

Synopsis – Digital Aesthetics

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Introduction:

Theater is a traditional art form, which like its siblings is undergoing a rapid transformation in relation to the digital evolution. Unlike the very common form of digital art within the installation art genre, the performance genre puts the artist in the middle of the stage. The role of the audience is simply to sit in their pre-booked seats, and let the entertainment come to them. New forms of digital performances still run with the same practices as older performances. Buy a ticket, sit in the back in the darkness with absolute anonymity, the stage does all the work etc. But what has changed since the digital age began? How do people react to these new forms of presentations? What do they do for the performance? Do they make performances more vivid? Inclusive?

Methods of investigation:

We wish to investigate the matter by several methods. Our group consists of some members who have seen the actual play, so 1st hand experience will be presented. Another entrance we will use is professional reviews of the show. We will analyze the material and cross it with an older and more classic performance. We are going to use theory from both classical performance as well as hyper-performances, and compare the two regarding the sound and visuals, and see where they put their emphasis. What we are hoping for, is a clear difference in the two; a deeper level of visual understanding and inclusion in the latter.

Case-study:

We will watch two performances, and cross them against each other. The first show, which unfortunately is no longer running, is called **"4:48 Psychosis"**, and was being performed on the Royal Theater in Copenhagen..

"4.48 Psychosis" is a play written by Sarah Kane, an English dramatist. The play, which was the last from the young playwright, before her death in 1999, stands as the shortest and most fragmented amongst her work. This very intense play was originally performed in 2000, at the Royal Court and directed by James Macdonald.

In 2002 the play premiered in Denmark at the Betty Nansen Theatre with Trine Dyrholm as the leading character and experienced huge success. In 2010 the play was reconstructed in an updated version by Jacob F. Schokking at the Royal Danish Theatre, again with Trine Dyrholm as the leading role.

"4:48 Psychosis" is a highly visual and sound demanding play which makes use of both digital soundscapes and visual projections to entrance the audience in a tense and emotional state.

The play is a traditional monologue, but makes heavy use of pre-recorded video

and sound. Trine Dyrholm is alone on stage, acting as though she is in a psychosis. This is helped by two projectors that are projecting an image below and behind her. One of the obvious effects this creates, is that when she is in the psychosis you see eerie illumination and animations, and when she is “normal” again, you see and hear her doctor speaking to her. Other effects the play makes use of is when she is lying in her bed in the hospital, all the audience sees is a black room with Trine Dyrholm lying on the floor, in a white rectangle formed by light. A very strong effect.

The other play, the one we will compare against, is a compilation play, or a tour de force, of dancing. The play is called **Dans2Go**, and is a dynamic performance with both classic and modern dance. It includes both Tjajkovsky and Metallica, and takes the audience from classic serenades by Balanchine to more modern performances as “Jord” by Jorma Uotinen. It is finished with a virtuos Grand Pas de Deux from the classical repertoire.

Research question:

How does the use of digital projections, sound and speech contribute to the audiences perception of a modern theatre play? In 4:48 Psychosis you see the use of projections to try and situate the leading character in different stages of her mind. Besides the mind stages, it is also used to situate the character in different physical places, as mentioned the hospital bed and the doctor talking to her. How are these digital projections, sounds and images captured by the audience, compared to the the Dans2Go, which greatly depends on the use of classical remedies and classical dancing?

Works Cited

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Links

Link til vores case:

http://kglteater.dk/Alle_forestillinger/Gaestespil_10_11/4_48_Psykose.aspx

Om forfatteren Sarah Kane:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Kane