ScreenStage Performance: Hybridity, Perception and Enstrangement

Abstract

This Practice as Research (PaR) proposes to articulate creative strategies within a hybrid intermedial form, known as ScreenStage Performance (SSP), integrating stage performance with screening. The strategies aim to disrupt customary perceptual patterns by means of intermedial approaches to composition as narration, invoking an awareness of these perceptions. The research integrates philosophical thinking with the creation and analysis of two ScreenStage performances – *The LIFT* (2021) and *SEASONS* (2019, 2022) – and the findings from extensive practice laboratories. The thesis posits the practice of ScreenStage as a subgenre in the intermedial field prevalent in the performing arts. ScreenStage practice attempts to represent the mediation and extension of human action through digital media and the virtual realms by means of conceptual hybridity. The thesis articulates the insights of a practitioner by applying new ways of semiotic thinking about intermediality in terms of composition, action, narration and 'enstrangement' (Shklovsky, 1919). SSP is considered and analysed as a system for signification and communication.

Using PaR methodology (Midgelow, 2019), the thesis attempts to articulate the epistemological knowledge of SSP from the perspective of the practitioner as an artistic-researcher and the first observer. It addresses a gap in the semiotic discourse of the performing arts posed by a lack of research on both the perspective of the practitioner and the signification strategies embodied by intermedial practices and provides new perspective and terminology for dance analysis. The thesis discusses the composition and physical action through movement notation (Eshkol, 1958-2007) and physical theatre theories (Mirodan 2015, Arendell, 2020). The analysis of the narration strategies yields a unique reconfiguration of the politics of the hybrid text, which stems from the development of distinctive sorts of enstrangement strategies.

The theoretical grounding of the thesis provides a particular perspective which negotiates phenomenological perception theories (Noë, 2004; Sobchack, 2016) with semiotics and media theories (Shklovsky, 1919; McLuhan, 1964; Todorov, 1977; Auslander, 2008; Pethő, 2018; Cobley, 2021) in a complementary manner. The three main theories of different fields by Alva Noë, Marshall McLuhan and Viktor Shklovsky, used to base the argument, are consistent in terms of their philosophical attempt to explore human perception as a total phenomenon. Namely, they are all interested in the activation of perception through reflective processes (Noë, 2017: 213), which act against "automatization" (Shklovsky, 2015: 162) and "numbness" (McLuhan, 2001: 6). The PaR develops phenomenological and semiotic discourse as another form of intermediality and provides creative practical and theoretical means of analysis and artmaking for practitioners, researchers, teachers and scholars.