of the intermedial and schizo subject who is constructed across and in-between technologies. On the one hand, the posthuman subject's apparent openness to alternate mediatization into sound and film suggests an unfixity and an immateriality that continues to operate out of traditional dualistic conceptions of subjectivity, and a concomitant front-loading of meaning into the epistemological system: on this perspective, informational pattern replaces consciousness as immaterial ontological foundation; on the other hand, the production's very foregrounding of autonomous media forms in their specific material instantiations function to counter the immaterialising

impulse, and instead highlights the differences effected in the audience's reception and reading of the subject: we perceive and understand the posthuman subject differently according to his/her various and particular manifestations. For example, in *The Waves*, our reception of the virtual world of film is starkly contrasted to that of the physical «reality» of live bodies doing (for example, the shooting of the film). The film projections in *The Waves* conjure specific and coherent meanings and emotions; the actions on stage and of the narrative itself, meanwhile, refuse coherence, operating in scarcely distinguishing frames, or units, of embodied action or «story». While the novel and the stage action lack any privileged centre, instead working with multiple viewpoints and lines of becoming, the film image provides a neat and pre-packaged point of view. Film is starkly presented as creating coherence out of chaos and meaning out of arbitrary and simultaneous actions and systems. In this way, Mitchell's production subjects audience reception to self-scrutiny; it highlights the liberal human's desire to attribute meaning to the world by the fact that preference is found in the narrow frame of the film rather than in the wider frame of the live and embodied stage, which is more chaotically constituted and unfocused, with multiple actions. Incidentally posited, here, too, is the idea that meaning does not exist in any transcendental sense, and that any meaning we ascribe is a thing desired and virtually, rather than actually, constructed.

*The Waves'*s schizo subject and figuration across media offers a bottom-up orientation for the posthuman, positing consciousness as epiphenomenal, a subjective and experiential consequence of physical processes, which leads to the fourth point of this discussion: how material and posthuman ontology renders a realist epistemology irrelevant, replacing it with reflexive and autopoietic models. For some researchers in the field of Artificial Life (which Hayles attests as fundamental to our evolving negotiations with what it means to be human), the bottom-up organisation of the (post)human is key to our ontology. Researcher Rodney Brooks at MIT claims that the essential property of the human being is not essential consciousness or mind or intelligence, but «the ability to move around and interact robustly with the environment» (Hayles, 1999: 235). Of course, *The Waves* enacts this very point of view with its presentation of human and non-human stage activity that is explicitly shown as the origin of any experience of consciousness. This theory, meanwhile, gestures towards Humberto Maturana's own thoughts, which insist that the body cannot be dispensed with and that the particularities of embodiment are entirely significant to cognition; in short, that mind and body are not separate but a «unity». This theory shakes the empirically constituted realist epistemology, which posits a «reality» out there that exists distinctly from the (human) observer. Maturana's key insight is to show that «reality» exists for all living creatures, including humans, «only through interactive processes determined solely by the

organism's own organization» (Hayles, 1999: 136). Precise material instantiation and organisation is the key to perception and relations with the world. The observer cannot describe absolute reality, for such description «would require an interaction with the absolute to be described, but the representation that would arise from such an interaction would necessarily be determined by the autopoietic organization of the observer […] hence, the cognitive reality that it would generate would unavoidably be relative to the observer» (Maturana, in Hayles, 1999: 136).

Such autopoietic structure and closure, as it is evidenced in the production of *The Waves*, is critical to this discussion of posthuman subjectivity and epistemology for two reasons: firstly, where the stage activity and use of technology shows the physical manifestation of a subject formed of multiple schizzes that are specifically affective,[2] it demonstrates that cognitive reality is derivative of particularised material instantiation – the result of the very specific physical organisation of parts; secondly, where the observer is shown to be an integral part of the picture, which s/he is by implication of her/his own particularised material instantiation, bodies cannot be claimed to be constituted of information/mind alone: information cannot be divided from matter. In fact, consciousness is specific to experiences of embodiment. There is no reality «out there». *The Waves*, in effect, in its precise use of forms, argues that the production, the subject, and, by implication, the world, are formed of specific organisations which alter the very terms of cognition or consciousness.

Such ways of perceiving ourselves and the world are challenging because traditional ontology is turned on its head: *The Waves* suggests that the subject is posthuman, a specifically and materially instantiated hybrid being, whose ways of thinking, perceiving, and being are consequent of physical and emergent processes. In Mitchell's world, there is no transcendental subject formed of mind and body. Wholeness is a fiction; there is no dramatic beginning, middle, and end that give shape and teleology to history. There is no single privileged spectacle, character, or point of view. Life is not about one privileged point – the self-contained mind of «man» - representing some inert physical world; there is, on *The Waves*'s model, only movement and difference and becoming in which the actant and spectator are equally imbricated.

In one view, a humanistic view, the «new» ways of perceiving and thinking the world inspired by this production are disturbing, for they refuse humankind its taken-for-granted position at the centre of the theatrical and world stages. The ontological and epistemological changes prompted by technological and media

2. Affective, in this usage, signifies an affect of feeling freed from interested or organising subjects, as set forth in Deleuzian theory. For a fuller and accessible description of affect, read Colebrook (2002: 27).

evolutions may be unsettling as they refuse the subject his/her essential character as a conscious, autonomous, and intelligent, being located in a meaningful world. A need to re-navigate his/her very ontology and function as posthuman is necessitated, for s/he/it is now reconstituted as a being formed in and of a comprehensively physical world of chaotic dynamics and emergent structures lacking the teleological security of, for example, the narratives of religion built upon an idea of soul. On another perspective, however, Mitchell's production is beautiful and offers a posthuman way of being that surrenders hegemonic control and posits, in its place, mutual and interdependent intelligent action between beings and objects. Indeed, despite the uncomfortable readjustment required of the audience in situating itself for a production that refuses common expectations (of a play and of the human subject), *The Waves*'s conjuring of an other way of being and seeing the world, modelled on hybridity and fluidity, is seductive and importantly allows us to imagine potential futures of mutuality of which Hayles (1999) and Haraway (1991) might approve.

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Bound to Honour: the Detention of David Hicks as Performance

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ABSTRACT: When you think of the war on terror, Guantanamo Bay and the incarceration of David Hicks you don't automatically think of an aerial performance. The 2006 production of *Honour Bound* created by Nigel Jamieson and choreographed by Australian Dance Theatre's Garry Stewart raises questions about human rights, justice and the role of politics in the war on terrorism. Using the processes of intermediality the production wages a physical assault, akin to David Hicks' experience, on the audience through a combination of set, sound and lighting with dance, aerial work and physical theatre to symbolically communicate the confronting aspects of imprisonment and incarceration thereby enhancing the visceral experience of the debate surrounding David Hicks for the audience. In the field of contemporary performance it is often said that form is content and content is form. This paper will demonstrate how the use of brutalised form personified the pain and distress of David and his parents.

Keywords: intermediality, liminality, Australian performance, performance innovation.

RESUMEN: Cuando se piensa en la guerra contra el terror, Bahía de Guantánamo y la encarcelación de David Hicks, no se concibe automáticamente un espectáculo aéreo. La producción de *Honour Bound* (2006), diseñada por Nigel Jamieson y coreografiada por Garry Stewart del Australian Dance Theatre, enuncia cuestiones sobre derechos humanos, justicia y el papel de la política en la guerra contra el terrorismo. Mediante los procesos de intermedialidad, la representación plantea al público un asalto físico, como el sufrido por David Hicks, por medio de la combinación de decorados, sonido e iluminación, con la danza, la acrobacia aérea y el teatro corporal, para comunicar simbólicamente los aspectos confrontados de la encarcelación y así enfatizar en el público la experiencia visceral de debate alrededor de David Hicks. En el campo de la interpretación contemporánea se aduce comúnmente que la forma es contenido y el contenido es forma. Este artículo

mostrará cómo el uso de una forma brutal consigue personificar el dolor y angustia de David y sus padres.

Palabras clave: intermedialidad, liminalidad, espectáculo teatral australiano, innovación interpretativa.

The paper's title is a play on words by inverting the performance's title, however, the notion of being bound to honour an individual's or country's historical narrative is very close to Nigel Jamieson's ontology of performance making. If, as Schrum (1999: 11) states «Theatre has always reflected the contemporary state of the world», then it would seem natural for Jamieson to tackle the subject of human rights within the arenas of war as seen through the eyes and experience of one individual – David Hicks. Here was an individual whose struggle for conviction or freedom was theatricalised, almost in soap opera like episodes, in the national press, on television and across national borders. Over the last few years Jamieson has created a number of works that have attempted to respond to stories of national interest like David Hicks, usually involving questions on morality, principles of habeas corpus (the assumption of innocence until proven guilty), and the principles of international treaties such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

1. The Oeuvre of Nigel Jamieson

The Theft of Sita premiered at the Adelaide Festival in 2000 was about the overthrow of the Suharto regime in Indonesia. It was inspired by the great classical story of the Ramayana. Transposing events to contemporary Indonesia, it follows the bemused clowns of the Wayang Kulit puppet theatre from an idealised classical landscape into a world transformed by forest fires, chainsaws and woodchip factories, half built freeways, theme parks and urban slums. Mirroring the classical story of the abduction of Sita, the pillage of contemporary Indonesia and the events leading to the overthrow of Suharto, the production is about a society gripped by change. At its heart lay a commitment to creating a closer understanding of the plight of our nearest neighbour.

Jamieson's production *In Our Name* was commissioned by Sydney's Belvior Street Theatre in 2004. It excavated the plight of an Iraqi family being held in detention. In making the work Jamieson commented that [it was] «the first time that I've been aware of an event where the country that I live in has

thrown away the basic tenets of humanity» (Jamieson, 2004). The al-Abaddi family fled Iraq, where other family members had been killed and tortured. They unsuccessfully sought asylum in Australia and spent three years in detention in Curtin, Port Hedland and finally Villawood. The family's teenage son, Haydar, tried to commit suicide a number of times. Haydar was allowed to stay in Australia. The al-Abaddi family was not. They are now living in New Zealand and trying to gain permanent residence there.

When Jamieson began *In Our Name* the fate of the family was unclear, as was the conclusion of the story in performance. This unfinished nature of a story was to be encountered again in the work of *Honour Bound*. Jamieson says, «On one level this is the price you pay for trying to create truly contemporary work; on another it reflects the temporal nature of life» (Jamieson, 2006: 3). It could also be argued that this is the territory of contemporary performance – form equals content and content equals form. It is open, sometimes unfinished, it is ephemeral or has the qualities of what Auslander (1997) calls «disappearance».

2. Intermediality in the Work of *Honour Bound*

Jamieson's approach to performance-making is to «try and create a new form of storytelling for each new story [he] tackles» (Jamieson, 2004). In the case of *Honour Bound* he tried to imagine the personal and human consequences of abandoning an Australian citizen, no matter the gravity of the supposed crime, to a place like Guantanamo's Camp X-ray. Jamieson's challenge was to find a brutality of form equal to the brutalising story of David Hicks.

In making *Honour Bound* Jamieson was interested in having the performers find a way of making a parallel physical journey to that which David Hicks was experiencing – humans being stretched to their limits. Enter Garry Stewart. In asking Stewart to choreograph and collaborate on the work, Jamieson was seeking to use a brutality of physical language in an attempt to function as an analogy of the psychological, emotional and physical turmoil that David and his fellow inmates experienced. In doing so, Stewart states that he was:

> Eschewing a dancerly aesthetic and pushed the performers into a zone that took them to the brink of their physical limitations. Their struggle becomes real rather than illustrated and thereby we can hope for the possibility that we have represented David and Terry Hicks' story with honesty and integrity. (Stewart, 2006: 2)

The form for *Honour Bound* emerged out of necessity. It had to be as hard and confronting as the content of the piece. Performance iconoclast, Robert Lepage, notes that «in the theatre, the audience has to be immersed in the show's

argument, every sense has to seize it so the form has to become an incarnation of the subject and themes» (Lepage, 1997: 164). It could be argued that the form used in this work positions it within in the field of performance innovation. Blumenthal suggests that «performance innovation occurs when the performance process informs us in a way that the medium has never informed us before, through connections that redefine conceptual relationships in the craft» (Lepage, 1995: 7). In the case of *Honour Bound* the relationship is made tangible through the inter-related nature of both content and form.

Honour Bound was not an easy performance to watch in terms of engaging with either the form or the content, but it was shatteringly good. It took the audience inside a giant wire cage inhabited by the people kept there and their keepers, whose job is to break down the humanity and spirit of the prisoners. Its model is immediately evident from the orange boiler suits – Guantanamo Bay. An explosion of movement puts the six performers into dizzying spins as they hang in space; heart-stopping drops from the height of the stage; disorienting situations in which we, as audience, seem to be observing them from above. Savage emotions of despair are counteracted by the poignancy of glimpses of compassion.

At the point of making the work in 2006 David Hicks had been incarcerated in Guantanamo Bay for nearly five years. David is the pivotal subject. Comments from his father, Terry, and his stepmother, Bev are screened with the action; excerpts from his letters are read as part of the soundscape and segments of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and Geneva Convention are scrolled across the floor, bodies and sides of the cage. Nigel Jamieson wisely and skilfully kept away from the question of guilt or otherwise amongst these prisoners. Instead, the piece explored the impact of mental and physical torture on all those involved: the tortured, the torturers and those whose governments allow this to happen. Us. Through *Honour Bound* Jamieson asks us to question our complicity in Hick's detention.

The artistry that turns the piece from documentary into theatre is the way imagination has given reality wings. The title is from a quote about freedom – incredibly – on the gates of Guantanamo Bay – «Honour Bound to Defend Freedom». Video artist Scott Otto Anderson has taken lines from international declarations of human rights, screened them for us to read, then turned them into a fractured sea of words for an aerial performer to walk along, climb - and fall, time and again. Garry Stewart's characteristically action-packed and at times bone-jarring choreography is given new urgency and a fresh dimension of aerial work that does mind-boggling things with gravity in the service of conveying how the prisoners might feel. Paul Charlier's score is an evocative blend of conventional music and techno sounds that hint at helicopters, blips of medical monitors and the like.

Honour Bound is an intermedial work in which meaning-making for the audience resides somewhere in-between the live bodies and the mediatised world of text and image. According to Chapple and Kattenbelt (2006: 11) «the incorporation of digital technologies within the theatrical and performance space is creating new modes of representation; new dramaturgical strategies; new ways of structuring and staging words, images and sounds; new ways of positioning bodies in time and space; new ways of creating temporal and spatial interrelations». It is within Chapple and Kattenbelt's words that we situate the work of *Honour Bound*. In this sense, I am using the term intermediality not to describe the nexus of live and mediatised components of the work, but to what Chapple and Kattenbelt define as an inbetweenness.

This work is an arena and mental space that may be best described as in-between realities. The reality of the performance which is both fiction and fact – a kind of factional theatre. There is also an in-betweenness of temporal and spatial relations. The performer and the audience are simultaneously in the same space and, at the same time, the unseen performer, the silent avatar of David Hicks, is in another space whilst being tangibly present in image and word. It is in this space that there is a possibility of generating new cultural, political, social and psychological meanings in relation to the debate on the war on terror, which is being waged in yet another space beyond the confines of the theatre.

> The inclusion of mediatised forms within live performance provides practitioners with the tangible reality to explore simultaneity through form. In the case of *Honour Bound* simultaneity was experienced as an in-between reality, a conflation of time, space and various truths. The resulting performance was more open to a multiplicity of interpretation, blurring of boundaries and non-hierarchical use of art form. (Gattenhof, 2007)

Viewing intermedial works requires a change in perception from the audience (Chapple and Kattenbelt, 2006: 22). It requires an embracing of a liminal space where, according to Chapple and Kattenbelt, there is a «meeting point in-between the performers and the observers, and the confluence of media involved in the performance at a particular moment in time» (Chapple and Kattenbelt, 2006: 12). This mirrors the reportage of David Hicks' incarceration. Somewhere in-between the mediatic portrayal and Hicks' personal experience lies the truth. This is what *Honour Bound* does. It asks the audience to question the nature of truth. It is not an Aristotelian narrative in structure with a neatly packaged resolution. Instead, it asks questions, poses problems and then invites the audience to juxtapose their lived experience of events, with the images, soundscapes and voices of David, Terry and Bev Hicks.

3. Conclusion

Honour Bound was not a box-office success. Michael Kantor, artistic director of Malthouse Theatre (Melbourne) believes this was due in part to the material being perceived as being too dark. But he notes that it «preceded the groundswell of sympathy for Hicks by about six months» (Kantor, 2007: 10). Affective theatre and performance, the type that Marianne Van Kerkhoven (2007) describes as «making a hit», that is, an emotional, psychological or social impact, is not dictated by financial outcome or bums on seats. It was unnerving to watch torturer and tortured emerge from the same boiler-suited figure: confusing at first but then a salutary comment on the impact the humiliation of an individual can have, not only on those involved but the wider community. Jamieson dislikes didactic theatre rather he is interested in working on a metaphorical level. On a number of levels, this work produced an un-utterable response from the audience, silenced as perhaps the Australian government tried to silence truth. As I sat in the audience at the conclusion of the performance, there was palpable silence and not spontaneous clapping usually encountered. After the performers were acknowledged and did leave the stage, a large number of audience members remained in the theatre, silent, weeping or just sitting. Like many of the other audience members I had been immersed in the debate in the newspapers, on radio and on television broadcasts, but the gravity of David's situation really hit home via the brutality of the physical performance - the sound of flesh crashing into wire, being subjected to harsh almost blinding lights, to the cacophony of sound. This for the audience was the world of David Hicks.

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Black to White: the Fading Process of Intermediality in the Gallery Space

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ABSTRACT: The article explores the processes of practice in terms of intermediality, and presents a visual and metaphorical concept for collaborative process. Through the use of a case study, *Men in the Wall* by Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie, the gallery is discussed as an intermedial environment. Certain technical devices, such as «the fade» are considered and it is argued that they contribute to the experience of an «other» space, a liminal moment that is at once present and absent, which is achieved through the blend and collision of media. The article concludes by suggesting a metaphorical analogy for the process and practice of intermedial and interdisciplinary work: the mollusc.

Keywords: intermediality, Process, Gallery space, Being (Intermedial Exi(s)ting), Fade, Effect/Affect.

RESUMEN: Este artículo explora los procesos de puesta en acción desde la perspectiva de la intermedialidad y propone un concepto visual y metafórico de los procesos colaborativos. Mediante el estudio de un caso práctico, *Men in the Wall*, de Liz Agiss y Billy Cowie, se analiza el área del anfiteatro como espacio de intermedialidad. Se tienen en cuenta aspectos técnicos como el fundido y su contribución en la configuración de un espacio alternativo, un momento liminal que está presente y ausente simultáneamente y que se consigue por medio de la amalgama y choque de media. Se concluye con una analogía metafórica para describir el proceso y práctica del trabajo interdisciplinario e intermedial: el molusco.

Palabras clave: intermedialidad, proceso, anfiteatro, ser (existencia intermedial), fundido, efecto / afecto.

Figure 1. *Men in the Wall*, Aggiss and Cowie (2003)

1. Introduction

Through an exploration of the ways in which certain technical devices can be used to create spaces, collisions and boundaries between media and the spaces in which they are presented, I introduce a concept for intermedial practice that can be used to explain both the process of and relationship between the practitioner and the work in its environment. Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie are two practitioners who are developing work for the first time in the gallery space, using a performance/dance/film hybrid piece to communicate their ideas. In *Men in the Wall* Aggiss and Cowie have «crossed over» from «black box» space of performance into the «white space» of the gallery, and I use the notion of crossing over as symbolic of the process of crossing into a transcendence of space, which is obtained through the technique of «the fade». In the article the fade is not only used as discussed in the context of film theory, but also to describe the conceptual movement across states of liminality, where notions of (E)merging and (dis)appearance collide. I suggest that the *transitional space* of the fade is an intermedial «Exi(s)ting» – a deconstructive neologism that I use to capture the complexities of being both within and outside of a work, and of the process being both present and absent within a product. I discuss this notion by using the conceptual metaphor of the mollusc for work and process.

The work *Men in the Wall* is discussed in the context of the space in which it was exhibited, and the concept of the mollusc is developed to represent such an architectural space – a housing of the work and a spiral image, which indicates the process of the media. I discuss these ideas in the context of the gallery space and suggest that the gallery space is the ideal environment for intermediality because I think that intermediality is not merely about the combination of the media, but about the relationships *between* the media and practices (creation, presentation and reception) and how the media communicate with each other and the participants. Intermediality, for me, is about the

processes of working with media and how the media is situated within a space; it is not, I argue, a term that advocates the abolition of specificity, but it does deconstruct the pre-existing notions of certain medial spaces.

2. *Men in the Wall* (2003)

The work of Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie could be considered as interdisciplinary as they appear to be using technology to present a performance, dance and film hybrid. The trickery they apply to their work challenges the traditionally separated «live» and «mediatized» spaces associated with the live and recorded performing arts: the digital effects applied to the work problematize the spaces in-between the media, performer and viewer. The choices about the exhibition of this work, as well as «the effect and affect of the media on the viewer» (Boenisch, 2006: 103-116), position this work in the contentious spaces of the intermedial.

Men in the wall is a four-screen, three dimensional stereoscopic (3D projected video) installation: four projections operate alongside each other, each projecting the image of a male performer. They dance, move and perform in individual boxes. The performers' images move out of the box only with the assistance of three-dimensional effects. At moments in a dance, the arms or legs seem to be protruding out of the boxed two-dimensional cinematic space, and at this point the bodies appear to inhabit the space *in-between* theatre, performance, painting and film.

At the Wimbledon College of Art Exhibition Launch in 2006, Aggiss commented on the experience of crossing over from one medium (theatre) to another; and suggested that moving from the black box and into a white box not only asked new questions about the work, but also about the artists and how they faced challenges of being accepted into the gallery space. The artists' dilemma is one that predates this work and Berghaus discusses it in relation to Laurie Anderson's work (Berghaus, 2005: 218), yet it is interesting to consider the borders that these artists transcend – not only within their ideas – but within the political negotiations of where their work is situated and how it is accepted.

The performance artists in *Men in the Wall* are housed within frames and the framing is challenged in several ways. The positioning of this film/performance work in the gallery space already challenges the usual framing of such work, furthermore the title and choices made about the exhibition acknowledge *the wall*, which is the space on which two-dimensional painting or photography is usually positioned. The framing is challenged further by the performers' interactions with each other; for example, the man in box four kicks the wall and

(we assume) sends vibrations to which the other performers respond. The man in box two listens with a cup against the wall of his box to the man in box one. The «boxed men» are projected separately from different projectors but they are positioned next to each other against the wall. They share the gallery space, yet they are «boxed-off» in their separate performance spaces. The spaces are also challenged by the three-dimensional effects: the limbs of the men appear to move out of film space and into the gallery space even though they have not moved from their own restrictive boxes. Furthermore, the audience space is challenged by this illusion and we question the hybrid performance and the ways in which we consume the work. Are we watching performance, film or transient landscapes on a wall? This hybrid work begs the audience to question their viewing position: as the viewer crosses into the gallery threshold they already anticipate an experience; what this work does is to challenge that experience further by crossing thresholds of mediality within it.

Men in the Wall challenges also the traditions of binary analysis of artworks into «live» *or* «mediatized» work, which they achieve through the use of technology. We become aware of this challenge to discrete medial boundaries at the moment when the work *fades* to a new scene. This moment of space, of transition, is the moment when the boundary between film and performance becomes most obvious, and this is also the moment when we question our viewing position, and it is during the processes *of fading* that we become most aware that we are situated in a gallery. The images all fade-out at the same time and this locates and joins them once again in space: when the images disappear from the gallery we are thrown into a blackness that is not unlike a performance or cinematic space. At the moment of blackness the performers are sharing a space that is «other» to our viewing space. When the performers return, we are aware once again that they are simultaneously present and absent from each other, separately boxed in projections but together in the gallery space. The fade acts as a literal crossing in relation to the media content and as an experiential crossing in terms of audience spaces.

The fade is applied in cinematic space but originated on the stage.[1] Theatre might use a black-out between scenes in the way that film would use a fade-out. However, the result is usually more physical and disruptive in theatre, perhaps because of the corporeal presence and perhaps because black-outs tend to be used in order that something can be changed physically on stage, creating a sense of spatial or temporal change, but of course remaining simultaneously within the actual space and the viewing place of theatre. The phenomenological response to the fade in this work is more complex because of the use of three-

1. Vardac (2005) discusses the transition of theatrical method from stage to screen.

dimensional effects. The effect applied to the work is an attempt to challenge the spatial relationships between performer and audience, and also between the medium of film and the medium of theatre.

With each new scene the scale of the performers is not changed; the camera is not used for close-ups or any other change of position and, as a result, the distance between the performers' space and the background becomes vast. The backgrounds are images of landscapes that change in each scene, varying from an urban setting to the rolling hills of the countryside. The distance between the performers and their projected environment is emphasised with each change of scene, and even more so when the performers (through the three-dimensional effect) seep into the gallery viewing space. The consequence of this is that, as the performers become further removed from their semi-inhabited background, they move closer to the audience. One is able to recognise the mise-en-scène of the gallery space, in which projected mediated performers are «tricking»[2] the viewer into thinking they are in a live space. It is at this point that the intermedial may be experienced: experienced from a phenomenological perspective.

The fade is a tool that is traditionally used in both the live and mediatized spheres, but in this work it emphasises the differences between the live and mediatized media: with each fade-out/fade-in the viewer questions further the relationship between the media and the ways in which the practices attempt to communicate by using the same device.

As well as recognising the structural exhibition choice of the gallery space, the work challenges the relationships between art and spectator in other structural ways: the images are projected and have been pre-recorded using a lens, but at no point is the lens used to alter the perspective, as is traditional in most moving-image work:

> By fixing the camera the directors have abdicated the power to suggest where the audience should focus their attention, and by providing four screens and the freedom to move around the gallery they have re-instated the viewer's ability to choose where to look at any point. In this respect, the piece aligns itself more with live dance performance than with film. (Cowie in Aggiss & Cowie, 2006: 124)

In filmmaking, it is typically the production that dictates the material viewed, whereas in live performance it is typically the viewer that has choice of perspective. The confusion of these media in *Men in the Wall* blurs the boundaries between production and reception:

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2. This is meant in the way that Gunning (2005) discusses illusion in early cinema, as «exhibitionist», directly influenced from Theatre.

> In *Men in the wall*, the performers are somehow attempting to break into the viewer's real space – they even appear to be aware of them.
> Warren: «I saw them again»,
> Holger: «Who?»
> Jeddi: «He means his bloody ghosts»,
> Holger: «What ghosts?»
> Warren: «The ones with the green and red eyes».
> (Aggiss and Cowie, 2006: 124)

This self-reflexive comment places the performers within a shared space with the viewer. The comments by the performers deconstruct the spaces between them and their boxes, through dialogue with each other, bridging the spaces between performer and audience through recognition, and interrogating the spaces between the live and the mediatized because of this. This approach resonates with the artistic perspectives adopted by Classical Hollywood Cinema and the work of the Avant-Garde film-makers and it does this by working with the gap. If the Classical Hollywood approach was to promote a suspension of disbelief, whilst the Avant-Garde adopted what are generally associated with Brechtian approaches, then *Men in the Wall* exploits the gap in-between the two. Their performance seems to acknowledge the two approaches, but uses the effect of the gap differently by simultaneously creating an illusion and drawing attention to the fact that it is not real at the same time. This works like a fade between the two approaches: the viewer is partly submerged in the world of the work and the work partly invades the space of the spectator.[3]

The performers are only able to inhabit the viewing space minimally because we are aware of their boxed confinement; they are a part of a projection from which they seem to be detached. At this point, we too become aware of our own boxed confinement within the gallery space – the white box in which we have joined the performance. The space itself is in the process of fading between the traditional white gallery space and the blackness of the cinematic or theatrical zones.

A summary in regards to the boundaries then: the boundaries of the mediatized and the «live» performance are blurred for several reasons. *Men in the Wall* appears to use an «Exhibitionist» (Gunning, 2005: 39) style to engage with audiences. The performers seemingly acknowledge the audience, and the spaces in which the performers operate are neither those of traditional filmic space or theatre. The spheres of the mediatized, but perceived to be live, body are complicated again by a further mediation achieved through application of 3-d

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3. Tom Gunning (2005) discusses the influence of early cinema on the Hollywood system, questioning notions of primitive representation and emphasising the role that technology plays in the development and the reading of the work.

digital technology. It would appear that this work moves through spheres: limbs seem physically to move closer to the viewer, challenging the concept of space: «When a live dancer stretches her hand toward you, you don't really think "that hand is getting closer to me" – when a 3-d film performer does, you do» (Cowie in Aggiss & Cowie, 2006: 123).

Meike Wagner (2006: 131) states that «The phenomenological perspective describes the spectator as a *seeing and being seen body*», and although in this case the performers are not actually seeing the spectator, it would appear that the technology and the processes of multiple layers of mediation contribute to an effect of *liveness* (Auslander, 1999) and as a result present the viewer within an experience that is not quite the same as watching a purely mediatized work. The invasion of the viewing space by the bodies of the projected performers is disruptive in as much as it makes one question the space in which the limbs that appear to protrude exist. The dissolve of the bodies from one space to another contaminates without actually having left the mediatized space. The bodies are at once present and absent in a space that the viewer may feel detached from and consumed within. In this, we are reminded of a Derridean thought that is useful to explain something that seems to exist through the oozing of technological boundaries and space: «[t]he interval of a spacing and temporalizing that puts off until later what is presently denied, the possible that is presently impossible» (Derrida, 1973: 129).

The boundaries between performance, film and spectator are challenged by the effects and the choices about exhibition - by the «staging», or the mise-en-scène of the environment in which the work is placed; furthermore, Aggiss and Cowie (2006: 1-2) refer to themselves as «maverick hybrids… teaching students that fall between the floorboards». This comment acknowledges the spaces between the disciplines, and perhaps the space is a «lack» of space: A lack in a sense because it is undefined – neither occupying a consistent physical space or a philosophical one; yet occupying an «in-between» space. The space that is acknowledged here by the practitioners is one that we can associate with the spaces of intermediality: intermediality is *in* and *amongst* the space with the viewer, the material, the idea and the media representation. It is the pre-fix, inter, that suggests the notion of «in-between» space.

Theorists such as Spielmann (2001: 55-61) refer to intermediality as a space for collision and exchange and Fornas (2002: 94) compares the space in terms of boundaries and crossings. I refer to intermediality as a process between artists, materials, ideas, exhibition and audience. The intermedial researcher is one that moves between disciplines: there is a theory of antidisciplinarity that can be attached to intermediality because to be too rooted in one's own discipline can destroy the processes of collaboration and intermedial practice. As we have seen, it has been suggested by theorists that intermediality is a crossing, a

boundary, a gap, another space. In practical terms intermediality is not fixed within a discipline; instead it is a varied approach, acknowledging the spaces and the boundaries of the work. It is an approach that transcends and moves beyond existing notions and boundaries, often within several disciplines, to challenge the language and the exhibition space of work in an attempt to devise pragmatic tools and develop the language in which we communicate.

The main element behind intermedial practice is the notion of process and how the work has grown, which reminds us of the Deleuzian notion of «living» within the film;[4] within intermedial practice there is a sense of «being» through process. So, how far can we go to interrogate the idea that intermediality is actually *being*, whereas interdisciplinarity and multimediality appear to *be*?

Intermedial work has within its fundamental «being» the notions of collision and remediation, blending and blurring, overlapping and crossing that ultimately become a being of work, the work, the work as a whole. On the other hand, multi- and interdisciplinarity are about fixed borders, separations, controlled disciplines, areas working within already understood and existing frameworks. If these are put together to form one work, they merely *appear* to be one work, and separations remain because the work has not been considered intermedially through idea and process.

Although we can start as practitioners from a particular disciplined perspective, when it comes to collaboration, a certain breaking down of this perspective and discipline is required, and a cross-disciplinary attitude to jargon and terminology that enables a new set of pragmatic tools to provide new creative and discursive languages. If we approach collaboration from a platform that is too rooted, we sometimes need to dig up the roots in order to move in new directions, rather like a plant that has outgrown its pot.

This takes us to how the work is formed and in-formed: the product can not exist intermedially if the process has not been an intermedial one. Intermedial work exists both as and within a framework of process and exhibition, and through form and in formation it becomes one work, existing as one life. It lives within its architectural space as a mollusc lives within its house space. This does not abolish boundaries between media but it does suggest that, for working practices, the project/object should be conceived, worked through and processed in synthesis, and that this will require a creative and discursive understanding between collaborators. The space of medial confusion in which intermediality can be positioned gives collaborators the opportunity to develop ways of working by creating new languages and methodological processes.

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4. Deleuze (2004: 40) discusses «living» in the film in relation to *Man with a Movie Camera* in which he describes how montage «enters into the filming, in the intervals occupied by the camera-eye (the cameraman who follows, runs, enters, exits: in short, life in the film)».

Vivian Sobchack (2004: 184) uses the terms «home», «house» and «prison-house» to explain the relationships one has with one's body. She explains that the way we consider the body depends upon whether we live «as or in ourselves». If one lives *as* oneself then one's physical presence is oneself; if one lives *in* oneself, then this insinuates that one's physical presence is not actually oneself, but merely an impression, or an appearance of oneself. The body is being used as a resource for the existing self rather than being the existing self.

I would like to suggest that this phenomenological approach can also go some way to describe the intermedial, in particular the process and how the work is constructed. The metaphorical image of the mollusc or snail's shell was one that inspired a working methodology – the body of the work must «exist». Is it an intermedial practice or does it claim to be? Are we living as a snail or are we living in the shell?

The trace of the mollusc metaphorically speaks of the practitioner and the process. The evidence that remains of the process speaks of a journey that is travelled through practical and theoretical experiences. The snail mollusc can never be without its trace; it is always a part of it and always connected to it. The journey of the snail can be traced in the same way that the process of the art always remains, as a palimpsest on canvas, through art history books and as a metaphorical trace in cultural references, discourses and thought. The moving image within the gallery space operates as a visual trace, the visual movement that propels within the shell, including the gallery on a metaphorical journey as it becomes part of the work. The work exists within the context of both the architectural space and the viewing space. Derrida uses the word «trace» to explain the relationship between absence and presence. The suggestion that what is neither completely absent nor present remains as a trace (Collins and Mayblin, 2000: 70) is a useful metaphor for understanding the process between practitioners and their work, allowing a trace of the process to exist in the product, and a trace of the product in formation in the process:

> The form of an intermedia artwork is thus defined then not only by collision but also by the exchange and transformation of elements that come from different media, such as painting, photography, film, video and other electronic media. Intermedia therefore is a formal category of exchange. It signifies an aesthetic encompassment of both form and content. (Spielmann, 2001: 59)

Spielmann suggests that the media forms themselves are revealed within the contextual meaning of intermedia. The intermedial space is revealed within the practical use of the media forms and the housing space of the work. Metaphorically, the practitioner reveals a trace similar to the technological trace that can be seen as processes of remediation, as outlined by Bolter and Grusin (2001). The trace

represents a layer like a palimpsest, not totally removed, yet not always fully visible as it becomes replaced by newer methodologies and new techniques.

This notion of contamination[5] raises questions about the purity of art, though in structural terms, in any notion of contamination there is an assumption of purity; this contradicts Bolter and Grusin and other theorists who suggest that media is remediated, a process which rejects the idea of the pure. Derrida uses the word «contamination» as part of the process of deconstruction; his theory acknowledges that «certain characteristics of philosophy and literature might remain, but they won't be allowed an assured, overarching mastery of what is written and how it is read» (Collins and Mayblin, 2000: 100). It is possible to apply Derrida's ideas about writing and philosophy to the intermedial space: through the deconstruction of traditional artistic boundaries there is a contamination of the traditional spaces and a challenge to the ways in which work is made and received and discussed in terms of language.

My final thoughts turn to the temporality of intermediality: the intermedial point when the media is in transition, a state in which it is not quite something else, it is not complete or unfinished: it is a transition; it is a process:

> [...] the intermedial links to the «not-yet» not only as a hybrid form that cannot yet be determined, but also as a temporal ex-tension that is always only provisionally realized in the happening of an instant. (Wurth, 2006: 2)

Wurth's use of the word «ex-tension» is particularly useful because of the connections with time. The fade or dissolve is often used in cinematic language to insinuate a passing of time. The fade can also be read as the tension point between one space and another, the area that controls when one space is exited and when another is entered. The fade at this point can be manipulated to fall in favour of the previous space or the next – it is at once present and absent.

The fade however can be read as the fulcrum that balances the space that controls the transitional. It is not an empty space, as in a gap, because it is a point that works as a present ex-tension of the previous and the next spaces. The fade is an ex-tension: it is a trace moment that can extend in both the *spaces that were* and the *space that is about to happen*.

The space therefore is such that one is exiting and exi(s)ting: one moment an experience is transgressing towards another instance that currently is not quite in existence, and only exists through the trace of the technology. This is rather like the idea of pre-mediation. At the point of the fade the in-formation is captured in a fragile exi(s)ting that could return to its previous form or reveal its

5. For a discussion of confusion and contamination see Wurth (2006) and Higgins (1981 [1966]).

next presence to the viewer, who in turn is sat in-between but always within the last and next image. Presently absent from the previous and the next, and in eager anticipation of the present. Between: Exited: Exi(s)ted. The fade is the Intermedial Exi(s)ting.

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REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS CULTURALES DE LA UNIVERSITAT JAUME I / *CULTURAL STUDIES JOURNAL OF UNIVERSITAT JAUME I*

Reseñas / Book Reviews

Intermediality in Theatre and Performance. By **Freda Chapple& Chiel Kattenbelt** (eds.). Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2006. Pp. 266. ISBN: 978-90-420-1629-3 / 90-420-1629-9 Pb. € 54 / US$ 81.
Reviewed by Asunción López-Varela, Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Intermediality, associated historically with the exchangeability of expressive means and aesthetic conventions between different art and media forms, is a dominant trend in the arts and the media of the twentieth century due mostly to the emergence of hypermedia paradigms. We can speak of the fusion of different arts and media into new forms, the representation conventions operating in several media, and/or the representation of one medium in another medium. In *Remediation,* Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (1999: 45) argued that although remediation existed as artistic practice as far back as the Renaissance (a time when artists began to give their viewing public an access to their work from all angles and corners) it can be said to have become a «defining characteristic of new digital media». The gaps or in-between spaces among different media formats allow «a process of transformation of thought and processes where something different is formed through performance» (Chapple & Kattenbelt, 2006: 12).

Notions of immediacy and transparency are explored in Chapple and Kattenbelt's volume in order to direct them towards the importance of corporeality. Thus, Andy Lavender studies immediacy in relation to *mise en scène* and the production of pleasure in contemporary mixed media theatre productions; and Ralf Remshardt engages with the exploration of remediation and acting in silent cinema. Of particular interest is Boenisch's theoretical framework which places the emphasis on medium as «an agency or means of doing something» (105), and which underpins the issue of media as cultural artifacts since, as Boenisch notes «media are by no means a neutral means to communicate or express something» (105). Boenisch quotes Benjamin's emphasis on the role of technology as fundamental to human perception: «the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence. The manner in which human sense perception is organized, the medium in which it is accomplished, is determined not only by nature but by historical circumstances as well» (105). Boenisch also quotes McLuhan's assertion that «the use of any kind of medium or extension of man alters the patterns of interdependence

among people, as it alters the ratios among our senses» (106), in an attempt to show that the connection between «media to the body and the senses of their users» (106). He goes on to discuss Kittler's (1992) merging of McLuhan and Foucault, and Bolter and Grusin's (1999) notion of remediation: «a medium is that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of the real» (106). Thus, as Boenisch notes,

> it seems that what is new about the new media is not based on any inherent individuality guaranteeing their difference from old media. Instead, the new media build into the new format some of the existent features of the old; and in doing this they redefine the old media, who continue to survive very well in the updated versions (107),

and he goes on to add that «from this perspective, rather than a linear line of evolutionary progress, media history resembles an ever extending spiral; each seemingly radical progress in media technological development turns out as yet another remediation» (108). Boenisch's discussion brings forth the theme of representation, establishing a hierarchy between factual and fictional worlds and assuming a mimetic relationship between the actual thing and its mediatised representation in which the latter appears as «a "second order reality", whether as idealist representation of a crude reality in terms of the beautiful and the sublime, as a realist rendering of the actual thing, or as a surreal invention of blatant Science Fiction» (109). In all cases, as he argues, the experience, whether factual or fictional, is felt in the same way because it is authentic, and this «authenticity of any medial world-making includes a significant *spatial effect*, as "making worlds" means creating spaces […] some […] quite literal, and others rather metaphorical» (110). He also notes the *sensorial layer*, the phenomenological experience added to the semiotic reality he terms *performance*, and which he tries to ground on the medium of theatre in the last part of his discussion, by returning to Manovich's notion of *transcoding* as «the translatability of virtually any kind of data, allowing blending various types of audiovisual information, and to store, access, display, exchange, and replicate them by means of a single machine» (Manovich, 2001: 45). Boenisch's reading of Manovich links transcoding to Benjamin's (1968) notion of technological reproduction and the emphasis on the semiotics of perception and theatrical reproduction beyond original presence. However, he fails to make the transition from sensorial to any bodily or corporeal experience in a convincing way, something betrayed in his choice of terms such as «observer» rather than the more agentive «user» (or even «participant»), or allusions such as «third meaning, attraction, and magic moment […]» (115).

Christopher Balme's paper analyses work by Michel de Certeau (1984) and Chambers' (1993) reading of Hosokawa (1984), all works that focus on perception and the role of the observer or «Walkman», as Chambers names it. The

main thesis can be summarized in Chambers' words:

> In the manifest refusal of sociability the Walkman nevertheless reaffirms participation in a shared environment. It directly partakes in the changes in the horizon of perception that characterize the late twentieth century, and which offers a world fragmenting under the mounting media accumulation of intersecting signs, sounds and images. (119)

In referring to the role of audio theatre, Balme explains that «an important effect of this walkman-induced or directed theatre was the almost complete effacement of the narrative in the traditional diegetic sense» (123). Thus, he adds «the overall effect of audio theatre is to intensify spatial perception in the sense of basic physical orientation» (123). Balme's argument moves one step closer towards an exploration of the corporeal implications of remediation. His exploration of *spatial metonymy*, following Lehmann's (2000) work contributes indeed to «a destabilization of borders between work and frame, perception and participation» (123), but unfortunately it stops there. Yet again, Meike Wagner's contribution takes this argument one step further with an exploration of puppet theatre and a new definition of intermediality as «a matrix, which shapes and produces theatrical bodies through a negotiation between the *discourse of the body*, the *spectator* and concepts of *materiality*», a definition that, unlike Boenisch's and Balme's work «does not subscribe to semiotic ideas of mediality as the signifying code of a technical apparatus» (128). Rather, she investigates

> the intersections of phenomenology and media theory, where theorists working in these fields consider corporeal perception as an interplay between the perceiving and the perceived, and thus introduce the spectator as a corporeally involved perceiver rather than only as a decoding and signifying mind whose position, traditionally, was to interpret a pre-existing message. (128)

Wagner makes use of Merleau-Ponty's (1945, 1964, 1986) works, where he develops an «ontology of seeing and flesh, which contradicts hermetic concepts of subjectivity, Ego and presence» (128), grounding inter-subjectivity in a dialectic between what is seen and unseen (the invisible), the familiar and the non-familiar, «the reversibility of seeing and being seen, perceiving and being perceived», a conclusion that «is always beyond one's reach, in this never-ending interplay of differences». Echoes of Merleau-Ponty's work can be found in Paul de Man's (1979, 1983) work and in postmodernist critical approaches in general. Wagner moves on to Tholen's (1995) own reading of Ponty in relation to Paul Virilio's work, which postulates that vision machines could accelerate and substitute human perception. Wagner notes it, distinguishes the visible from the invisible and offers no fixed perspective; but rather one «that can be shifted by the demands of the other» (130) becomes more relevant to our interests since

subjectivity is also constituted by non-symbolic forces (body, acts, feelings, drives) and, due to its self-reflexive consciousness, capable of strategic self-fashioning and responsible acting. For this reason the subject-agency interferes in existing codes and texts, employing them as scenery for engaging in the symbolic interaction with others and her or his own gaze. The subject thus absorbs foreign texts, utterances, and signifying systems of the past and present, but also transforms and revises them.

Language and semiotic theories of the past century have been important in conceptualizing the relation between subject and object, capturing the mutual construction of speaker and cultural system at the point of enunciation without resort to the freedom-determinism binary of ontologies that inscribe subjects and objects. It is in this sense that Chapple and Kattenbelt's volume is of particular value.

As Wagner recognizes, «technical apparatus […] set a constant limit and cut off a well-demarcated invisible» (130). We need to seek new epistemological theories that ground vision, the construction of intersubjectivity and its cultural implications *clearly* in the material substrate that now characterizes most of our human-machine interactions. Finding third-spaces, in betweens «intermedial interplay of the border between the own and the other» (136), between puppet theatre and Haraway's (1985) cyborg machines might be useful in order to frame intermediality in a historiographical, and thus, a cultural way. However, we continue to fall short of a radical theory that will allow us to make sense of identity and its representations in the age of digital machines, of «the twin preoccupations of contemporary media: the transparent presentation of the real and the enjoyment of the opacity of media themselves» (137). Like us, Robin Nelson argues that «an emergent habitus of virtual spaces, which afford experiences that are in part embodied, is shifting the phenomenal relationship with machines» (139). Thus, Nelson turns to Bourdieu's (1979) notion of *habitus* to propose a hypothesis grounded in the changing «disposition whereby viewers *engage* with the apparatus - to be in some sense *present within the medium* -while at the same time, being *consciously aware of the medium* with which they are engaging» (139), coming as close as possible to Bolter and Grusin's notion of *hypermedium*. Nelson's research has the advantage of grounding the study of the intermediality of *screen spaces* in cultural studies. The author speaks of

> a continuum of increasing depths of immersion, ranging from a temporary suspension of disbelief in traditional television fiction, through a deeper immersion in a role-playing computer game, to a full simulation of an unreal world experienced as if directly through sense-perception but in fact through the wiring of a virtual reality head-set. (139)

Local beliefs, values, and practices can no longer be held as absolute or as exclusive, at the expense of others, where problems become shared problems and, hence, difficult to ignore. «*Images have been transformed* from static representations of

the world *into spaces in which events happen that involve and engage people to various degrees in physical space*» (148).

To sum up, the collection of articles edited by Chapple & Kattenbelt shows the need for further research in the question of performance, audience participation and corporeality in intermedial exchanges. This excellent volume points towards the need for a new hermeneutic theory for identity, one that no longer underscores the agency of the different media formats.

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CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND REPRESENTATION. CLR is an annual scholarly publication devoted to the discipline of Cultural Studies, whose scope is aimed at the international academic community. Each issue deals monographically with a relevant aspect of the representation of culture in its various manifestations (social, political, educational, artistic, historical, linguistic, etc.), encouraging interdisciplinary and innovative approaches in the field of cultural research. The Journal is committed to academic and research excellence by publishing relevant and original material that meets high scientific standards.

Submission of a paper will be taken to imply that it is unpublished and is not being considered for publication elsewhere. Articles will undergo an independent evaluation by two external referees, who will advise the Editors on the suitability of their publication.

Publication elsewhere of an article included in *Culture, Language and Representation* requires that the author acknowledge that it has first appeared in the Journal. If in doubt, authors are advised to contact The Editors.

1) Manuscript submissions

- Contributions may be written in English or Spanish.
- The length of the articles should not exceed 20 pages, 6000 words approximately.
- Book reviews will be 3-5 pages (900 to 1500 words aprox.).
  - Reviews should include: full title of book; full name of author(s) in the same order as they appear in the book; place of publication; publisher; year of publication; number of pages (e.g. xii + 234); ISBN; price (if known).
  - Reviewers are encouraged to send two copies of their review to the Publishers of the book reviewed.
- Submissions should be made in a 3.5" diskette (WORD or RTF document for PC), accompanied by 2 double-spaced printouts.

2) Personal information

Personal and contact information of the contributor must appear on a separate sheet, including the following: *a*) Article title; *b*) Full name of contributor; *c*) Institutional affiliation; *d*) Contact address; telephone number; fax.; e-mail address.

3) Layout

- Manuscripts should be double-spaced and justified throughout, using Times New Roman, 12 points fonts.
- Footnotes will be single-spaced, using Times New Roman, 10 points fonts.
  Avoid the use of footnotes to accommodate bibliographical references.

4) Quotations

- Use quotation marks in the following sequence (“ ‘ ’ ”) for quotes not exceeding 4 lines.
- Quotations longer than 4 lines should be indented in a new paragraph.
- References must be incorporated in the body of the text, using the following model: Said (1993: 35); (Bhabha, 1990: 123).
- When reference is made to more than one author in a parenthesis, these should be separated by a semicolon and arranged chronologically.
- Textual omissions will be indicated by suspension points in square brackets [...]; authorial commentary in a quoted text will also appear in square brackets.

5) Bibliographical references

- All works cited in the text must appear in the “Works cited” section.
- Surname and initial of the author(s) should appear in SMALL CAPS and BOLD type.

a) Books

SAID, E. W. (1978): *Orientalism*, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

b) Two or more authors

DU GAY, P.; S. HALL; L. JANES; H. MACKAY; K. NEGUS (1997): *Doing Cultural Studies: the Story of the Sony Walkman*, London, Sage / The Open University.

c) Book by an editor

HALL, S.; D. HOBSON; A. LOWE; P. WILLIS (eds.) (1980): *Culture, Media, Language*, London, Hutchinson.

d) Article in a Journal or Periodical

NADIN, M. (1984): «On the Meaning of the Visual», *Semiotica*, 52: 45-56.

BATE, J. (1999): «A genious, but so ordinary», *The Independent*, 23 January, 5.

e) Chapter or section in a collective book

HALL, S. (1980): «Encoding/Decoding» in HALL, S.; D. HOBSON; A. LOWE; P. WILLIS (eds.) (1980): *Culture, Media, Language*, London, Hutchinson. 128-138.

When the collective book already appears in the “Works cited”, a short reference might be used:

HALL, S. (1992): «The West and the Rest» in HALL, S.; B. GIEBEN (eds.) (1992: 25-37).

f) Year

When there are two or more works by the same author with the same publishing year, they should be listed adding a correlative letter in italics, separated by a space from the year.

Eagleton, Terry (1976 *a*): *Criticism and Ideology*, London, New Left Books.

— (1976 *b*): *Marxism and Literary Criticism*, London, Methuen.

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Contribuciones para CLR

Volúmenes 7-8

La revista *Cultura, Lenguaje y Representación* lanza su propuesta de petición de artículos para los volúmenes de mayo 2009 y mayo 2010.

El volumen de mayo de 2009 es una convocatoria abierta de artículos originales que aborden temáticas relevantes dentro del área del análisis cultural: las humanidades, las artes, literatura, cine, educación, lingüística y comunicación, historia cultural, antropología, sociología, etc. Se aceptan artículos, tanto centrados en la especulación teórica, como los análisis de estudios de casos o textos específicos, siempre que la orientación metodológica de los mismos sea de carácter cultural.

El volumen de mayo de 2010 abordará la temática de **«La cultura popular en la era de la globalización»**.

Para cualquier consulta puede ponerse en contacto con los directores:

José Luis Blas (blas@fil.uji.es)
José Ramón Prado (prado@ang.uji.es)

Los artículos deberán ajustarse a las Normas de Publicación de la revista, disponibles en su página web:

www.clr.uji.es

Dirección de envío de originales en español (dos copias impresas y documento WORD o RTF):

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Campus Riu Sec
Universitat Jaume I
12071 Castellón
Spain

Fecha límite para la presentación de originales:

Artículos para el volumen de mayo de 2009: 30 de octubre, 2008.

Artículos para el volumen de mayo de 2010: 15 de septiembre, 2009.

Call for contributions CLR

Volumes 7-8

Journal *Culture, Language and Representation* seeks contributions for its 2009 and 2010 volumes.

The 2009 volume is an open call for original articles that engage in any relevant area of cultural analysis: the Arts, literature, film, education, linguistics and communication, cultural history, anthropology, sociology, etc. Theoretical discussions as well as empirical analysis of specific study cases or texts are welcome.

The 2010 issue will be devoted to **«Popular Culture in the Age of Globalization»**.

Articles and book reviews must follow the Journal's Guidelines for Publication, available from the Journal's web page:

www.clr.uji.es

For any enquiries, you may contact the Editors:

José R. Prado (prado@ang.uji.es)

Please send two hard copies and a WORD or RTF document of your completed manuscript to:

José R. Prado
Dept. Estudis Anglesos
Campus Riu Sec
Universitat Jaume I
12071 Castellón
Spain

Deadlines for submissions:

Articles for the 2009 issue should reach the Editors no later than 30th October 2008.

Articles for the 2010 issue should reach the Editors before 15th September 2009.