

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS?
VISUAL MEDIA USE AND INTERMEDIALITY IN
SHAKESPEARE PRODUCTIONS

By

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on archive material, reviews and personal observation, this thesis examines the use of visual media in stage productions of Shakespeare's plays. Utilizing examples from the period between 1905 and 2007, the thesis focuses on intermedial productions, explores the media use in Shakespeare productions, and asks why certain Shakespeare plays seem to be more adaptable to the inclusion of visual media. Chapter one considers the technology and societal shifts affecting the theatre art and the audience and Klaus Bruhn Jensen's three level definition of intermediality which provides a framework for the categorizing the media usage within Shakespeare productions. Chapter two discusses the presentational nature and history of western theatre and the commonly incorporated visual media sources as foundation for the study of the visual media incorporation. Chapter three focuses on the presentation of time and space within the theatre and media sources, and the incorporation of pre-cinematic effects and film within the theatre production in the first half of the twentieth century. Chapter four considers Jensen's first level of intermediality dealing with "the combination and adaptation of separate *material vehicles* of representation and reproduction, sometimes called *multimedia*," which encompasses the use of non-diegetic projected media as scenery or the presentation of memories or dreams (2008, p. 2385). Chapter five outlines Jensen's second level of intermediality which "denotes communication through several *sensory modalities* at once," which

allows the narrative use of media sources to presentation of multiple perspectives and simultaneous situations through diegetic media(2008, p. 2385). Two types of Shakespeare productions fall into the third level of Jensen's definition of intermediality, concerning "the interrelations between media as *institutions* in society, as addressed in technological and economic terms such as convergence and conglomeration" those in which the live actors interact with the incorporated non-diegetic media, which I discuss in chapter six, and those which explore the societal relationship with media through the use and manipulation of diegetic media, which I discuss in chapter seven. (2008, p. 2385). Chapter eight concludes by revisiting the question of media incorporation in productions of Shakespeare's plays and considers the possible intermedial future of theatre and Shakespeare production.

DEDICATION

This work is lovingly dedicated to my family, without whose love, prayer, enduring support, and extreme *sacrifice* this work would not be possible.

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In the course of the thesis I reference Shakespeare's plays frequently. Although there are several good editions of Shakespeare, I have chosen 1998 *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, Eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, as my primary text for quotes, characters' names, and play structure.

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CHAPTER 1

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: MEDIA INCURSION IN SHAKESPEARE PRODUCTIONS

Visual Media Incorporation and Evolution

The incorporation of film, video and more recently, computer-generated elements in stage productions is not a new occurrence, and some media and theatre theorists, including Marshall McLuhan, Chiel Kattenbelt, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, and Philip Auslander, would consider the incorporation of such visual media elements in theatre productions as a natural evolution within western theatre, which reflects changes within the society, the arts, and the audience. The history and development of western theatre and visual media like cinema, television and digital environments seem to support this idea.

Evolution in art is contingent upon the human creators and viewers of the art, and their perception of the world around them. Societal changes affect both the citizens of that society and the arts created within the society, triggering aesthetic changes within each artistic genre and a changing audience perception of what constitutes art within the society. This phenomenon is explored by many philosophers, media theorists, and social critics. Walter Benjamin prefaces his essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” in *Illuminations*, with a quote from Paul Valéry’s work “The Conquest of Ubiquity” (“La Conquête de l’ubiquité”), in which Valéry explains that,

In all the arts there is a physical component which can no longer be considered or treated as it used to be, which cannot remain unaffected by our modern knowledge and power. For the last twenty years [1908-1928]¹ neither matter nor space nor time has been what it was from time immemorial. We must expect great innovations to transform the entire technique of the arts, thereby affecting artistic invention itself and perhaps even bringing about an amazing change in our very notion of art (Valéry 225).

One of the main tenets of Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" is that "During long periods of history, 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" (216). Within the essay Benjamin refers to the development of photography and the historical debate on the question of whether photography is an art. According to Benjamin, the theorists debated whether photography was an art but neglected the primary question of "whether the . . . invention of photography had not transformed the very nature of art" (220). He notes that the difficulties photography caused the traditional aesthetics were nothing compared to the problems film would later cause (220). With the development of film, the theoreticians continued to overlook the question of whether photography and film had changed the nature of art, instead concentrating their work on whether a recording medium can be considered art. Although the changing nature of art is

¹ "The Conquest of Ubiquity" ("La Conquête de l'ubiquité") was first published in *De la Musique avant toute chose* (Editions du Tambourinaire) in 1928.

introduced in Benjamin's essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," he ignores the question of the legitimacy of photography and film as an art and instead explores the effect of "mechanical reproduction" on art and society.

Marshall McLuhan furthers the idea of technology and media affecting society and changing audience perception. According to McLuhan each new technology or medium creates new stresses and needs with society and the audience (183). He goes so far as to consider media as an extension of who we are as a society and as individuals. Theatre theorist Mark Fortier outlines McLuhan's ideas succinctly when he states, "McLuhan calls the media 'extensions of man', implying [and in some instances stating] that new media extend our bodies, especially our sensory system: we hear, see and touch in new ways because of radio, television [and] computers" (178)². McLuhan sees this extension of our sensory systems as an implosion. In the introduction to the first edition of his work *Understanding Media*, McLuhan states,

After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary and mechanical technologies, the Western world is imploding. During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned. Rapidly, we approach the final phase of the extensions of man—the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and

² This idea is the very foundation of McLuhan's book *Understanding Media*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1964. References to this effect can be found on pages 3, 7, 21, 46, 68, 182-183, etc, of McLuhan's text.

corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and our nerves by the various media (3).

McLuhan considers “media . . . an extension of our physical and nervous systems”, going so far as to consider changes in technology as a type of organic evolutionary process (21, 68, 182-183.) He feels the medium and humanity share a reciprocal bond. “The medium is the message,” declares McLuhan, who goes on to explain that “the ‘message’ of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs” (8). Each new technology has an effect on society, because “it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action” (McLuhan 9). Since technology is an extension of our physical being, by extension transformations that technology initiates in society represent a type of organic evolution; however, the human/technology relationship cycle appears to gain speed with the addition of each new technology. McLuhan explains the vicious cycle:

Response to the increased power and speed of our own [technologically] extended bodies is one which engenders new extensions. Every technology creates new stresses and needs in the humlan [sic] beings who have engendered it. The new need and the new technological response are born of our embrace of the already existing technology—a ceaseless process (183).

McLuhan expands on this idea of media and technology evolution as a biological evolution, stating : “For media, as an extension of our physical and nervous systems, constitute a world of biochemical interactions that must ever seek new equilibrium as new extensions occur” (202). So with each new medium or

technology which we develop, humanity must incorporate and adapt to the change caused by the new medium in order to reach equilibrium. This idea reinforces Benjamin's assertion that "the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence" (216).

It is a perpetual cycle of evolution. Each new technology or medium creates new stresses and needs within the society or audience (McLuhan 183). These stresses and needs create the necessary conditions for further innovation: new technologies or media built upon established media to meet the new needs, which ultimately leads to David Bolter and Richard A. Grusin's labelling of this model as "remediation" (313, 338-343).

Other theorists including Nicholas Vardac and Rudolf Arnheim anticipate McLuhan's identification of societal stresses and media remediation, specifically in the area of theatre and early film, which is understandable considering McLuhan's work on media seems prompted by the advent of television. In the preface to his work *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith*, Nicholas A.

Vardac notes:

The roots of a new art form are to be found in the sociological needs and tensions, in the spirit of the times, which sponsor its growth. This tension is so thoroughly woven into the cultural fabric that it can best be identified through its expression in the arts, in this case, in the related arts of theatre and of staging [the motion picture] (vvi).

Vardac's work focuses on the perceived connection or modeling of early cinema on the nineteenth and early twentieth century theatrical model. Psychologist and film theorist, Rudolf Arnheim, concedes that cinema employed a theatrical model

in *Film as Art*, explaining that “[t]he history of human ingenuity shows that almost every innovation goes through a preliminary phase in which the solution is obtained by the old method, modified or amplified by some new feature” (146).

In *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Bolter and Grunsin define “remediation,” at its most basic level, as a reworking or repurposing of elements or works of a medium within another medium. As noted remediation is common in the development and evolution of new media, and can take different forms including modifying of the existing material, absorbing another medium entirely, or improving or changing the method of representation. Bolter and Grusin suggest that, as an artistic practice, remediation dates back at least to the Renaissance (21), the practice probably dates back much farther, especially when considering McLuhan’s assertion that technological advances occur in response to tensions unfulfilled or created by previous technology and the evolutionary practice of modelling new technology on the old medium. In a sense, remediation can even be seen in the works of Shakespeare, as many of the plays are adapted from other sources.

McLuhan sees the evolution of media as a biological evolution, and as in biological evolution, each advance struggles first for survival and then for dominance: survival of the fittest. McLuhan states, “A new medium is never an addition to an old one, nor does it leave the old one in peace. It never ceases to oppress the older media until it finds new shapes and positions for them” (174). As the new technology, media or art equals or achieves cultural dominance over the old model, the older technology, media or art which served as a model will either fade to extinction or struggle to find a new position, often by means of

remediation of elements from the now culturally dominant technology, media or art. Bolter and Grusin suggest,

What remains strong in our culture today is the conviction that technology itself progresses through reform: that technology reforms itself. In our terms, new technologies or representation proceed by reforming or remediating earlier ones, while earlier technologies are struggling to maintain their legitimacy by remediating newer ones (352).

This process of evolutionary remediation, which adapts and creates using the older, established model, is natural easy to see and understand, but as Bolter and Grusin note, remediation works in the reverse as well, as older media remediate elements of the new form in an attempt “to maintain their legitimacy” (352).

Although, as Leo Braudy suggests, “a newer art can more comfortably embrace the methods of an older art than the other way around” (423), it is not uncommon to see the methods and techniques of newer forms expressed in the older media. As early as 1949 Vardac identifies theatre’s remediation of film in describing the similarity of the two forms as film began and developed into its own recognised artistic form. He explains, “... in these early years [1895-1910], the film and the stage were hardly differentiated from one another; the cinema frequently borrowed from the theatre, while the theatre, in an attempt to counter the new attraction, in its turn borrowed from the film” (xxvi). This and a later reference identify the “borrowing” from film as simply an effort to compete with film for the audience, but the implications are broader. Theatre remediated elements of the film medium to ensure its viability and legitimacy against the new culturally dominant medium.

Philip Auslander outlines what he sees as the historic pattern of remediation within the live and the mediatized form in his work *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*:

Initially, the mediatized form is modeled on the live form, but it eventually usurps the live form's position in the cultural economy. The live form then starts to replicate the mediatized form. . . . This historical dynamic does not occur in a vacuum, of course. It is bound up with the audience's perception and expectations, which shape and are shaped by technological change and the uses of technology influenced by capital investment (183-184).

As Auslander and Vardac indicate, remediation can work both ways with the established medium remediating the newer medium. Historically, Western theatre used first the oral and then the printed narratives as source material for production³. Film borrowed narrative material from print and theatre and adopted theatrical staging until developing its own narrative and artistic model. Theatre, in turn, borrowed from film in an effort to combat film's rise to cultural dominance. Television borrowed from theatre and film until developing into the culturally dominant medium, at which time, theatre and film borrowed from television, evolving and adapting to the prominence of the new medium and the changing expectations of the audience. The internet and other digital media are now having a profound effect on the culture and the audience, especially in the reception of multiple simultaneous events and hypertexts. Television, film, and theatre are now

³ Taking the concept one step further, Martin Meisel in *Reflections* outlines theatre's remediation of fine art and engraving within the stage picture.

remediating the Internet and other digital media which have gained cultural dominance.

Changes and advances in one artistic or visual medium affect the other arts and media. The collaborative nature and ability of western theatre to incorporate elements of other arts and media within the theatre production makes it particularly adaptable to the changing aesthetic. The nature of western theatre is one of inclusion, able to conscript the other arts into its service. In Chiel Kattenbelt's account, "Theatre is the only art capable of incorporating all other arts without being dependent on one of these in order to be theatre" (32). However, unlike those who believe that "as components of a theatre performance the individual arts lose their autonomy, and become a new art," Kattenbelt considers theatre performance "a *contexture* (a weaving of strands together to create a texture) as opposed to a *composition* of individual elements" (31). It is this inclusive nature or "hypermediacy," as Kattenbelt terms it, which allows theatre to adapt and evolve to meet the expectations and needs of the contemporary audience.

The phenomenon of changes within one medium or art effecting change in another can not only be seen in the effect of theatre's composite arts on the production, but also the effect of other media on theatre and the audience's reception and perception of stage performance, which will in turn result in a changing aesthetic. As new technological or media extensions are developed, we must seek new equilibrium individually, as a society, and, by extension, within media and the arts. W.B. Worthen observes that "Drama, dramatic performance and the ways we understand them are constantly changing under the pressure of new technologies (indoor theatres, the printing of plays, stage lighting, the

proscenium, film, digital media)” (2). Modern media affects the way in which drama is performed and the way we as audience members receive it. Given this artistic interaction, the incorporation of visual media, such as film, video elements, and computer-generated images (CGI), within modern theatre production is not surprising in this high-tech, digital-savvy society.

Visual Media in Shakespeare Production

The permeation of other visual media influences and techniques in theatre production is now so encompassing that to try to separate and examine the influences of any technological medium on theatre production would be a monumental task, akin to finding specific grains of sand on a vast beach. With the advent of new media and technology, human perception and audience expectations have changed, and theatre is incorporating remediation in order to establish equilibrium. Thus, the study of theatre, the visual arts, and audience perception, must include the consideration of the society and technological advances through which it evolved.

The present work focuses on the use of visual media, such as film, video, and computer-generated images (CGI), as an integral element of professional Shakespeare productions and question why certain Shakespeare plays seem to be more adaptable to the inclusion of visual media. This approach necessitates consideration of the history, movements and nature of western theatre and the commonly incorporated visual media sources, providing a foundation for the study of the visual media incorporation. Discussion of the history of theatre and visual media is not complete without consideration of technology and societal shifts

affecting the art and the audience. I will explore the various ways in which theatre incorporates visual media sources as a production tool, using professional productions of Shakespeare as examples. The exploration of visual media incorporation within professional Shakespeare productions considers how the media incorporation has evolved, which Shakespeare plays seem most adaptable to media incursion, and how the addition of visual media source is changing theatre production and reception. Filmed Shakespeare productions (independent of or based on theatre productions) may also figure in the discussion of the changing perception or serve as examples of prominent points. This study will hopefully shed light on how new technology affects audiences, requiring western theatre to adapt and evolve to meet the expectations of the changing audience, and will explore the continued relevance and adaptability of Shakespeare's plays in the postmodern, digital age.

As an established classic and commonly produced staple of the dramatic canon, Shakespeare's plays provide an ideal sample for such a study of the evolution and remediation of art and media and its relationship to audience perception. In *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance*, W. B. Worthen states, "As the history of modern theater attests, Shakespearean drama not only occupies the sphere of the 'classic,' but also has frequently provided the site for innovation in the style, substance, and practice of modern performance" (2). The distance from the original productions, the absence of definitive documentation on how the various productions were staged, and the inability to determine definitively the intent of the author leave Shakespeare's plays relatively open to interpretation on stage and in the various media that appropriate his material.

Many theatre practitioners seem to believe as Luke McKernan that, “Shakespeare’s plays were written for more than the stage” (21). He goes on to explain that, although they were obviously written for the Elizabethan theatre, their life extends far beyond that time and purpose. Their longevity and enduring popularity indicate that “they are larger works than mere stage plays. . . . They are universal property” (McKernan 21). Shakespeare’s work possesses an adaptable quality which can incorporate continued changes and still attract large audiences after 400 years of production. John Russell Brown explains in *Shakespeare and the Theatrical Effect* that, “It seems that the possibility of change has been written into the texts” (197).

Shakespeare offers a flexible structure open to interpretation. Robert Shaughnessy noticed a “greater tolerance of the contemporary theatre’s ways with texts” in *The Shakespeare Effect*, which he feels derives from a “[g]rowing recognition of the mutability and adaptability of the texts, whose absolute integrity was in the past vociferously defended” by scholars and critics (5). He goes on to state,

. . . the task, and method, of performance criticism is not just to evaluate how ‘successfully’ a given production realizes the potential of the text but to identify the complex logic of its alignments of performers, spectators, space and script, and that, in order to do this, it is necessary to locate these within the broader sphere of culture, politics and history. (Shaughnessy 5-6).

The lack of copyright allows producers and director’s to be liberal with changes to Shakespeare’s play. However, in English speaking areas, Shakespeare seems to possess an inherent moral copyright, historically maintained by the audience and

academics that balk at extraneous changes. Shaughnessy identifies the twentieth century as “the most radically experimental phase of Shakespearean theatre history” yet concedes that when compared with other fields of performance, “the pace of innovation and levels of excitement . . . seem antediluvian”(8). He further characterizes the relationship Shakespeare performance has with the avant-garde as indifferent, isolationist, and exhibiting “cautious and incremental assimilation” (8).

Implied production limits imposed by many scholars, theatre critics, audiences, and practitioners can easily be explained by the cultural tendency towards repertory or perpetuation of the status quo. Actors and audience generally come to performances with similar cultural and societal influences that are further perpetuated through the performance, resulting in a standardization of production and repertory, which is further perpetuated by theatre critics (Bennett 119-120). This prevalence towards standardization of production methods and repertoire could explain the negative and occasionally derisive reviews and responses to Shakespeare productions incorporating film and video between 1960 and 2000. According to Shaughnessy, “much of the energy of new performance [in theatre between 1980 and 2000] has derived from its increasingly hybrid nature”; however, attempts at hybridization or interdisciplinary approaches to Shakespeare theatre during the period were often met with critical disapproval (9). With the entry to the twenty first century, the tide seemed to turn. The increased frequency of media incorporation within Shakespeare productions and a rapid decline in the mention of the media incorporation by reviewers seem to reflect a

shift in audience perception and the nature and art of theatre, resulting in an increasingly apparent acceptance of multimedia Shakespeare productions.

My research primarily focuses on professional Anglo-American productions. In these areas where English is the dominant language, the maintenance of Shakespeare's poetic language is often of critical importance within the production of Shakespeare plays. According to Anthony Dawson's introductory material to *Hamlet*, "The very fact that Shakespeare wrote in English seems to confer a burden of responsibility and authenticity: one should not monkey with sacred texts" (25). Many authors in the English literature and theatre fields suggest that to rob Shakespeare of his language is to rob the play of its meaning. Michèle Willems' work exemplifies this argument, explaining "Shakespeare's language is charged with layers of significance; not only does it carry the dramatic energy, it is also fraught with symbols and networks of metaphors" (92). According to Willems and others, to deprive Shakespeare of the poetry and power of the language is to lose the essence of Shakespeare in the translation. The meaning of a Shakespeare play is concentrated in Shakespeare's poetic language. In non-English speaking areas, where translation is necessary, the adherence to the poetic meter is often lost in lieu of an accurate translation of the line's meaning, allowing more interpretive latitude.

Whenever possible I viewed the productions included as an audience member. Those productions I was unable to view in person, I viewed on archived video or reconstructed for the research by examining production stills, production documents, interviews, reviews and articles related to the production.

Several of Shakespeare's plays seem particularly adaptable to media incursions. Shakespeare's histories, tragedies, and dark comedies, which explore political, social or moral themes, see the most media use. Shakespeare's comedies and romances, those plays dealing with themes of truth, love, friendship, and family, seem to draw little visual media incorporation. The popularity of certain Shakespeare plays, the frequency with which some of the plays are produced, and the tendency toward the frequent recurrence of plays in the repertory system of some theatres could be factors in the frequency in which some plays seem to include incorporated visual media. However, I propose that the increased media use within those plays dealing with political or social themes see the most media use due to the current prevalence and importance of media within politics. The use of media within productions of Shakespeare's histories, tragedies and dark comedies often highlight the political aspects of the play or use the altered physicality of the media element to portray, memories, dreams, supernatural characters or ghosts. Once visual media elements are incorporated within a production, it is not uncommon to find media elements employed for multiple, diverse functions. Multimedia and intermedial Shakespeare productions generally reflect a historically contemporary or timeless eclecticism within the production design, which allows the easy incorporation of visual media elements within the production without the fear of obvious anachronism. The exception is the plays which incorporate the visual media elements solely as a portrayal of memories, dreams, supernatural characters or ghosts.

In studying visual media elements within Shakespeare productions, a distinct evolutionary pattern of common usage seems to present itself. The

earliest incorporation of film in theatrical productions utilizes the photographic reproduction inherent in the film medium as a moving backdrop or simply moving scenery. This straightforward scenic use changes as theatre moves away from the illusionistic and realistic representations into more expressionistic or symbolic presentation. As the visual media such as film, television, video, and computers become more accessible and our exposure to such media in society increases, the visual media elements are used as framing devices or narrative tools. Ultimately, the visual media elements are employed to alter the focus and point of view of the audience, effectively altering the spatial and temporal constraints of live theatre through the interaction with other media. Theatre productions since the beginning of this century use have incorporated computer-generated virtual puppets which share the stage with live actors, and used media sources within the stage production as a way to view and interpret “live” events occurring simultaneously on stage or in off-stage locations in order to explore our relationship with media and media interpretation.

Often the theatrical function of incorporated visual media elements is reflected in the conspicuous incorporation of the projection or transmission elements within the scenography. Obvious or prominent placement of media devices presupposes the characters’ awareness and use of the media (diegetic), whereas seamless integration implies unconscious mediation (non-diegetic).

In the introduction to *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, Robin Nelson outlines research on “the impact of new media on living theatre events” furthered by the International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR) (16). Nelson references a “multi-level definition of intermediality” comprised of three levels put

forward by Klaus Bruhn Jensen, in Wolfgang Donsbach' 2008 edition of the *International Encyclopedia of Communication*:

First, and most concretely, intermediality is the combination and adaptation of separate *material vehicles* of representation and reproduction, sometimes called *multimedia* . . . Second, the term denotes communication through several *sensory modalities* at once . . . Third, intermediality concerns the interrelations between media as *institutions* in society, as addressed in technological and economic terms such as convergence and conglomeration (2385).⁴

Nelson further explicates the levels in relation to the body of the text *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, providing examples of each level as they are presented in the text; however, this approach seems to skew Jensen's definition, in a way that precludes or minimizes consideration of some media inclusion which could arguably be considered within the various levels. Nelson considers the example of "a live actor speaking in a performance space, which also projects a live feed image of her on to an on-stage screen" as indicative of the first level of Jensen's definition (16). However, invisible or non-diegetic media elements like film, video, and digital scenic projections and the use of media as a special effect to present memories or dreams also seem to fulfil the requirement of the first level of Jensen's definition, providing "representation and reproduction." Nelson's example of "a live actor speaking in a performance space, which also projects a live feed image of her on to an on-stage screen" seems to more closely resemble Jensen's second level. Nelson considers Jensen's second level as dealing with

⁴ Italic emphasis as appears in original.

complex multimedia, multi-screen productions employing diverse media, “dynamic machinery that re-configure stage space” and “technological devices” sharing the stage with live performers in “a rich and complex sense experience” (16). At this level the use of diegetic media as a narrative tool or a means of altering the point of view during a production could be argued. Nelson actually does little to expand on the third level, explaining that the editors of the text “are only generally concerned with the economic infrastructure which has brought about new circumstances,” but he states that they “address the capacity for convergence of digital technologies” (16). I perceive this third level of Jensen’s definition, dealing with “the interrelations between media as institutions in society,” as complex intermedial productions incorporating live and virtual performances possible through media representation, performance capture or digital magic, and productions which use convergent media reflecting society’s media interactions with film, broadcast, and/or digital media. As Nelson states, “the capacity for live feeds and manipulation of imagery in real time greatly extends the possibilities of contemporary theatre practices” (16). The third level of Jensen’s definition also addresses the media as an institution in society, which perforce must include consideration of the audience and its perception, interpretation and interaction with the media, moving past consideration of presentation.

Where “*mixed media* suggests a more neutral, instrumental combination,” indicative of the first level of intermediality as outlined by Jensen, the second and third levels of the definition seem to involve “the intermedia terminology . . . employed to stress the innovative or transgressive potential of artworks that articulate their message in the interstices of two media forms” (Jensen 2386). This

idea reflects Kattenbelt's ideas of intermediality as "a blend of the art forms of theatre, film, television and digital media which lead to an engagement with theoretical frameworks drawn from selected areas of performance, perception and media theories, and philosophical approaches to performance" (Chapple and Kattenbelt 20), and theatre as a "hypermedium," which "provides a space where the art forms of theatre, opera and dance meet, interact and integrate with the media of cinema, television, video and the new technologies; creating profusions of texts, inter-texts, inter-media, and spaces in-between" (Chapple and Kattenbelt 24). Jensen also claims that "an aesthetic focus on intermedia relations has been placed in historical perspective by research on how a given medium 'remediates' other media," citing Bolter and Grusin's 1999 book *Remediation: Understanding New Media*.

Jensen's definition of intermediality can also be applied to the evolutionary pattern of common visual media usage within Shakespeare productions mentioned earlier. The earliest visual media incorporation as scenic elements, and the later use of media elements to establish locations and as a device to frame the action of the play, seems to adhere to the first level of Jensen's definition: "the combination and adaptation of separate material vehicles or representation and reproduction" (Jensen 2385). The incorporation of non-diegetic media elements which capitalize on the altered physicality of the media to represent manifestations of internal thoughts or dreams could also be considered an element of the first level of Jensen's definition. Although Nelson suggests the simultaneous video and live presence of a performer could be considered part of the first level of intermediality by Jensen's definition, it would seem to me that the use of visual media elements

to alter the audience's point of view would fall into the second level of intermediality: "communication through several sensory modalities at once" (Jensen 2385). The narrative use of media as a way to view and interpret live events occurring on-stage or in off-stage locations, also seems to be part of the second level of Jensen's definition of intermediality, especial when incorporating diegetic media elements. The most complex multimedia theatre productions, which often "[concern] the interrelations between media as institutions in society," comprise the third level of the intermediality definition presented by Jensen (2385). These productions may incorporate the use of media representations or virtual puppets on stage with interacting with live performers. Productions which explore media's role in society, also seem to fall into this third level of intermediality, as they concern the interrelations between media as institutions in society" (Jensen 2385). Thus, the evolution of visual media use in stage productions of Shakespeare seems to roughly correspond to the three levels of intermediality.

The increased incorporation of visual media elements, such as film, broadcast media, video, CCTV and computer generated digital elements in theatre productions since the turn of the twenty-first century, apparently prompted by the increased availability, access, and exposure to digital media by the general population, has evolved into much more than an easy solution to the spatial and temporal constraints of the theatre or its employment as a special effect. These elements have become tools of dramatic expression.

The complexity of these multimedia or intermedial productions and the audience's increasing acceptance of visual media elements in Shakespeare productions may indicate a profound shift in "live" theatre production and, in some

aspects, a convergence of the visual media, or may simply indicate a remediation of theatre and newer visual media. It definitely indicates a change in the theatre audience, which is likely the consequence of the gradual separation and isolation of the audience, and the increased exposure to new media and the ever-present media circus that assails citizens of developed countries.

Evolution of Art, Technology and the Audience Perception

The evolution of technology and the increased importance of the visual record seem to be intertwined. Whether the societal desire for an individual to see for themselves prompted the technological development of devices that can record the visual record (as with the development of photography), or the technological development created the societal need to see is unclear but it is clear that the two share a parallel evolution. Before the direct recording of images on silver photographic plates, the dissemination of information depended upon the written or spoken word and illustrations of events recorded by other individuals. These words and illustrations were presented through the understanding and interpretation of witnesses and the reporter. Thus, the information presented could be perceived as indirect or tainted, since it depends upon the perception, interpretation and dissemination of other individuals. The very language with which we communicate ideas is not a natural thing but a construct of society, according to Robert Kolker (2). With the development of photography, the information or image recorded is perceived to be direct and accurate, since there is no perceived interpretation by other individuals. Nothing apparently stands between the perception of the image and the perceiver.

However, this belief of the infallibility of the visual representation is fundamentally flawed since the photographer selects and frames the image to be photographed, which can alter perception, and images can be manipulated during the development process (Kolker 1-19). Unfortunately, the ocular basis which maintains that visual information is first hand information void of bias or manipulation remains firm within the public psyche.

Advances in printing and publication resulted in the rapid dissemination of photographic images. As a result, the development of photography and methods of artistic reproduction, allowed audiences greater access to art and the world, and were factors in theatre's movement through the elaborate staging of the romantic theatre and the realist movement. The audience's expectations changed with the availability of photographic and mechanically reproduced images. The resulting affect on the western theatre was an increasing drive for verisimilitude and increasingly elaborate stage pictures. Walter Benjamin explores the changing perception of art in his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" published in *Illuminations*.

Benjamin maintains that, "In principle a work of art has always been reproducible" by manual copying or technological reproduction (212). Printing and then lithography presented the first means of mechanically reproducing art. The profound effect of the printing press on the world is generally understood. As the printing press revolutionized dissemination of the written word, the invention of photography revolutionized the capture and presentation of images, initiating the process of technical reproduction.

Although Benjamin concedes that technical reproduction can allow greater access to the object, or at least its copy, by placing it into situations, unattainable for the original, he believes the original's presence, which is tied up in authenticity and tradition, is depreciated. The authenticity of an object or work of art is dependent upon its uniqueness and presence in time and space and is outside the realm of technical reproducibility according to Benjamin (214). However, photography and later film and video by their very nature were created to be reproduced. Any print made from a photographic or film negative is an "authentic" print; what it lacks is a uniqueness or "aura."

Benjamin declares, "that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art. One may generalize by saying: the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition" (215). The "aura" is not as simple a concept as it first appears. Benjamin defines the aura as an object's unique existence in time and space and its authenticity, both of which are tied into a tradition which is alive and changeable (214, 217). Benjamin explains the links between art and tradition and between ritual and cult, stating,

Originally the contextual integration of art in tradition found its expression in the cult. We know that the earliest art works originated in the service of ritual—first the magical, then the religious kind. It is significant that the existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function. In other words, the unique value of the 'authentic' work or art has its basis in ritual . . . (217).

The definition of the aura Benjamin uses, equates the cult value with inapproachability or distance between the observer and the art. In a note to his essay, Benjamin explains:

The definition of the aura as a 'unique phenomenon of a distance however close it may be' represents nothing but the formulation of the cult value of the work of art in categories of space and time perception. Distance is the opposite of closeness. The essentially distant object is the unapproachable one. Unapproachability is indeed a major quality of the cult image (236-237).

Benjamin asserts that, "for the first time in world history, mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual" (218). With the decay of the aura and the devaluation or loss of the authentic, the art is separated from its ritual or cult value. Benjamin's account of the effects of mechanical reproduction on art, and by extension society, reflects the human desire for closeness and intimacy, which initiate the deterioration of the aura: in essence, He blames the decay of the aura on the social masses and their desire "to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly" and to overcome "the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction" (216-217). Benjamin also notes the tendency to substitute "a plurality of copies for a unique existence" and a desire for closeness (215).

The detachment of art from its link to ritual and cult, which Benjamin identifies, supports one of the main tenets of postmodernism: the demystification

of ritual and abandonment of the belief in a single enduring truth. According to the works of François Lyotard and Gianni Vattimo, “To live in the postmodern condition . . . is to live without a grand and deep sense of abiding truth” (qtd. in Fortier 176). Although a set definition of postmodernism in art and theatre is difficult to pinpoint, the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* defines postmodernism as “a rejection of ideology and theory in favour of a plurality of values and techniques” (OED.com). In the current society of entitlement, which demands unlimited access to images and information, and fiercely advocates for personal freedom, it is not difficult to see the drive to possess the unique, which has resulted in an age of technological reproduction, substituting “a plurality of copies for a unique existence” (Benjamin 215).

Where Benjamin sees a desire for reproducibility to bring the work of art closer, Fortier sees the postmodern world as one of recycled works in a type of remediation. According to Fortier, with the “proliferation of image and information, thinkers from Marx to Foucault . . . concerned with production rather than reproduction, are rendered obsolete” (177). This idea seems to reflect Fredric Jameson’s assertion that postmodernism is basically a cultural circumstance caused by capitalism’s commodification of virtually all aspects of social and cultural life (Fortier 177). A sense of desire and entitlement, grounded in the fierce exclamation of individualism and personal rights within the current culture, has caused the decay of the aura. Technology has allowed us our desire to overcome the distance between ourselves and the work of art. Even live events are commonly brought closer through the use of simultaneous video supplementation.

The mechanical reproducibility of art freed art from ritual and tradition, allowing unprecedented access and resulting in the loss of the aura. Lacking the unique experience inherent in the aura of a work of art, modern and postmodern audiences replace the unique experience with a plurality of copies and often a simulated proximity. Benjamin's ideas are extended by McLuhan, who sees any new medium or technology as an extension of our body and senses. As extensions of ourselves, new media and technology are considered biological and/or psychological evolution. Auslander's examination of the changing definition of "liveness" draws on both the ideas of Benjamin and McLuhan and the ideas of other theorists such as Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, who likewise draw from Benjamin and McLuhan for their examination of "remediation." Each of these theorists identifies a pattern of replication, replacement, and remediation in the development of new media and the reestablishment of equilibrium within and between the media.

CHAPTER 2

PRESENTATIONAL NATURE AND THE CHANGING AUDIENCE VIEW

Theatre Presentation and the Audience

In “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Walter Benjamin declares, “Any thorough study proves that there is indeed no greater contrast than that of the stage play to a work of art that is completely subject to or, like the film, founded in mechanical reproduction” (223). The presentational nature of the artistic medium is key in defining the relationship of the audience to the art. Benjamin spends considerable time exploring the difference between stage performance and recorded media. He explains that the stage actor is definitely present to the audience and, thus, has a physical presence in time and space: an “aura” if you will. The actors share the physical space and time with the audience. The physicality of actors and audience in a shared time and space allows for interaction and maintains the aura.

By their very nature, visual media elements like film, broadcast, and digital media restrict audience interaction. The film actor’s performance is delivered through the medium of the technology. The lack of the presence of the film actor before the audience means “[t]he audience’s identification with the actor is really an identification with the camera. Consequently the audience takes the position of the camera . . . ,” according to Benjamin (222). The aura of a live theatre performance cannot be separated from the actors performing. The effect of film has resulted in man operating “with his whole living person, yet forgoing its aura”

because, as Benjamin explains, “aura is tied to his [man’s] presence; there can be no replica of it” (223). Unlike the traditional arts, the art of reproduction lacks an aura.

One underlying factor that cannot be overlooked or dismissed when evaluating theatre and theatrical audiences is the live, ephemeral nature of the theatre art. The live nature of theatre and the reliance on human instruments to present and receive the art results in an immediate art form that cannot be faithfully reproduced from show to show. Each event will have minor differences in the production and reception, which will alter the event to the extent that no two will be identical in production or experience. Thus, each presentation is unique, immediate and ephemeral, existing only in the moment and the imperfect memories and differing perceptions of the audience.

Theatre’s immediate, ephemeral nature is compounded by our human perceptual limitations. In *Theatrical Presentation*, Bernard Beckerman explains:

In watching a [live] show, it is physically impossible to absorb the entire presentation. Unlike cinema [or television], where we are subject to the camera’s eye, theatre is seldom so contracted that the eye can take in the entire performance, looking first at one player and then another. To whom we pay attention at any one time is partly determined by the performers. Part of their aim is to control and direct our focus. Yet, however astute the performers are, they do not have absolute control. We can always direct our attention elsewhere (79).

He goes on to explain that we perceive not only what is focally before us, but we perceive peripherally activities unfolding in a context of the events we observe

(Beckerman 79-80). Susan Bennett presents the ephemeral nature of theatre in a slightly different manner in *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception*. She likens theatre to other art works:

The theatre audience shares with the spectator of an art work the inability to take in everything with a single look but, where the art work [or film] remains for subsequent looks, the theatrical performance is ephemeral. Pleasure results from that ephemerality, from the necessity of making a selection of the elements offered (78).

The selections made by the audience determine their perception of the theatre piece. Subsequent viewings of the productions will not replicate the perception or the experience, since the live nature of the theatre performance makes replication of the past performance impossible. Instead, during subsequent viewings of a stage production, it is natural for audience members to focus on different elements within the production to add to the initial experience and expand their interpretation of the production as a whole, not to replicate exactly their pattern of perception from the first viewing, even if they could.

Many theatre theorists feel that the immediacy of theatre and the unrestricted *mise-en-scène*⁵ (not possible in either the television or cinema) generally require more of the theatre audience than the recorded and more perceptually limited camera-dependent arts. Bernard Beckerman considers a theatre presentation as a “*unique*” offering: “It is an offering in which the performance agency or figure [generally an actor] cannot be replicated but must be in the presence of the audience for the presentational act to occur” (5).

⁵ Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson specify: “In the original French, *mise-en-scène* means ‘putting in the scene,’ and was first applied to the practice of directing plays. . . . [M]ise-en-scène includes those aspects of film that overlap with the art of theater: setting, lighting, costume, and the behaviour of the figures” (156).

The relationship between the performers and the audience in the theatre is unique. It is a living communication between the temporal world of the play and the world of the audience. Like the artist, the audience enters the theatre as active participants in the production not mere receivers (Bennett 10). The audience becomes one of the many agents of the dramatic text, determining the internal meanings and actively responding to the production (Bennett 22; Worthen 23). Although Bennett and Worthen are correct in that the audience of the theatre performance can respond and have a direct impact on the performance, the television and cinema audiences also determine internal meaning and can actively respond even if they cannot communicate directly with the performers.

The prevalent but somewhat misguided idea of the theatre audience as active and the television and cinema audience as passive is common among theatre practitioners and scholars. In *Architecture, Actor and Audience*, Iain MacKintosh declares that “the [theatre] audience’s role is an active, not a passive, one” (2). He contends that, “In cinema, which is a passive art form, you and your reactions are pre-programmed by the director, crew, cast and writer” (MacKintosh 2). Simply put, MacKintosh and others associate audience activity and engagement with communication: the auditory and visual dialogue between the art and the audience. The separation of the television and film performer from the audience and the finished nature of cinema and recorded television make such a “dialogue” impossible. According to MacKintosh, “The cinema goer’s [sic] communication with that ghostly image on the screen is one way: all he or she can do is listen or watch” (2). The separation of the audience is complete since the audience is separated from the cinema creation by both space and time. The

audience has no influence on the finished film or television event and is not generally present during the creation, so it cannot affect the presentation of the narrative, only the reception of the piece. Since the receiver of a message is an active producer of meaning, it would be short-sighted to consider the cinema audience as strictly passive observers. However, the perception of the theatre audience and the television and cinema audience does indicate the differences in the audience dynamics and the audience's relation to the work.

The recorded nature of cinema is finished and prohibits audience interaction with the performance. Bennett points out that, "Despite the . . . obvious similarities between the cinema and theatre, it is of course, necessary to remember the finished nature of the cinema production. It is not modifiable in the same way as theatre" (80). Despite the fact that in cinema or on television the world presented is a recorded medium, later projected as two-dimensional lights and shadows on a neutral screen, the audience accepts this artificial reality, provided there is, what André Bazin refers to in *What is Cinema?* as, "a common denominator between the cinematographic image and the world we live in" (416). Unlike the active audience of the stage allowed a relatively free *mise-en-scène*, the cinematic audience is directed by the film. Bennett explains, "Film action is always interpreted by the camera, and the spectator's view of the signifying system(s) guided in a way that cannot be guaranteed by on-stage, live performance" (81). The very camera placement and selection of shots predetermines the audience's focus. They have little from which to select but that which is recorded and projected before them, unlike the theatre that must present a complete picture to ensure viable interpretation by the audience.

Despite questions raised by Brewster and Jacobs regarding Vardac's argument and limited sources, Vardac's work, referenced for fifty years, raises interesting points about the relationship between theatre and early cinema. Vardac considers the artistic movement towards cinema occurring as early as 1824 with the increasing demand for greater pictorial realism and the development of film and motion pictures (xx); however, the movement towards cinematic art seems to occur as early as 1762 with the expulsion of spectators from the stage, the rise of spectacle, the growing popularity of optical entertainments, and ultimately, the creation of the virtual fourth wall. The distancing of the audience from the stage begins with the movement to private indoor stages and rise of spectacle in the seventeenth century, and continues to the present condition of increasingly mediatized performances and intermedial theatre. The expulsion of spectators from stage removed the audience from the created world of the production, which allowed for more unified, spectacular stage illusions. The convention of the fourth wall established a barrier or separation from the audience, and the advancement of stage technology changed the relationship of the theatre to the audience, intensifying the movement towards verisimilitude and realism. Cinema furthered the movement towards realism while further distancing the audience from the created pictures.

The nature of theatre performance allows for a shared if silent communication between the performers and the audience. Although lacking the direct address of the audience commonly found in early drama, the connection between the contemporary theatre actors and their audience is palpable. Even in silence, the energy and responses of the audience are communicated to the

stage, which the actors, in turn, use to gauge their performance and make adjustments. Audience members, individually and collectively, are active respondents to the occurrences on stage. They are engaged by the production, interpreting the production elements and creating or discovering meaning.

The physical divorcing of the audience from the dramatic action, with the implementation of increasingly controllable stage and auditorium lighting, limited the audience's interaction and participation in the theatre production. The development of easily controllable indoor light eventually allowed for the darkening of the auditorium during productions, not only separating the audience from stage, but separating and isolating the audience members from each other with a barrier of darkness. Although still a vital element of theatre production, the nature of the audience changed from a collective entity, a society of spectators, to individual viewers of the dramatic action.

Sarah Hatchuel considers this change as a movement towards audience passivity, encouraged by the introduction of new stage conventions, but the movement seems to reflect a societal change in the audience from the community audience experience to a more individualized reception characteristic of the cinema audience (7). In *Visual Digital Culture: Surface Play and Spectacle in New Media Genres*, Andrew Darley details this shift to individuated spectators:

The emergent entertainment forms of the nineteenth century [including the panorama, the diorama, the "optical theatre," and film] . . . begin to constitute distinctive exhibition modes. In more or less radical ways they diverge from the typical spatial arrangement of the live theatre. One tendency is for the new technologies of visual production to press for a darker more concentrated viewing situation. There is a

distinct sense in which the image exhibited takes on a more precise definition as image. . . . Although they [the exhibition spaces] remain public these consumption spaces begin to solicit the audience more as individuated and attentive spectators (179).

The passivity of the audience is complicit in the illusionistic theatre.

Cinema took the separation of the audience one step further than the illusionistic theatre. The cinema completely divorced from the action, the audience gathered to view the event. Some could argue that the theatre and film audience share a sense of community when gathering together to attend their different events; however, cinema made audience/performer interaction impossible by its very nature. The unperceptive screen presents an impermeable barrier to the audience.

The Cinematic Gaze

In his text *The Cinematic Society*, Norman K. Denzin cites Jean-Louis Comolli's work *Cinéma Contre Spectacle: Suivi de Technique et Idéologie* to support his ideas regarding the evolution of the cinematic gaze, which he suggests developed from the desire to replace the imperfect human eye and the interpretation of the artist or observer with a scientific lens. According to Denzin,

With this challenge [Leonardo da Vinci's camera obscura] to the eye and its inability to render the visible world with full accuracy, came the understanding that the photographic image produced by this new scientific apparatus (the camera and its lens) was perfect; it could not be argued with. It did not distort reality; in fact it could show the real in

all its truth. The human eye was displaced as the final authority on reality and its recording (24).

The scientific lens “created a spectral gaze that made the spectator . . . an invisible presence in what was seen,” creating an invisible place for the spectators and making voyeurs out of viewers (Denzin 26). The cinema replaced the still photograph, which, in effect, “allowed the viewer to engage the subject of the gaze in real life detail; in the detail which accompanies movement through time and space” (Denzin 26). However, this displacement of the eye by the scientific lens of photography and later cinema did not displace the dominance of the eye over the other sensory systems or the paradoxical human understanding that equates seeing (visual perception) with knowing (human knowledge), but neither the interpreter (media creator) nor the observer (media spectator) is a neutral spectator of events; both are tainted by their interpretation. Human understanding is separate from human knowledge in that understanding grows in time, so seeing (visual perception) does not necessarily lead to understanding. Denzin considers the disconnect between human understanding and human knowledge to be the centre of the creation of the cinematic voyeur:

The very processes that joined truth and perception undermined from within the observer’s ability to point with certainty to what was seen, and hence known about the visual world and the subjects who inhabited that world. Thus was born a special type of viewer, the voyeur who looked repeatedly in order to know (27).

Denzin's idea of the voyeuristic desire as a desire to see in order to know (in effect the building of understanding based on multiple viewings) takes a different approach to the psychological tenets of Schaulust or Scopophilia⁶.

The popularity of the film medium from its inception to modern productions is often credited with the societal privileging of images over sound and a type of fulfillment of man's inherent voyeuristic desires: a desire to see and be seen. The fundamental idea of the cinematic gaze originates in the psychoanalytical theories of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and Jacques Lacan (1901-1981). In *The Imaginary Signifier*, Christian Metz explains the importance of perceptions and their link to the sexual drives:

The practice of the cinema is only possible through the perceptual passions: the desire to see (= scopic drive, scopophilia, voyeurism), which was alone engaged in the art of the silent film, the desire to hear which has been added to it in the sound cinema (this is the "*pulsion invocante*," the invocatory drive, one of the four main sexual drives for Lacan; it is well known that Freud isolated it less clearly and hardly deals with it as such) (58).

Freud considers schaulust a more prohibitive, primal desire consisting of two parts: the active voyeur and the passive exhibitionist.

The sexual drives of scopophilia and voyeurism are distinct from the other sexual drives in that they are dependent upon a lack: the object never reached and the goal unachieved. The voyeur maintains a distance or separation from the object of desire. According to Felluga's interpretation of Lacan's work,

⁶ Literally, the love of looking according to Dino Felluga, "Terms Used by Narratology and Film Theory." Freud used the term *Schaulust*, "pleasure in looking," which is commonly translated *scopophilia* or *scopophilia*.

In constructing our fantasy-version of reality, we establish coordinates for our desire; we situate both ourselves and our object of desire, as well as the relation between. . . . Our desires therefore necessarily rely on lack, since fantasy, by definition, does not correspond to anything in the real (“Modules on Lacan: On Desire”).

Our desires and perceptual pleasure rely on separation or lack. Coming too close to our desire will expose the lack, so, as Felluga relates, “the desire is most interested not in fully attaining the object of desire but in keeping our distance, thus allowing desire to persist” (“Modules on Lacan: On Desire”). Our desires and perceptual pleasures, much like a magic trick, would be destroyed were the workings of the illusion revealed by close examination. Felluga also explains that the term “desires” used in Lacan is not restricted to the sexual:

Desire . . . has little to do with material sexuality for Lacan; it is caught up, rather, in social structures and strictures, in the fantasy version of reality that forever dominated our lives after our entrance into language. . . . In a sense, then, our desire is never properly our own, but is created through fantasies that are caught up in cultural ideologies rather than material sexuality (“Modules on Lacan: On Desire”).

Our society and culture are instrumental in the formation of our desires, which are reflected and realized through art.

Theatre and cinema (and the various broadcast media) vary in their scopic nature. The differences are the result of the nature and relationship of the audience to the art and the immediate physicality of the performance. Metz states, “In the theatre, actors and spectators are present at the same time and in the same location, hence present one to another, as the two protagonists of an

authentic perverse couple” (63). The actor sees the audience and knows they are there since they share the physical time and location of the performance. The actor is the subject of the audiences’ voyeuristic gaze and passively allows the audience the desired gaze. In the theatre the actor is presumed to consent and be complicit in the passive exhibitionist role because he/she is physically present on the stage: the viewed object (Metz 62). The separation between the object and the body or eye of the observer is often maintained by the architectural elements of the theatre and the stage conventions of the culture, the theatre, and the individual production. In effect the theatre presents a form of sanctioned scopophobia.

The scopic nature of cinema differs from theatre in two ways: the lack of the physical presence and the implied consent of the actor to be viewed. Unlike theatre, the cinematic actor is unaware of the audience during performance because the audience is absent: the camera assumes the spectator’s position. Likewise, the actors are absent during the audience’s viewing of the film. Because the actor/exhibitionist and spectator/voyeur are not present “at the same time and in the same location,” the implied consent inherent in the theatre actor/audience relationship is absent (Metz 62-63). As Metz explains,

. . . in the cinema, the actor was present when the spectator was not (= shooting), and the spectator is present when the actor is no longer (= projection): a failure to meet of the voyeur and the exhibitionist whose approaches no longer coincide (they have ‘missed’ one another). The cinema’s voyeurism must (of necessity) do without any clear mark of consent on the part of the object (63).

The very nature of the cinematic arts provides the separation or lack necessary to nurture the desire and scopophobic tendency. Where theatre presents the physical dependent on stage conventions and architectural barriers to maintain the separation between the voyeur and the object, cinema provides only an effigy of the real.

The perceived differences in the theatre and cinematic audiences are also a factor in the differing scopic nature of theatre and cinema. The theatre audiences, comprised of active individual consciousnesses, form a temporary collective and form an active element in the theatre experience. The separating and isolating convention of lowering the lights on the audience during the performance has not compromised this collective element but does provide the isolation and separation necessary for the perceptual pleasure of the voyeur. Still, both the voyeur and exhibitionist are aware of each other's presence while maintaining the necessary space to preserve the desire. However, the cinema audience has arguably been described as a collection of individuals and passive observers of the narrative.⁷

Metz describes this contrast:

. . . those attending a cinematic projection do not, as in the theatre, constitute a true 'audience', a temporary collectivity; they are an accumulation of individuals who, despite appearances, more closely resemble the fragmented group of readers of a novel (64).

The description of the cinema audience as individuals sitting in a dark auditorium viewing the object's image is more in keeping with our sinister ideas of the voyeur, and, as Metz suggests, the unauthorized scopophilia of the cinema voyeur is more

⁷ This representation of the cinema audience is found in Andre' Bazin's *What is Cinema?*, Christian Metz's *The Imaginary Signifier*, Michell Stephens's *The Rise of the Image, The Fall of the Word*, and others.

primal. The actor/audience relationship (including the idea of implied exhibitionist consent) and the ceremonial history of the theatre lead Metz to view theatre in a more positive light than other voyeur/exhibitionist associations. Metz states that, “the theatre retains something of [a] deliberate civic tendency toward ludicrous-liturgical ‘communion’” He goes on to say, “It is for reasons of this kind too that theatrical voyeurism, less cut off from its exhibitionist correlate, tends more toward a reconciled and community-oriented practice of the scopic perversion” (Metz 65). However, cinema, in his eyes, lacks the actor/audience relationship of theatre, and, thus, retains the primal, prohibitive characteristics of Freud’s Schaulust.

The voyeuristic desire encompasses more than the need to observe to gain knowledge and the sexual desires explored by Freud and Lacan, power and control are integral elements of the voyeuristic desire. Freud considered Schaulust as consisting of two parts (the active voyeur and the passive exhibitionist), implying a consensual arrangement in the normal psychological condition; however, even in this consensual arrangement the voyeur objectifies the object of his gaze. It is this objectifying gaze that figures prominently in the feminist cinematic theory of Laura Mulvey and others. The active voyeur, associated with the male gaze, and the passive object of the gaze, associated with the female figure, forms the basis of Mulvey’s idea of the patriarchal cinematic gaze. In a sense, the voyeur possesses and controls the object of his/her gaze. The voyeur is in the active position of power. If seeing is knowledge and knowledge is power, then the control of the image is power. Thus, the voyeur possesses the power and control over the object. In a situation where the viewing

is consensual, the power is, in a sense, shared, as the passive exhibitionist allows the observation; however, if the object is unaware of the voyeuristic gaze, the power and control over the object rests with the voyeur.

Distancing of the audience from the art seems a common thread in related theatre and media theory. Although Benjamin asserts that “Unapproachability is indeed a major quality of the cult image” the lack of a physical presence results in a lack of “aura” which is connected to the shared physicality of the actor and the audience (223, 236-237). Thus, by Benjamin’s criteria, art made to be reproduced like photography and cinema lack the aura of the traditional arts, including theatre. Film sacrifices the aura of a “unique existence” in time and space for a “plurality of copies” and a desire to bring things closer. “The social bases[sic] of the contemporary decay of the aura” according to Benjamin is “[n]amely, the desire of contemporary masses to bring things ‘closer’ spatially and humanly, which is just as ardent as their bent toward overcoming the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction” (216-217). The immediate and ephemeral nature of the theatre characterized by the physicality of the performance (with aura intact) would imply a type of intimacy; however, the separation of the audience from the performance strains that intimacy. The evolving cinema allowed the camera to venture closer to the action and the individual performer than the theatrical seating and barriers of convention generally allowed a theatrical audience. Although lacking the physicality (and aura), the cinema gave audiences the desired closeness and a simulated intimacy with the filmed subject. The advent of television further isolated the audience, yet the live nature and presentation of early television provided immediacy similar to that of theatre. Early television

advertisements lauded the ability of people to experience the theatre event without leaving their own home. No longer did the audience need to gather to view a performance; the televised event was piped in for their individual viewing.

Like film, early television initially modelled itself on the theatre. Although, historically, television was developed after cinema and both used theatre as a model, in terms of performance and audience perception it lies between theatre and film. Auslander attributes this to a similar ontology (12). He argues that the ontology of the televisual (which he concedes is now expressed through a variety of media) allowed television to replicate and then replace theatre and film as the dominant cultural medium (Auslander 10-22). Auslander contends that,

Television was imagined *as theatre*, not just in the sense that it could convey theatrical events to the viewer, but in that it offered to replicate the visual and experiential discourse of theatre in the antiseptic space of the suburban home theatre. Television, as parasite, strangled its host by offering itself not as an extension of the theatrical experience but as an equivalent *replacement* for that experience. (22)

This pattern of replication and replacement is common in technology and media remediation and evolution.

The development of the television medium as one based on the live model of theatre manifests clearly though Philip Auslander's work. He explains that, as a camera-bound medium, television might have been modeled on the cinema instead of theatre, but the essence of the televisual, as a means to transmit events as they occur, was more akin to theatre than the recorded medium of film (Auslander 12). Auslander goes on to say:

Although the possibility of recording television broadcasts was available as part of the television technology from quite early in its development, the capacity for rebroadcasting was seen then as ancillary to television's essence as a live medium. In the 1930s and 1940s, television was envisioned primarily as a medium devoted to the transmission of ongoing live events, not to reproduction (15).

Television was considered live. "Although the question of authentic television form remained unresolved," according to Auslander, "early writers on television generally agreed that television's essential properties as a medium are *immediacy* and *intimacy*"⁸ essentially identifying television as a "live" medium (14). It is the properties of immediacy and intimacy which make the experience of televised drama comparable to theatre and allow television to later replace theatre as the dominant "live" media. Immediacy is an essential property of theatre performance. The occurring event is viewed by the watching audience in "real time"⁹ and once the moment passes, that moment cannot be reproduced. This is as true of early live television as it is of theatre. The early ideology of television as a live form remained engrained in the cultural psyche, even after television adopted a recorded format and the television cameras entered the set, adopting a more cinematic discourse.

Television's form and experience provided society a more intimate view of the performance through mediatization. Auslander points out that the descriptions of televised drama from the 1930s through the 1950s emphasize television's immediacy and intimacy, comparing the experience to that of drama in the theatre

⁸ Original emphasis.

⁹ Through the text *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, Auslander traces the changing definition of "live" and the idea of a mediatized event occurring in "real time." The idea of real time has changed to mean something that plays out in the same time frame and without substantial alteration although transpiring earlier and recorded.

(17). The limited mobility of the early cameras generally kept them in a line spaced along the front of the performance space; thus, televisual discourse was quite similar to theatre discourse. Auslander explains that early television shows were shot in proscenium, and “the cameras never entered the playing space to produce reverse angles. As a result, the television image was frontal and oriented toward the viewer in much the same way as a performance on a proscenium stage would be” (Auslander 20). The television camera allowed the television viewers the ideal position in relation to the image: placing them in the best position to view the performance.

Although the televised image resembled the point of view of the theatrical audience which was perpetuated in the television editing, the television image was selected by the director and cameramen, not the open *mise-en-scène* of the theatre. “That television editing appears as a reframing of a single, continuous image from a fixed point of view, rather than a suturing of image to image or a shift in point of view, also asserts the immediacy, the sense of a continuous perceptual experience unfolding in real time, that television shares with theatre,” according to Auslander (20). Although the televisual presentation allowed for an intimacy much like that possible with film, granting the audience a view not generally possible at a live event, the separation inherent in the broadcast medium removed some or all of the audience from the event, restricting or eliminating possible communication between the actors and their audience.

The community created by the coming together of people to experience an event became smaller and more isolated with each new medium. This movement away from a community model to individual spectators seems to be a reflection of

society as individualism becomes more dominant and pervasive. After the initial loss of audience when cinema assumed the position as the culturally dominant medium, the affect of each newly developed medium seems to result in a gradual decline in theatre attendance and an audience accustomed to the conventions and allowances of the new medium. The established and the new media remediate the materials and techniques of each other in an effort to meet the changing needs of society and reach equilibrium.

Theatre's Aural Nature and the Rise of Spectacle

When considering the incorporation of visual media elements in stage productions, it is important to consider the separate nature and characteristics of theatre and that of film, broadcast and digital elements. In the essay "Media, Modalities and Modes" Lars Elleström remarks,

If all media were fundamentally different, it would be hard to find any interrelations at all; if they were fundamentally similar, it would be hard to find something that is not already interrelated. Media, however, are both different and similar . . . (12).

Initially theatre and mediatized sources like cinema, video and digital sources appear to have more similarities than differences. Both art forms involve the creation or representation of active scenes employing actors in familiar mise-en-scène. Closer examination of the theatre and mediatized visual arts reveals core differences in the nature of the arts, the audience dynamics and the uses of space and time.

When considering the nature of an artistic medium, it is important to consider the primary method the medium employs to deliver the narrative or thought. The nature of theatre is often viewed as something of a paradox. Theatre, cinema, television and computer generated images are generally defined as visual, image based arts, yet live theatrical drama depends primarily on the dialogue and interaction of characters to further the narration, suggesting an aural nature. Theatre depends on the spoken word as the primary method of delivering the narrative. Cinema, however, is a visual art in that it depends upon the pictures to deliver the narrative. The confusion over the nature of particular arts like theatre and cinema often arises from the incorporation of multiple supportive characteristics often utilized to maximize the impact of the narrative or thought, and the audience perception of a particular work or the art as a whole. The nature of theatre and that of cinematic and digital arts is important since the delivery method of the narrative affect the audience dynamic and the representation of space and time within the art.

The paradoxical nature of the Western theatre extends back to the creation of the art. Developed from prehistoric rituals, ceremonies and storytelling traditions, the aural predominance of theatre seems natural. Organized western theatre appears to emerge around the sixth century B.C. from the Greek dithyrambs and bardic traditions. According to Oscar G. Brockett, "The earliest still extant account of how Greek drama originated—a chapter in Aristotle's "Poetics" (c. 335-323 B.C.)—states that tragedy emerged out of improvisations by the leaders of dithyrambs." (15). Since Aristotle's ideas concerning drama appear rather cryptic, there have been varied interpretations of the "Poetics"; however, in

the “Poetics.” Aristotle identified and appears to rank the six basic components of drama, stressing the literary elements over the performance. In his hierarchy the first four elements of drama focus on the literary components of structure, characters, content, and language of the play; the fifth element considers the aural elements, such as the vocal delivery and/or music of the production; and the last element (and by accounts the least important) was the spectacle or visual elements in the production. The narrative core at the heart of theatre is transmitted to the audience through auditory means: lines spoken or sung by the performers, and to a lesser extent the accompanying music. The dance and other perceived visual elements of the drama simply support the auditory narrative delivery. This hierarchy of theatre elements is fitting for early western theatre, lacking technologies which would enable elaborate stage pictures. Ironically the auditorium spaces where the audience gathered to attend the performances of early drama were called the ‘theatron’ or ‘seeing place’ in the Greek. Even early in Theatre’s history its nature as an aural art form and the role of its spectacle or visual components come into question.

From its inception, cinema relied primarily upon visual images to present the narration. The reliance on visual images seems obvious when one considers its photographic connection and the absence of synchronized sound in early film. In the silent film dialogue was unimportant. Film communicates primarily through a language of images. The adoption of synchronized sound in the late 1920s was greeted with enthusiasm by the audience already accustomed to music and vocal talents augmenting the visual communications of film. The addition of sound did have an impact on cinema, apparently moving it away from metaphor and symbol

in exchange for the illusion of objective presentation; however, sound plays a subservient, subordinate and supplementary role to the visual image (Bazin 46).

Although cinema is a visual art, the advent of synchronized sound created a situation where cinema had to balance the visual and aural elements.

Illustrating the importance of the visual image in film, Rudolf Arnheim, in *Film as Art* commented that one would find the sudden loss of sight much more shocking than the sudden loss of sound (173). Yet, to watch a raw cut film that has not yet had the incidental foley sound and background music added is a startling experience. The absence of sound, where we unconsciously expect it, is unnerving. Life is not silent. We generally connect image and sound in our perception of life events and the arts that portray those events, like film and theatre. We unconsciously depend on the ambient sounds surrounding events to aid us in interpreting the visual information. In many ways background music has substituted for the ambient sounds of life in the cinema, aiding the viewers in the interpretation of the visual information and, in some cases, foreshadowing or recalling events within the narration.

The rise of spectacle in western theatre resulted in a struggle to balance the scenographic elements with the aural narrative nature of the medium. In *Theatre as Sign-System*, Elaine Aston and George Savona assert that, “It goes almost without saying that, from the earliest theatres, dramatists have been concerned to counterpoint verbal with visual impact” (142). Spectacle is a powerful element that can easily dominate a performance. In *Visual Digital Culture*, Andrew Darley explores the nature of spectacle and concludes that “spectacle is, in many respects, the antithesis of narrative” (104). His realization of the danger spectacle

presents is strengthened by the fact that his research primarily deals with visual digital presentations such as cinema and computer environments. Darley asserts that,

Spectacle effectively halts motivated movement. In its purer state it exists for itself, consisting of images whose main drive is to dazzle and stimulate the eye (and by extension the other senses). Drained of meaning, bereft of the weight of fictional progress, the cunning of spectacle is that it begins and ends with its own artifice . . . (104).

Since dramatic narrative is presented primarily through the lines of a play, the predominance of spectacle can interfere with the narrative delivery. The visual elements in theatre production can supplement the play production or reduce a play to a parade of spectacle. In her *Shakespeare Survey* article “Verbal-Visual, Verbal-Pictorial or Textual-Televisual? Reflections on the BBC Shakespeare Series,” Michèle Willems points out, “One should not confuse visual richness and visual significance.” (99). Spectacle for spectacle’s sake is a disruptive use of the artistic element. A suitable balance of visual and aural elements must be struck.

The struggle between the aural nature and visual spectacle may be a result of early intermediality. Nelson points out in the introduction to *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* that “Throughout the history of the arts and media, different disciplines or arts have worked together in a range of combinations. Greek theatre and the Jacobean masque, for example, brought together different combinations of words, visuals, sounds and movement” (15). This combination of media in other contemporary dramatic and artistic forms would affect the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre audiences as well, creating new stresses and

audience expectations. One can see the struggle to reconcile the visual element with the aural nature of theatre plays out prominently in the Elizabethan theatre.

The Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre seem a pivotal point in the rise of spectacle. Although spectacle was still limited, the movement to private indoor stages occurring during Shakespeare's time, furthered by the influence of Royal spectacles, courtly masques and the introduction of new technologies, prompted a rise in the importance of spectacle. Primarily depending upon the audience's imaginary forces to dress the scenes, as his poetry and language through the lines of text furthered the narrative of his dramas, Shakespeare seems to recognize the audience's increasing desire for spectacle and the importance of balance between the aural and visual elements. The diverse theatrical venues available during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century signal a profound change in society and the dramatic arts of the time. This change is reflected in the struggle between the aural and visual elements of the stage and the changing relationship to the audience.

The writing of Shakespeare, Jonson, and their contemporaries reflects the struggle between the traditional aural and increasingly important visual elements. In a paper delivered at the British Shakespeare Association Biennial Conference, Brian W. Schneider of the University of Manchester explored the debate between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century audience members who came to see the play and those who came to hear it. Schneider explained and demonstrated that much of that debate was carried out in the prologues, epilogues and inductions that frame the texts (1). Authors in the period associated the audience dichotomy with intellectual status: favouring the hearers of their words

over the viewers of their work. Of the authors of the period Shakespeare seemed to be one of those most willing to reconcile the two factions of the audience. According to Schneider, "As his career unfolds Shakespeare is increasingly aware that spectacle and language require to be[sic] balanced and the audience should be encouraged to use both eye and ear to comprehend fully the theatrical experience" (9). Hamlet's advice to the players and the Chorus's Prologue to *Henry V* both recognize the two elements of the theatre experience and address the need for balance. Ben Jonson was not as forgiving or willing to reconcile the seeing and hearing audiences. The rise of the spectacle fostered by the new indoor theatres was a plague to Jonson. Schneider asserts that,

In his collaboration with Inigo Jones he [Jonson] became finally aware that Jones' spectacular effects were obscuring his verse. He reacted in typical Jonsonian fashion with bitter irony in his poem, 'An expostulation[sic] with Inigo Jones': 'O Showes! Showes! Mighty Showes! / The Eloquence of Masques! What need of prose / Or verse, or Sense t'express Immortal you'. The words reveal both recognition of the effect of spectacle, but also resentment that such spectacle should be so influential (5).

The rise of the spectacle in the new indoor stages did not immediately replace the aural dominance of the theatre art. The stage was still above all ". . . a place of verbal enunciation"; however, after the Restoration, set design and music gained in importance (Hatchuel 6).

As a result of technological advances and a shifting artistic aesthetic, the eighteenth and nineteenth century theatre became less a theatre of words and more a theatre of stage pictures and spectacle. The proliferation of perspective

scenery, increasingly elaborate and complex stage machinery and more flexible and controllable lighting systems fired the increasing drive toward illusion and representative realism in the stage spectacles. Visual elements and spectacle assumed a dominant position on stage in the eighteenth century, in part, because the sheer expanses of the new theatre houses required all but the most privileged patrons to rely on the stage picture to determine the narrative of the production. From the upper-most balcony seats the stage appeared tiny. Subtle gestures or facial expression would not be seen. Out of necessity, stage gesture became an art in itself.

Painted perspective and controllable light sources strengthened the rise of illusion and spectacle in the theatre. These painted, two-dimensional environments provided backdrops for the idealistic stage presentations of the eighteenth century. The extent of these painted spectacles could be quite elaborate. During the eighteenth century the work of Philip James de Loutherbourg and others played key roles in the evolution of stage scenery from the utilitarian architectural standard to a theatre of illusion. Not only did Loutherbourg introduce advances in technical theatre and design, but he also integrated the various scenic elements into a unified, harmonious vision. The impact of Loutherbourg's work extended beyond the stage. After leaving his position as chief stage designer at the Drury Lane Theatre (1773-1781) under David Garrick and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Loutherbourg opened the Eidophusikon: a small stage on which he created wonderful painted landscapes, accompanied by sound and lighting effects that created the illusion of motion. The Eidophusikon quickly gained popularity and is believed to be a precursor and perhaps the inspiration for staged panorama, the

diorama and eventually the cinema (Otto 66). The incorporation of these artistic and technological advances within theatrical production is a prime example of early remediation of various media forms.

The extent to which the spectacle of nineteenth and early twentieth century theatre went in an attempt to reach an ever more realistic picture was often extreme. Attempts to bring a new view to the classic plays like those of Shakespeare furthered a developing interest in archaeologically illustrated views over the traditional ideal illustration: a “real” as opposed to an “ideal” view (Meisel 32-33). This movement was furthered by the industrial revolution. The development of better printing techniques which allowed pictorial representations to be included in printed books, the development and evolution of photography and the ability for individuals to travel further distances with greater ease increased the education of the population at large and the knowledge of other places and times.

Technological advances in the nineteenth century, coupled with fervent attention to historical and architectural detail in the theatres, resulted in increasingly elaborate stage pictures. The Victorian and Edwardian actor/managers in London were committed to a pictorial *mise-en-scène*. The importance of the stage picture resulted in an interesting remediation of popular artworks and engravings of the period, by employing tableaux vivants or living representations of the pictures within the theatre production. Martin Meisel’s work, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-century Literature*, explores the crosspollination or remediation of these arts and the rise of pictorial illusion or realizations. He explains that the play became a series of

pictures created for the audience: each pictures dissolves into the action of the play from which elements of a subsequent picture will be assembled and then dissolved into yet another picture similar to “that of the magic lantern or so-called ‘Dissolving Views’,” a forerunner of early cinema (Meisel 38).

The desire to create illusion and representative realism in the stage spectacle involving moving stage-pictures or environments which could move with the actors drove the development of new stage machinery and dramatic approaches, and foreshadowed the development of cinema. Illusions like the diorama and the panorama created moving pictures, but these elements often required special buildings or intricate equipment to realize the full effect of the stage illusion. According to Michael R. Booth in *Victorian Spectacular Theatre 1850-1910*, “It was the theatre that adapted the moving panorama, where pictorialism and technology united to satisfy the spectator’s simultaneous desire for performance, scenic spectacle, and educational topography” (6-7). Gaslight, introduced into stage lighting in 1816, allowed for a control that opened new possibilities for the art of architecture and staging, until it was gradually replaced by the more flexible, more controllable and less hazardous incandescent electric light in the 1880s. By the end of the nineteenth century, large water tanks were used to create water spectacles or stage storm scenes and sea rescues, and treadmills, installed in the stage floor and run by electric power, were timed to moving panoramas to give the illusion of motion. The spectacle of nineteenth and early twentieth century theatre was elaborate, but there were finite spatial limits in the struggle for verisimilitude.

The Victorian and Edwardian actor/managers in London were committed to a pictorial *mise-en-scène*. They considered Shakespeare's own words, projected through the Chorus's lines in the prologue of *Henry V*, as not merely an apology, but a challenge for further generations to produce the play (and by extension all of Shakespeare's plays) with every possible scenic and technological advantage (Schoch 69). According to Richard W. Schoch, "It was all but inconceivable to imagine a nineteenth-century production of Shakespeare as anything other than an animated painting" (59).

The prevalence of illusion and spectacle of Shakespeare productions between 1830 and the end of the nineteenth century is witnessed in productions such as Henry Irving's 1882 production of *Romeo and Juliet* in which the spectacle of the Capulet Ball was so beautiful and constantly changing that *Daily Telegraph* reviewer Clement Scott found it impossible to concentrate on the actors (Booth 55). Michael R. Booth points out "Despite protests against the spectacular production of Shakespeare, however, it remained the dominant mode even at the height of contrary argument in the years from 1890 to 1910" (30). According to Russell Jackson, "The scenography of romantic realism . . . continued into the new century, reaching its apogee in the works of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, a staunch defender of its values against would-be reformers such as Edward Gordon Craig or the 'Elizabethanist' William Poel" (66-67).

Where the reformers Craig and Poel succeeded in changing the "view" of drama, the pictorial illusion of Tree was adopted and furthered by the infant cinema. The changing dramaturgy of the period highlights not only an elevation of the visual spectacle to a position equal to or greater than the importance of the

aural elements in the drama, but also the emerging movement towards verisimilitude, a desire for immediacy of experience within the spectators, and what Vardac considers the seeds of the infant cinema.

Cinema and the Theatre Connection

The use of theatre as a model for early film has been well established. In their book *Theatre to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film*, Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs point out that “The strongest arguments for a continuity between theatre and early cinema have in fact been made not by film historians but by theatre historians” (5). The claim of the integral link between theatre and film was maintained most strongly by A. Nicholas Vardac, author of the 1949 seminal work *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Origins of Early Film from Garrick to Griffith*. Vardac identifies what he interprets as a correlation between the realistic-romantic theatrical cycle in the nineteenth century, and the invention and early development of the motion picture. He goes so far as to suggest that, “The necessity for greater pictorial realism in the arts of theatre appears as the logical impetus to the invention of cinema” (Vardac xx).

Although Brewster and Jacobs dispute many of Vardac’s arguments, they seem to concede to his assertion that the cinematic narrative form owes a substantial debt to the stage. Vardac asserts that the early cinema modelled the spectacular, multiple-staging of simultaneous events and episodic technique of the nineteenth-century melodrama:

Time and space limitations were ignored and large numbers of scenes were pictured upon the stage for the development of the narrative. This resulted in either a progression of

pictorial episodes defining a single line of action, or, more frequently, brought about cross-cutting between two or more parallel lines of action or flashing back to earlier actions. Such an editorial pattern was of a cinematic order and was similar in its aims and conception to that demonstrated by Porter and elaborated by Griffith as basic motion-picture syntax. In its execution it resulted in such filmic devices as the dissolve, the fade-out and fade-in, or the change in the vantage point within a given scene (65).

Vardac based much of his work on the similar *mise-en-scène* of nineteenth-century theatre and early film; however, Brewster and Jacobs point out that the immediate nature of theatre makes it impossible to definitively reconstruct theatrical production prior to the advent of film or video archiving. In this case, the historian is at the mercy of prompt books, reviews, and correspondence to reconstruct the production (Brewster and Jacobs 5-6).

Although in the nineteenth century the realistic-romantic theatre and the infant cinema were both devoted to the creation of visual or pictorial illusion and developmentally ran a similar course, according to Vardac, the spatial limits of the established theatrical medium were soon realized:

When [theatrical] realism and romanticism had, toward the end of the [nineteenth-] century, attained real leaves, beeves, and ships, the stage could go no further. But the need for pictorial realism on an ever greater scale remained. Only the motion picture with its reproduction of reality could carry on the cycle (xxv).

Vardac asserts that where theatre was apparently reaching the limit of feasible, realistic spectacle, the upstart cinema promised realism by its very nature,

suggesting that the development of cinema was the next step in the drive for realism in artistic representation (xxiv-xxvi). What Vardac fails to consider is that society and the times were affecting the arts equally, moving them to develop similar approaches and elements as one artistic movement gave way to another.

The recorded and projected images of the new Cinematographe developed and exhibited by Louis and Augustus Lumière and the work of other cinema pioneers reproduced reality with a photographic accuracy. Initially, the audience draw of the early cinema was not so much for the material presented as it was the technology presenting it. Cinema was and is first and foremost a recorded medium. As the progeny of the realistic representation of the photographic medium and the “live” enactment of the theatre, film initially appeared to represent simply an advanced form of recording events: a simple advance in technology. Christian Metz explains that, historically, “Before becoming a means of expression familiar to us, it [film] was simply a means of mechanical recording, preserving, and reproducing moving visual spectacles . . .” (69). Recorded events or happenings which highlighted the mechanical reproduction abilities of the new technology but generally lacked story or plot structure, such as the Lumière brothers’ *L’arrivée d’un Train en gare* (1895), featuring the arrival of a train, were the common fare (Cobley 154-155). The camera was set at a fixed position and recorded the action of the event as it unfolded before it. These event films presented little documentations of events of public interest or the perceived popular idea of artistic merit. According to Susan Langer, for the first few decades, film appeared little more than a new technical device: a way of “preserving and retailing [existing] dramatic performances” (414). However, as

André Bazin states in *What is Cinema?*, “The faithful reproduction of reality is not art” (203).

Although a few narrative works appeared early in cinematic history, as is evidenced in the Lumière project *L’Arroseur arrosé* (the Waterer Watered 1895), prior to 1908, the non-narrative films seemed to dominate the medium. This seems to be due at least in part to the short length of the film reel. One-reel narratives had to be simple since little time was allowed to develop the characters and narrative. The introduction of the narrative element in film appears to stimulate the development of cinema as an artistic medium. In his book *Narrative*, Paul Copley demonstrates that narrative techniques in cinema generally emerged around 1908 to 1917 (154-155). Eileen Bowser, a film archivist and a leader of the international film archive movement, and Brewster and Jacobs, seem to agree with Copley’s dating of the emergence of narrative cinema. Bowser suggests that the concept of cinema as an independent art form developed with the birth of the feature film after 1908 in her book *History of the American Cinema* (266-269), and Brewster and Jacobs, maintain that narrative patterns develop and strengthen with the rise of the longer feature film after 1910 (214).

Not surprisingly, the modelling of theatre by the cinema seems to manifest with the emergence of narrative cinema. According to John L. Fell, “By 1911 a narrative structure for film had more or less established itself” probably due, at least in part, to the rise of the feature film (12). Brewster and Jacobs maintain that “[w]ith the rise of the feature film in the 1910s, films became much more like plays in the kind of narratives they related—indeed, many, perhaps most of them were

adaptations of stage plays, ancient and modern” (213). Where “primitive” cinema borrowed from diverse sources, many of which were unrelated to theatre,

[W]ith the development of longer films after 1910, theatrical models came back [to theatre as a model] with a force that overwhelmed all of the others except perhaps the literary ones. Far from being a restriction on the development of the cinema, in the 1910s the theatre became a storehouse of devices for the cinema, and has remained so (though, of course, the traffic is not so one-way as it was in the 1910s). (Brewster and Jacobs 214)

Cobley suggests that cinema turned to theatre for narrative material to attract the “bourgeois reading public who demanded more sophisticated character psychology in their narratives” (158). This view is interesting considering Vardac’s claim that in the early years, “. . . the film and the stage were hardly differentiated from one another; the cinema frequently borrowed from the theatre, while theatre, in its attempt to counter the new attraction [cinema], in its turn borrowed from the film” (xxvi).

The shared visual and narrative characteristics of the two media made theatre an ideal model but not the only model. Theatre was by no means the only model or source of material for the developing narrative cinema. Brewster and Jacobs assert that the 1978 conference of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) in Brighton, during which the members viewed as many films thought to be made prior to 1905 in the holding of their associated archives as possible. Among the findings of this conference was “that early filmmakers borrowed from a whole series of sources unlinked to the theatre . . .” (Brewster and Jacobs 5). The narrative focus of classical cinema after 1907 seems to rely

more on the narrative of short stories and literature than the theatrical model, although none are contending that a link between film and theatre does exist.

Vardac was not the only one to note the apparent connection or modelling of the narrative cinema on the stage. David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson in *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*, observe a connection between theatre and “primitive” cinema. However, where Vardac notes a similarity in the staging and the development of narrative cinematic tools, Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson note a similarity in presentation from the view of the audience:

[T]he primitive cinema largely assumed that the spectator was equivalent to an audience member in a theater. Mise-en-scene often imitated theatrical settings, and actors behaved as if they were on an actual stage. The framing and staging of scenes in constructed sets placed the spectator at a distance from the space of the action, looking into it. Devices like crosscutting, montage sequences, and dissolves for eliding or compressing time were not in general use. The spectator witnessed either a continuous stretch of time over a whole film or discrete blocks of time in one-shot scenes with ellipses or overlaps between. Filmmakers provided few cues to guide the spectator through the action; there was little of the redundancy of narrative information which the classical cinema would habitually provide (158).

The fixed position of the camera reflected the fixed position of the theatre spectator. Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson indicate that, “During the primitive period, the narration usually remained omniscient, with actions placed in a block before the viewer. . . . The narration seldom attempted to guide the spectator

actively” (162-163). The camera filmed the scenes in a long-shot while actors performed with large gestures, holding up objects relevant to the action briefly to give the spectator a better view. If the action was performed within the shot frame, its narrative function was apparently considered fulfilled (Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson 174). Since the causality occurred at a level of external action, the cinematic narratives were simple. Framing, staging and editing played a minimal role. As Mitchell Stephens points out in *The Rise of the Image the Fall of the Word*:

With theatre as the model, the role of the camera in these first movies was simple: it occupied some version of the best seat in the house, and it filmed what it saw from there. Shots almost always changed when the scene changed; edits, perhaps covered by a fade to black or a title, were made where the curtain might have fallen (91).

By these accounts the early cinematic narratives resemble the visual theatre experience: the narrative reflecting a fixed, linear, temporal progression of one scene to the next. However, Brewster and Jacobs’s work counters the notion of pre-1907 cinema as “primitive,” citing the findings of the 1978 FIAF Conference in Brighton which determined that there was a need to reconsider “the notion of ‘primitivity’ of the cinema before about 1907 . . .” (5).

In her book *Shakespeare from Stage to Screen*, Sarah Hatchuel sees the adaptation of Shakespeare to the silent film medium as an instrumental shift in the point of view, stating “The first silent transfer of Shakespeare scenes to the screen inaugurated the movement from a verbal to a visual point of view” (12). According to Hatchuel, two types of Shakespeare adaptation developed: “films that favoured

the means of theatre and concentrated on the actors, the sets and the *mise-en-scène*, and those that used the camera with the intention of cinematic creation” (12). True to its nature and initial purpose as a means to capture events, cinema was initially used as a technological recording tool. As Hatchuel explains,

At the beginning, cinema was used to record stage productions. The first kind of adaptations, therefore, worked in the mode of filmed theatre. The camera remained fixed, and the shooting was frontal. Everything was done to reproduce the theatrical experience and to immortalize the acting of great players. . . . Generally, these films, which did not free themselves from a theatre *mise-en-scène*, convey the implicit idea that the stage performance was already a complete work in itself, and that their only function was to ‘photograph it’ in order to preserve it. (13)

These productions were Film d’Art, Theatre Film or “canned theater,” which cannot be seen as a cinematic art, but simply as a recorded theatrical production.

Mitchell Stephens identifies the Film d’art movement in Paris in 1908 bent on the recording and preservation of performances on film by encouraging filmmakers to film quality stage productions with the original actors and scenery (90). The Film d’Art or Theatre Film was primarily a European movement. In the United States the sheer distance between the film and theatre hubs seemed sufficient to disconnect theatre and film (Rothwell 5). Ironically, this ‘canned theater’ movement occurs at a time when cinema is finding its own narrative style.

An intact example of the use of film as a centralized system for staging a performance is the 1911 production of F. R. Benson’s *Richard III*, which is basically an abbreviated version of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre production

filmed in the theatre. Benson's production of *Richard III* was shot from one fixed location and apparently utilized theatrical set pieces throughout the film. The use of the two dimensional painted drops in Benson's *Richard III* is painfully apparent as they swing and ripple with entrances and exits especially during the interior scenes (*Silent Shakespeare*). As a cinematic piece, the production falls short. In *Shakespeare on Silent Film*, Robert Hamilton Ball states that even with the captions, which take up almost half of the film footage, the narrative is unclear (87). Cinematically, the Benson *Richard III* is little more than a record of a reportedly remarkable stage performance; however, as the record of a stage performance by an Edwardian theatre company, the film piece is a unique resource (Jackson 107-121). Although the production design, acting, and cinematography of Benson's *Richard III* resemble "canned theater," it is actually an adaptation, as the film includes episodes not in the stage version. The cinematic art involves creation, not simply recording reality.

Although, Vardac, himself, states that the motion picture and theatre were responding to the same societal needs and tensions, he blames the rise of cinema for disrupting the natural evolution of the theatre:

By coming at the very peak of the nineteenth century cycle of realism, it [cinema] upset the normal expectations in the theatre itself. For in accordance with the principle of organic change which is regularly found in theatrical art, one might have expected , in the early twentieth century, the rapid development of newer experimental forms with the consequent breakdown of both the realistic and the spectacular styles. Just at the time, however, that such a change might have been expected, the regular development

of theatrical forms was checked and thwarted by the appearance of the motion picture (xxvi).

Early cinema evolved into a unique and highly successful visual medium capable of recording and projecting visual reproductions, but film was limited to externally driven events or narratives. Film could not explore the greater depths of human nature and the psyche better suited to verbal delivery and the physical reality of live theatre. Vardac feels motion pictures prompted a movement away from the elaborate spectacle of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century theatre in lieu of symbolism and abstract minimalism (241). The ability of film to capture and photographically present reality in a scope which could not be duplicated on stage may have been a factor in western theatre's movement away from the spectacular theatrical illusions to more minimalistic and expressionistic staging. The influence of cinema and the growing interest in human psychology and sociology seemed to refocus the theatre on areas of subjective human experience suited to the verbal medium of drama. According to Sarah Hatchuel, "Until the beginning of World War I, the theatre tried to compete with the cinema in terms of realism" (13). Hatchuel goes on to agree with Vardac's conclusion that, "cinema seems to have obliged theatre to work again on symbols and on the verbal" (14).

Although parallel timelines of the birth of cinema and the rise of symbolist theatre invite comparison and speculative cause-and-effect relationships, the concurrent societal interest in human psychology and sociology cannot be dismissed as contributing factors in the subsequent theatrical evolution. According to Robert Cohen, the movement beyond realism in theatre seemed to stem from a belief that realism would never raise the commonplace to the level of art; it would

only drag the art down to the level of the mundane. Cohen reiterates, “It [Realism] ran counter to all that the theatre had stood for in the past; it throttled the potential of artistic creativity” (235). By 1900 the theatrical stylizations initiated by the symbolists, including Jean Moréas, Richard Wagner, Aldophe Appia, and Maurice Maeterlinck, were firmly established on all fronts (Cohen 235); however, the theatrical movement away from realism was by no means absolute. The desire and drive for verisimilitude in presentation persisted, tempered by the movement towards evocation rather than literal representation.

CHAPTER 3

WHEN TIME AND PLACE SHALL SERVE

Conventions and the Representation of Space and Time

The complex interrelation of aural and visual elements, audience perception and reception, and the presentation of space and time within the production are factors in the changing conceptual focus of both dramatic and cinematic production. The study of space and time in theatre is basically a study of theatre conventions and scenography, which are historically and culturally driven. Jerzy Limon explored the changing spatial/temporal dichotomy of the world of the audience and that of the stage in “From Liturgy to the Globe: The Changing Concept of Space.” Limon sees the perception of the theatrical event, determined by the accepted relationship of the audience to the performance, as an extension of the culture and predominant societal thought. He states:

[A]mong other creations of the human mind and technical skills, theatre and drama may be seen as reflections of particular cognitive models of the universe, created in given periods. One of the peculiar features of theatre is the division, which may generally be defined as one between two times and two spaces, that of the performers and that of the spectators (Limon 46).

In effect two realities are present in a standard dramatic presentation: the reality presented in the world of the play and the reality of the audience's world.¹⁰ Susan Bennett views theatre events as two frames "the outer frame contains all those cultural elements which create and inform the theatrical event. The inner frame contains the dramatic production in a particular playing space" (149).

The audience/performance relationship is defined at least in part by the accepted conventions. Limon defines theatre conventions in relation to their purpose and their historic, cultural connection. He suggests:

The particular techniques of creating fictional space, called theatre conventions, will vary from one period to another, and it is not by any means impossible to look at theatre history from this particular perspective asking how fictional space and time are created and what is their relationship to the time and space of the auditorium and to the world outside (Limon 47).

Although theatre conventions allow some flexibility, the immediacy of live performance tends to restrict production to dramatic narratives presented in accordance with universal realities of space and continuous temporal progression.

The audience's acceptance of established and production-specific conventions determines the abilities of the dramatic art and other performance based art. Incorporation of visual media elements within theatre productions often requires an adoption of the ontology and conventions of the medium incorporated, within the existing theatre ontology and conventions. Within a multimedia or

¹⁰ Limon describes four theatre spaces: the architectural space, the stage space, the auditorium space, and the fictional space of the production.

intermedial theatre production, diverse media conventions mediate the boundaries between the production spaces, the media spaces and the audience.

The separation in the spatial/temporal dichotomy between the audience and the action is by no means absolute. Historically, drama often blurs the borders of the realities through interaction with the audience. This blurring of the boundaries between the world of the actors and the audience in Elizabethan theatre is obvious in the use of prologues, epilogues, soliloquies and asides spoken by the actors to the audience. Brecht seems to consider Elizabethan drama as the precursor for epic drama, and seems to be an influence in his “alienation effect” (Willett 45). According to Limon there was no discrepancy between the audience and the dramatic action in the Elizabethan theatre (52). In *Shakespeare from Stage to Screen*, Sarah Hatchuel supports this view of a shared reality or ritual: “By its mode of presentation, Elizabethan theatre emphasized the breaking of illusion and the notion of shared ritual. The boundary was blurred between the actor and the spectator: both were united in the same communion of entertainment and imagination” (3-4). Hamlet illustrates the interaction and crossing of the boundaries between the dramatic presentation and the reality in “The Mousetrap” scene in *Hamlet*. Hamlet begins the scene as an audience member and commentator but crosses the boundary into the world of the actor’s reality, effectively blurring the boundary between the two, which is fitting considering his desire to merge the two realities in an attempt to spotlight Claudius’s guilt. The shared reality of the Elizabethan stage fostered an interactive communication between actors and audience still present in a somewhat diluted form in the modern theatre experience.

The shared reality of the stage changed with the changing perceptions of the audience. The shared stage reality of Shakespeare's plays required the audience to work their thoughts in order to flesh out the scenes before them. The drama depended primarily on the playwright's poetry and the actor's performance to carry the narrative. Actors communicated directly with the spectators in asides or addresses, which disrupted the illusion of a realistic world existing independent from the audience (Hatchuel 104). Limited scene design and spectacle allowed for a rapid re-definition of the scenic location within the finite stage space similar to the flexible scenic movement available in the cinema. The playwright and actor were only confined by the limits of the audience's imagination. The determined location of the theatre space, within the dramatic narrative, was generally consistent within an established scene, but flexible from scene to scene. The rise of spectacle allowed a separate stage reality to evolve by requiring less active involvement on the part of the audience, distancing the spectators from the play, and the implementation of new theatrical conventions.

Stage conventions evolved as mutually accepted expectations of the audience and production. Theatre conventions establish the boundaries between the production and audience space and define the acceptable behaviours in those spaces. Theatre conventions themselves can be separated into two groups: accepted cultural conventions common to theatre of a specific time and society, and theatre conventions unique to a particular production. The lowering of auditorium lights to signal the start of a production is an example of a culturally accepted modern theatre convention which aids in distancing the audience from the action on stage yet focuses audience attention on the stage activity, allowing

for greater control of the spectacle or illusion on the stage. Theatre conventions can also be unique to particular plays or productions. In these instances the conventions must be established early in the production and remain consistent throughout the production. The audience's acceptance of established and production-specific conventions determines the abilities of the dramatic art. Although theatre conventions allow some flexibility, the immediacy of live performance tends to restrict production to dramatic narratives presented in accordance with universal realities of space and continuous temporal progression.

The immediate, interactive environment of live theatre production enforces the presence of universal physical laws on the production mitigated only by accepted stage conventions that require the audience's acceptance and willing suspension of disbelief. The physicality of the live performance anchors the performance within the time and space of the audience's reality, limited by the dimensions of the theatre building or performance space and the constant linear progression of time experienced by the players and audience. The representation of space with regard to the location of particular scenes is generally flexible only to the extent that it may change from one scene to the next, but generally the location of a scene remains constant within the scene itself, unless a production incorporates specialized stage machinery or visual media elements to give the illusion of movement between locations within the confines of the stage space. Change of scenic location usually occurs between scenes and involves the use of theatre conventions that signal the change to the audience and theatrical machinery or personnel to actively manipulate the change. Live performance does not allow either the perceptual flexibility of the created

cinematic space and digital environments or the fractured discontinuous presentation of time possible through film and digital editing.

Considered an art of space and time, scenography involves the design of the environments or stage worlds in which the dramatic action of a play takes place. The history of scene design and stage technology is grounded in the battle between the finite limits of actual stage space and the desire to create a more acceptable illusionary playing space for the dramatic narrative. The spatial fixity of the stage can restrict reality and illusion. The elaborate sets and theatrical machinery can only go so far in the representation of reality within the walls of the traditional western theatre stage. Vardac feels the spatial limit was reached when “realism and romanticism had, toward the end of the [nineteenth-]century, attained real leaves, beebes and ships” on stage (xxv). Herbert Beerbohm Tree continued the drive for realistic illusion into the twentieth century with his 1900 production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* featuring “live rabbits and a carpet of grass with flowers that could be plucked” (Brockett 435).

The spatial limitations of the stage space are not solely defined in the physical area and technical hardware of the theatre; the presentational reality also depends upon the ability to transition from one representational space and time to another. In the spectacle-laden stages of the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century, changes of location were often indicated with a change of scenery aided by stage technology and later preceded by dropping an act curtain or changing the lighting, but within the established scene, the definition of space was relatively unified and consistent. The representation of simultaneous events and parallel lines of action are common by the nineteenth century, especially in

melodrama, but the means by which the parallel storyline developed relied heavily on spectacular staging and audience accepted conventions, allowing the cutting between the two representations and suspension of the non-active storyline. Vardac considered the spectacular, multiple-staging of simultaneous events and episodic technique of the nineteenth-century melodrama as cinematic in nature and claims that the developing cinema adopted the practice “as basic motion-picture syntax” (65). Rudolf Arnheim observes that by the mid-twentieth century the stage space/time relationship from scene to scene was made more flexible with the help of theatrical conventions, but the realistic continuity of space/time common to live theatre was restrictive:

[I]n the theatre it is . . . permissible to have one scene occur at quite a different time and place from the preceding scene. But scenes with a realistic continuity of place and time are very long-drawn-out and allow no break. Any change is indicated by a definite interruption—the curtain is lowered or the stage darkened (29).

These interruptions in the productions signal the suspension of one stage reality and the creation or resumption of another space and/or timeline to the audience. The cutting between stage spaces, which in effect altered the audience point of view, also tended to result in the repetition of staged events. The audience may observe the action of Romeo forcing open the entrance and entering the Capulet tomb from the garden, and then observe the same action from the tomb. Even in productions where multiple locations or times may be represented on stage, generally only one temporal/spatial location represented is “active” at a time. Despite the nature of the scenery (three-dimensional, two-dimensional, non-

existent, or even virtual), the presence of three-dimensional live actors in real space and time, presenting a narrative drama, limits and anchors the theatre production, restricting the presentation of simultaneous actions in different locations, unless aided by technological means.

Although it is possible to present scenes in a way which fragments or disrupts the linear time scheme, stage productions generally present scenes in a serial fashion. The represented temporal segments tend to be largely limited to the presentation of scenes exhibiting larger sections of the narrative, not the brief shot or combination of shots found in cinema. Although Sarah Hatchuel states that “cinema strongly differs from theatre, a medium which is linked to the inexorable succession of time and hardly allows a turning back of the clock,” the flashback was an accepted temporal disruption to the theatrical plotline by the nineteenth century, and like many other staging devices, was adopted by the cinema (41-42). David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson defined the flashback best: “A flashback is simply a portion of a story that the plot presents out of chronological order” (65). Generally, the movement away from the progressive linear time scheme in theatre is usually less drastic than that employed in contemporary film. The physicality of the stage production also tends to anchor the temporal progression, restricting the compression and expansion of passing time to the physical presentation. Time in the theatre is constant and progressive.

George Méliès was one of the first to recognize cinema’s unprecedented capacity for manipulating and distorting time and space to create fantastical filmed illusions. From the accidental jump cut of the street scene (often credited as the birth of cinematic special effects), Méliès realized the representational possibility

inherent in the cinema¹¹. Freed from the literal progression of time and space, film could create illusions surpassing even the magician's art. As noted on the website EarlyCinema.com, "He [Méliès] pioneered cinematic special effects creating the first double exposure (*La Caverne Maudite*, 1898), the first split screen shot with actors playing opposite themselves (*Un Homme de Tête*, 1898,) and the first [cinematic] dissolve (*Cendrillon*, 1899)." The illusions created by Méliès relied on the photo-realistic nature of the recording medium. Like the magician's trick, the cinematic special effect loses its effectiveness if the representation of reality is marred or the illusion revealed. Much as Méliès created fantastical worlds in his films, theatre began incorporating film and video as the set environment for the action of the play, utilizing the very photo-realism which made Méliès' films a wonder.

With the movement of film from a simple means of reproducing reality to an often narrative art form, cinema adopted and adapted many theatrical models for furthering the narrative. Although early filmmakers used other models, devices like the dissolve, the fade-out and fade-in and changes of point of view within a scene are often attributed to the theatrical narrative of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Vardac goes so far as to suggest "cross-cutting between two or more parallel lines of action or flashing back to earlier actions between scenes" as theatrical devices adopted by film (65).

Within film, video and digital environments, both space and time are created and manipulated. The photographic nature of the cinematic medium allows for a level of representational reality which, coupled with the flexibility of perspective

¹¹ Currently disputed cinematic folklore claims an "accident" involving a jammed camera while Méliès was filming a street scene resulted in objects disappearing and transforming (the most notable being a carriage transforming into a hearse) once the filming resumed.

possible from shot to shot, is unlimited by spatial constraints. As Steve Dixon explains in *Digital Performance*:

As film theorists have explained since the early 1900s, the media screen provides a unique pliable and poetic space. Unlike the fixed point of view offered to the seated theater spectator, screen media facilitate multiple viewpoints on the same subject through the variation of camera angles; and perspective and spatiality can be transformed from a vast panorama to a huge close-up in a twenty-fourth-of-a-second blink of the projector's eye (333).

Dixon limits the audience to the more common traditional seated auditorium of the western theatre, ignoring the open Elizabethan public stages and productions that allow the audience to or alter their point of view during the course of the performance. Now these stages tend to be the exception, not the rule, and the audience is still often limited by accepted stage conventions or the dictates of personal space and decorum. In *The Art of Watching Films*, Joseph M. Boggs states, "Film . . . surpasses drama in its unique capacity for revealing various points of view, portraying action, manipulating time and conveying a boundless sense of space" Unlike the stage play, film can provide a continuous, unbroken flow which blurs and minimizes transitions without compromising the story's unity" (2). The image conveyed was also of a more dependable nature, controllable and unchanging in multiple showings.

Digitally created characters and environments, have no link with the physical world, lack even the recorded representational reality of the cinema. These computer creations adhere only to the dictated laws of the created world the creation inhabits, which is limited by the audience's perception and acceptance

of the created reality. The only spatial constraint inherent in the film is the audience's inability to observe anything perceived outside the film frame, the limits of the eye to discern the objects framed by the director and cinematographer, and the dimensionality of the representation. The constraints of digital creations are limited by the same constraints as film, plus the added limitation of the sophistication of the digital animation and boundaries of the created world.

Time within the film, video, and digital media is likewise flexible and fractured through the pre-production development, shooting, editing, and post-production process. Large segments of time are omitted or compressed, distilling the events of the narrative to its core elements. Bordwell and Thompson indicate that unlike the theatrical form of earlier filmed presentations, after 1908 few films "would make plot time identical to story time, presenting an uninterrupted stretch of time across the whole. In proceeding from one high point in the causal chain to another, certain intervals would be eliminated, repeated, or reordered in the plot" (181). Unlike the physical reality in which the audience lives, time within the cinematic and digital arts is not consistent or necessarily linear.

In film time is discontinuous. It can be sped up, slowed down, or stopped in film. Past or future events can be presented out of chronological order, as in the flashback or the less common flash-forward. According to Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson the flashback is the only permissible manipulation of the film's narrative story order and is not used as often as one might think in classical Hollywood film (42). They explain that in classical Hollywood film the flashback was generally a brief expository which serves to fill in information about a character's background, and which was largely replaced by expository dialogue with the advent of sound

(42). In “The Means of the Photoplay” from *The Film: A Psychological Study*, Hugo Münsterberg likens the flashback to the theatre’s play within a play (403-404). Basically the flashback presents a memory or past event in a limited, subjective point of view, which is seldom restricted solely to what the character experiencing the recollection could have known (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 30-31). Despite the claim that the flashback was not used often and was largely replaced by expository dialogue with the coming of sound, the use of the flashback did not disappear and seems to have resurged and evolved.

“[U]nthinkable in the classical narrative cinema,” that endeavoured to present the narration in a straight forward chronological progression, the flash-forward form was avoided (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 374). Advanced notice of future events within the cinema made the narration overtly omniscient in the eyes of filmmakers. However, the flash-forward is now being used to “illustrate” possible future events, dreams or supernatural divination. An interesting example of the flash-forward form is Kenneth Branagh’s use in his full-length film version of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Branagh incorporates the flash-forward technique to illustrate the thoughts and plans of the concealed Hamlet during Claudius’s prayer (*Hamlet* 3.3). After leaving Polonius, Claudius enters the chapel, checks to ensure that no one is in the chapel or confessional, and enters the confessional booth as the last few lines of Hamlet’s preparation to confront his mother, “How in my words somever she be shent, To give them seals never my soul consent” is heard in a voice over (*Hamlet* 3.2.386-388). As Claudius nears the end of his confession of guilt and chides “Bow, stubborn knees” (*Hamlet* 3.3.70-72), he kneels in the confessional. With Claudius’s head only inches from

the decorative grille of the privacy screen, a hand is seen on the other side of the screen. Claudius's eyes close in prayer at the end of his monologue and we are shown Hamlet on the other side of the screen in the adjoining portion of the confessional. Hamlet silently slides a long dagger through one of the holes in the decorative grille to within a centimetre of Claudius's ear and places his palm at the hilt, preparing to hammer the dagger into the skull of the unsuspecting Claudius as Hamlet's monologue "Now might I do it pat . . ." is heard in voice over. With Hamlet's line "and so he goes to heaven, And so am I revenged" (*Hamlet* 3.3. 74-75), we see Hamlet drive the blade into Claudius's skull with a spurt of blood, before a quick cut back to real time and a live, still praying Claudius reveals the flash-forward the viewers were subjected to (Branagh 100-102). This scene shocks the audience and throws those spectators familiar with the play off balance, until the shot of Hamlet stabbing Claudius is revealed as a flash-forward. Branagh uses this flash-forward view of Hamlet killing Claudius as a window into Hamlet's thoughts and initial intent which do not materialize in the course of the plot. Although Hamlet withdraws without stabbing Claudius the audience is left no illusion of Hamlet having second thoughts about his revenge, or his inability to act being a matter of conscience.

The flashback and flash-forward form have evolved to include the representation of any unsubstantial mental activity experienced by the character including day dreams or supernatural insight. The classic Hollywood cinema's method of presentation and framing of the flashback or flash-forward has likewise changed. Instead of framing the flashback by dissolves to and from the character experiencing the event, it is not uncommon to have a flashback or memory

triggered by an object or event outside the individual experiencing the flashback. The consecutive passage of time is also disrupted in the modern flashback and flash-forward form. Instead of returning to the same point in the chronological events so the viewer has not missed any events in the narrative, the viewer may return to the conscious timeline at the same point as the character, which can involve shock and momentary disorientation (Branigan 49-50). Generally, the events or conversation missed are incidental and recovered through the exposition of another character, so necessary events are not lost, but the time is fractured and shards are lost.

Unrestricted by the continuous nature of time, filmmakers continue to explore different presentations of time. As Bordwell points out, “[a] filmmaker who presents story events out of chronological order . . . risks forcing the spectator to choose between restructuring story order and losing track of current action” (33). However, human perception and the interpretation of art continue to evolve and change with the changing culture and advances in technology. Bordwell notes, “. . . we have seen in recent decades that films with complex time patterns can supply audiences with new schemata or encourage them to see the film more than once” (33). Each new experience, technology and art effects the changing perception of art and the accepted conventions of the form.

Pre-cinematic Media Incorporation in Theatre

The development and incorporation of stage conventions mitigates the limitations inherent in the immediate, physical nature of theatre production, but cannot resolve the spatial and temporal constraints imposed by the physical

universe in which the art is created. The use of visual media sources such as film in an effort to combat the spatial limitations of the live stage can be seen as an extension of the drive for verisimilitude in the theatre scenography; however, film was not the first optical device used to combat the spatial limitations of the playing space and attempt to introduce an element of simultaneity or altered dimensionality within the performance. The use of light and shadows to represent action occurring in an adjoining space has a long theatrical and cinematic history.

The history of shadow-play is ancient. One can assume that the use of shadows dates back to the earliest theatre productions. What child has not played with the projection of shadows or shivered at the unknown shadow approaching? The use of light and shadows to represent action occurring in an adjoining space has a long theatrical and cinematic history. Plato's "The Allegory of the Cave" in Book VII of *The Republic*, likens our perceptions of truth and reality to shadows of that reality cast upon a cave wall (249-252). Leon Conrad, a writer on the *Shadowstage Productions* website, best states mankind's captivation with shadows, when he states, "Our engagement with shadows is inextricably linked to perceptions of time and space, form and feeling, reality and illusion." Some consider shadow theatre or shadow puppet shows, which are believed to have been in practice as early as the fourth century in India, Indonesia, Turkey and Greece (Brockett 76-77), as an early form of cinema or at least a precursor to early cinema. The connection is not hard to see as both forms are arts presented through the representation of light and shadow to create an image.

The history of shadow-play and prevalence of shadow-play in everyday life, presupposes its use in theatre; however, it can be difficult to reconstruct from early

documents. The cinema, especially those works influenced by post-World War I German Expressionism (1919 to approximately 1933), offer clear examples of shadows used to indicate simultaneous events occurring beyond the frame of the camera picture or the view of the scene. The German Expressionist movement in cinema was characterized by “distorted and exaggerated settings, heavy and dramatic shadows, unnatural space in composition, oblique angles, curved or nonparallel lines, a mobile and subjective camera, unnatural costumes and makeup, and stylized makeup” (Konigsberg 126). Classic horror films, film noir, and other prominent films have been heavily influenced by German Expressionism. The adoption of the chiaroscuro¹² and use of shadows by these forms is evident in films such as F.W. Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922), Todd Browning’s *Dracula* (1931), Orson Welles’s *Citizen Kane* (1941), and John Huston’s *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), to name just a few. In *Film, Form and Culture*, Robert Kolker asserts that Orson Welles “was particularly interested in the Expressionist use of shadow, and *Citizen Kane* has a dark mise-en-scène that uses shadow as a thematic device” (122).

Modern theatre examples of shadow play to expand the world of the play action include the 1997 Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) production of *Hamlet*, the 2001 RSC production of *Hamlet*, the 2004 RSC production of *Macbeth*, and the 2004 National Theatre production of *Measure for Measure*. The incorporation of shadow-play often occurs within productions utilizing film and video and in some cases utilizes video for the shadow’s representation.

¹² Chiaroscuro is a term, which according to Konigsberg, “. . . derives from the Italian words for ‘bright’ (*chiaro*) and ‘dark’ (*oscuro*). It means the arrangement of light and dark in a pictorial composition” (1997, p. 54). Chiaroscuro is a key element in German Expressionism which relies heavily on low-key lighting and outsized, heavy shadows.

The 2004 RSC production of *Macbeth* which I attended is a prime example of this mixed video-projected shadow-play. The set design consisted of a large fortress wall punctuated by a single massive gothic doorway. This mobile wall shifted upstage and downstage and at left and right angles to differentiate the various interior and exterior locations of the play. During Macbeth's soliloquy and scene with Lady Macbeth where they plan King Duncan's murder (*Macbeth* 1.7), the shadows of the dining King Duncan, and other members of his party appear on the set wall (which angled from downstage left to upstage right) as if the shadows were thrown by a large fireplace in the adjoining dining room. The shadow-play of Duncan's last supper, projected upstage of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, served as a vivid reminder of the brutality of the actions discussed by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth* 1.7).

The same device was used to show the coronation of Macbeth during Banquo's soliloquy (*Macbeth* 3.1.1-10), although the position of the set wall upon which the coronation of Macbeth was projected was reversed. During the soliloquy the shadow-play showed the placing of the crown on Macbeth's head and the swearing of the lords who file past, kneel and kiss his ring as a pledge of fealty. Banquo briefly observed this action from downstage right before his ten line soliloquy considering Macbeth's achievement, the actions he took to reach that height and the possible fulfilment of the witches prophesy for his issue. The use of the video-projected shadows served to expand the physical space of the play by representing concurrent events occurring in adjacent spaces.

The 1997 and 2001 productions of *Hamlet* and the 2004 NT production of *Measure for Measure* employed the shadow-play in a slightly different manner.

The 1997 Michael Warchus *Hamlet*, which I viewed on archived video, utilized shadow-play as a means of presenting “The Mousetrap” (*Hamlet* 3.2). The travelling players, engaged by Hamlet to enact something like the murder of his father before the King, performed the drama as a shadow-play behind a screen, which separated them from the courtly audience. This unique presentation of “The Mousetrap” highlighted the separation of the court from the world of the theatrical production and indirectly symbolized the barrier separating the cinematic audience from the cinematic action in this updated production. The use of a screen and shadows is indicative of cinematic projection, which made Hamlet’s incursion upon the created world of the players startlingly significant.

The 2001 RSC production of *Hamlet* and the 2004 NT production of *Measure for Measure*, both of which I attended, used screens and shadows to expose concealed people and actions. Within the cavernous set of the 2001 RSC *Hamlet* director Stephen Pimlott employed a portable screen to serve as the arras behind which Polonius concealed himself to observe Gertrude’s conference with her son, Hamlet, in her closet (*Hamlet* 3.4). Polonius’s death was seen in silhouette as Hamlet shoots him¹³. Likewise, the 2004 NT production of *Measure for Measure* employed the screen and shadows to allow the audience a view the off-stage action between 4.1 and 4.2 as Angelo beds the disguised Mariana, who he believes is Isabella. The shadow-play in *Measure for Measure* also takes on a menacing quality as silhouettes on the upstage screen grow to eclipse the scenes played downstage: a representation of the unseen growing menace felt through the production.

¹³ The 2001 RSC production of *Hamlet* directed by Steven Pimlott was modernized and incorporated modern firearms throughout, with the obvious exception of the dual. Hamlet carried a pistol in a shoulder holster through most of the scenes.

When considering the early use of film within stage productions, one cannot ignore the popularity of optical entertainments like the projected magic lantern shows and phantasmagoria, and the earlier mechanical shows of the eidophusikon, the dioramas, and panoramas. A precursor to cinema, the popular magic lantern shows and phantasmagoria basically required little more than the magic lantern projector, a projection surface, and the often elaborately coloured and constructed glass slides. The magic lantern or phantasmagoric exhibitions could be quite elaborate: utilizing multiple projectors; front and rear projection; self-focusing projection lenses and wheeled dollies, which allowed the projected image to grow larger without significant distortion; dry ice fogs; smoke; special glass slides that could be manipulated to create moving images; and special sound devices to create the appropriate mood or effect. Void of a physical presence, the projected image is not constrained by physical laws of space or time. The use of magic lantern and phantasmagoria techniques within the stage production is possible but it tends to be more effective in smaller venues. It would seem that the altered physicality of the image would work wonderfully as a special effect on stage; however, lens limits, light sources, theatrical lighting issues and the lack of unobtrusive projection surfaces, most likely prohibited use of the magic lantern as a stage effect.

Panoramas, dioramas and the eidophusikon required special spaces to accommodate the scenery, lighting and mechanical devices and to facilitate the viewing angle necessary for the illusion. Developed in 1787 by Robert Baker, "The panorama itself was originally a huge picture painted in special perspective on a domed cylinder in such a way that it could be viewed from the center of a

circular building . . .” according to Michael R. Booth (6). He explains that the panorama evolved away from the “concept of circularity but . . . retained its great size” (6). When the panorama “became a flat picture with an illusion of depth and illuminated by special techniques it was called a diorama” (Booth 6). Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre and Charles Marie Bouton are credited with the development of the diorama. Instead of the circular perspective of the panorama, the diorama employed layers of linen and gauzes often painted on both sides, and lit by daylight in such a way that the image seems to change, morphing before the eyes of the viewer. Booth describes Loutherbouurg’s Eidophusikon as “a sophisticated combination of lighting, sound, scene painting, transparencies, cutout scenery and models in miniature theatre 10 feet wide, 6 feet high, and 8 feet deep¹⁴” (5). Theatre adapted the moving panorama to create an illusion of motion within the theatrical production. Booth states, “It was theatre that adapted the moving panorama, where pictorialism and technology united to satisfy the spectator’s simultaneous desire for performance, scenic spectacle, and educational topography” (6-7). An example of the use of panorama within stage productions is the William Charles Macready 1838 production of *Henry V*, which employed the use of a diorama to illustrate Henry’s journey from England to France, his travels within France, and his triumphant return to London (Finkel 10).

Elaborate optical and stage illusions like the moving panorama and “Pepper’s Ghost” were common to the nineteenth century pictorial stages. Mervyn Heard, an authority on vintage Victorian optical entertainments, explains the simple optical effect of Pepper’s Ghost can be created by “An actor off-stage (below or to one side) dressed as a ghost was illuminated by the light from a

¹⁴ About 3 meters wide, 1.8 meters high and 2.4 meters deep

lantern, and his transparent image, formed on an angled sheet of glass that filled the stage aperture, appeared to the audience to 'interact' with live performers" (24 September 2006). Henry Dircks and John Henry Pepper explain the apparatus for exhibiting the dramatic effect in patent application:

The arrangement of the theatre requires in addition to the ordinary stage a second stage at a lower level than the ordinary one, hidden from the audience . . . this hidden stage is to be strongly illuminated by artificial light, and is capable of being rendered dark instantaneously whilst the ordinary stage and the theatre remain illuminated by ordinary lighting. A large glass screen is placed on the ordinary stage and in front of the hidden one. The spectators will not observe the glass screen but will see the actors on the ordinary stage through it as if it were not there; nevertheless the glass will serve to reflect to them an image of the actors on the hidden stage when these are illuminated, but this image will be made immediately to disappear by darkening the hidden stage (Pepper 7-8).

The illusion first appeared on stage in 1862 in a production of Charles Dickens' Christmas story, *The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain* (Pepper 12). The illusion had some success in the theatre, but according to George Speaight, "Getting the glass into position must have been a slow and laborious process and the whole stage area behind it sterilized for any normal theatrical purpose, as no speech could be heard from it" (qtd. in Heard Introduction iii). Although great care was taken to conceal the presence of the glass and ensure the optical success of the illusion, the angled glass cut off the stage behind it acoustically. As a result, the illusion was not common in larger mainstream productions but was

successfully exploited in the smaller fairground 'ghost show' or 'bogey' (Heard Introduction ii).

Precursors to cinema, panoramas, dioramas and the eidophusikon present advances in painting and the manipulation of light to create an illusion. These optical entertainments also require "disorientation of the audience" and control over the audience focus in order to "produce magical effects of transformation", so the audience was "placed in a darkened auditorium," (Mannoni, Campagnoni and Robinson 177): an uncommon situation for an audience of the period accustomed to auditoriums remaining lit throughout the performance. Darkness is a separating and isolating element, removing the audience from the outside reality and at the same time separating them from the mechanisms of the illusion and the other audience members. In the case of the diorama, the audience was literally moved from one picture to another. The passivity of the audience's relationship to the illusion foreshadows the perceived audience to image relationship of cinema.

The increasing importance of the image or illusion is apparent both on stage and in the developing optical entertainments. In *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century*, Wolfgang Schivelbush suggests the importance of light and picture in the nineteenth century optical entertainments:

The new media of the nineteenth century—the panorama, the diorama, the magic lantern, 'dissolving views' and, finally, film—were pure aesthetic, technical creations born of the spirit of light. The main difference between them and theatre was that they created a pictorial instead of a spatial illusion (213).

Although also a trick of light, 'pepper's ghost' tended to create a spatial illusion, representing the ghostly image void of physical substance and aura. In essence, the transcending of physical space and insubstantial nature of the illusion is at the heart of the effect. Schivelbush goes on to state, "Common to all these media, from the diorama to the cinemascope screen, is a darkened auditorium and a bright illuminated image. . . . In light based media, light does not simply illuminate existing scenes; it creates them. The world of the diorama and the cinema is and illusionary dream world that light opens up to the viewer" (1995, pp. 220-221). Given their nature, cinema seems the next step in the optical entertainment evolution.

The modern theatrical employment of shadows and pre-cinematic optical entertainments of the nineteenth century accomplishes similar goals as the use of film, video and Computer Generated Images (CGI): the expansion of the physical limitations of the theatre space, a sense of simultaneity, and in some cases an expressionistic representation. In many ways cinematic incorporation within stage productions is simply an extension and furtherance of the pre-cinematic shadow-play and the presentation of optical illusions. The differences lie in the technology employed to create the image. Pre-cinematic devices, cinema, video and CGI fills in and mutes the silhouetted shadow image when stage productions require or desire more than the primal substance of the figure.

Inception of Incorporation: Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree and the Cinema

Although looked down upon by many in the theatre, some enterprising actors and artist were drawn to the new growing visual medium of cinema.

Feature films hired writers and performers from the stage and modelled shots on famous paintings and photographs in an attempt to legitimize cinema as an art form as well as a mass media (Bordwell 133). Considering the visual focus and the drive for verisimilitude of the stage picture on the illusionistic romantic stage and the increasing move to realism, initial interest and movement of theatre professionals into the new medium of cinema seems natural.

One of the prominent pioneering actors drawn to the new medium from the English theatre was Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree. Tree embraced the infant cinema early. Robert Hamilton Ball asserts, “[T]here was no precedent for so eminent an actor to allow himself to participate in a medium which was hardly recognized as respectable by the cultured public” (22). Ball explains Tree’s willingness to embrace cinema as simply a product of his eagerness for experimentation. It seems Tree was a gambler or an artistic visionary who did not fear the label of eccentric (Ball 22). In fact, Ball states, “This was not the kind of a man to let slip the opportunity to try a new medium” (23). Sarah Hatchuel maintains, “Herbert Beerbohm Tree, an actor-manager who fervently defended the spectacular aesthetic of realism for staging Shakespeare’s plays, was the first to carry out the transition to cinema,” filming scenes from his *King John* in 1899 (12), narrowly beating Sarah Berhardt’s dual scene from *Hamlet*, released in 1900, for the honour of first Shakespearean film (Buchanan 73).

Until its discovery in 1990, it was believed that no print or photographic evidence of Tree’s *King John* had survived exhibition, so film historians and scholars, the most notable being Robert Hamilton Ball, could only speculate which scene or scenes might have been depicted. Judith Buchanan’s work

Shakespeare on Silent Film has clarified the likely form of Tree's *King John* film and the possible situation surrounding its creation. Filmed in early or mid-September on the London Embankment at the British Mutoscope and Biograph Company (BMBC) open air studio, Herbert Beerbohm Tree's *King John* was released at a time when the studio was under fire for a "giddy" (an animated picture with a risqué subject) entitled *Studio Troubles*, released in late 1898 or early 1899 (Buchanan 57-59). Buchanan believes,

It would be wrong-headed to suggest that *King John* might have been made as a direct result of the bad publicity generated by *Studio Troubles*. The BMBC were churning out far too many other films in this period to justify drawing a direct causal link between any two. However, it was certainly hoped that the mere fact of a Shakespeare film would function as a sanitizing and legitimising influence on the questionable reputation of the industry as a whole and of the BMBC in particular (59-60).

Whether planned after the controversy or welcomed as a coincidence, the exhibition of Tree's *King John* served to temporarily arrest the predicted national moral and cultural decline and reinstated some of BMBC's positive press (Buchanan 58-59).

Buchanan considers Tree's keen commercial instincts as the trigger which caused his movement into cinema. According to Buchanan,

In 1895, Tree's production of *Trilby* . . . had . . . been an enormous commercial and critical success on the London stage. An 1896 American Biograph short entitled 'The Kissing Scene Between Trilby and Little Billee', drawing upon the same source material, was exhibited in London in

1897, its profile inevitably boosted by Tree's recent, acclaimed stage production. Given their interests in common, it seems likely that Tree would have been aware of the film, and, so, it must have grated with his well-tuned commercial instincts that others were receiving enhanced publicity (and returns) partly on the back of his successful stage production. Having incidentally been beaten to it back in 1897 in relation to *Trilby*, in 1899 he was no doubt anxious to stamp his own authority on the cinematic tie-in that could accompany his own stage production. Tree's collaboration with the BMBC in 1899 made such a tie-in possible (60-61).

The *King John* scenes were probably filmed in early to mid-September, during the final dress rehearsals for the stage performance. In fact, Buchanan relates the account of H. Chance Newton, published in *The Sketch* (20 Sept. 1899), who called on Mr. Tree at Her Majesty's theatre, presumably during a dress rehearsal, only to find the cast in full costume and makeup, rushing off to the studio to be filmed (61-62). According to Buchanan, "Some or all of the three *King John* scenes shot were first exhibited at the Palace Theatre of Varieties on Shaftsbury Avenue, London on 20 September 1899. The *King John* film therefore shared its opening night with that of the stage production from which it derived" (66). The advertisements for the Palace program in *The Times* indicate that *King John* remained part of the Biograph program through early winter of 1899. The stage production of *King John* ran through 6 January 1900 (Buchanan 67). Buchanan seems to agree with other scholars that the film was shot for advertising purposes. The Palace Theatre program lists the film's title as "A Scene—'King John,' now playing at Her Majesty's Theatre" (Buchanan 67). Buchanan states, "The film was

far too short to have been intended as a presentation whose meaning was autonomously self-contained: its purpose was not so much to *tell* a story as to allude to one and thus advertise where it *was* being told” (68). Tree’s tie-in to the stage performance is too obvious to be a happy accident.

In March of 1905 a London-based trade journal, the *Optical Lantern and Cinematic Journal*, announced:

Mr Charles Urban, never behind in seizing the opportunity that presents itself for making the Bioscope popular, has by means of his splendid lens used on his recent trip to America, successfully photographed the ship scene in Mr Tree’s play *The Tempest*. As the company now tour the country, there will be no need to carry the cumbersome property belonging to the scene. The Bioscope will do the work of depicting the scene by projections from behind the screen. The audience, however, will not be made painfully conscious that they are looking at animated pictures, as the colouring of the films and various other technicalities we need not mention, serve to produce the illusion of reality, equal if not better than did the original mechanical contrivances (qtd. in Ball 30).

The collaboration of cinematic entrepreneur Charles Urban and actor Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, initiated in 1903, reflected the relationship of film and theatre, while hailing a new direction for stage production. The collaboration resulted in an impressive filmed storm sequence which lasted less than two minutes but was spectacular enough to warrant independent exhibition in England and America. Although no definitive account of the filmed sequence being used during the tour of *The Tempest* exists, the apparent intent to substitute the sequence for the

staged effect was one of the first ripples in a movement flooding the stages with multimedia Shakespeare productions.

The collaboration of Charles Urban and Herbert Beerbohm Tree on the storm sequence in *The Tempest* was the first recorded account of a cinematic element filmed for intended use in a multimedia production of a Shakespeare play and may be the first intended use of film in any play. Given the elaborate nature of the illusionist and emerging realist staging of the nineteenth and early twentieth century and the development of the infant cinema, the mutual benefit of the Urban and Tree collaboration is understandable. John L. Fell explains the attraction of the movies over the technical nightmare of the illusionist romantic theatre:

Movies simply swallowed up all the techniques of naturalistic artifice which had encumbered theater stages with sets and machines of increasing complexity and sometimes questionable dependability. To a theatre audience, not to mention the stagehands, there was always some lingering doubt that a locomotive would arrive in time to miss the heroine tied to the track. On the screen one not only saw a real train, but the director could command its behavior down to as tight a rescue as anything dared . . . (232).

Always the innovator, Tree probably saw the benefit of a film representation over the elaborate set required for the spectacle of the storm sequence in the touring production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Tree's presentation of *The Tempest* was immensely popular and quite spectacular. The reviews of the production particularly note the opening storm sequence. The 17 September 1904 issue of the *Era* reported,

[M]odern science has enabled Mr Tree to fairly stagger us by some wonderful storm effects and to produce a magnificent realization of the shipwreck that opens the play. The vessel takes up the whole stage . . . Amid the shrieking of the wind and the roaring thunder we hear faintly the voices of the ship's master and the boatswain; the very timbers seem to creak; the mainmast snaps like a piece of matchwood; and the spectacle is really awesome (qtd. in Ball 31).

By all accounts the spectacle of the shipwreck was marvellous on the London stage, yet one can sympathize with a company required to tour with a vessel that takes up the whole stage. The spectacle of Tree's *The Tempest* was likewise the talk of New York. John Corbin of the *New York Times* reported on the theatrical debate over the original 1904 London production of Tree's *The Tempest*:

Beerbohm Tree's gorgeous scenic production of "The Tempest" is the occasion of a lively war of words in London. An intelligent German traveler wrote a letter to a daily paper charging that the effect of so much scenery was to banish the poet from the stage (9 Oct. 1904.)

Evidently, this criticism prompted Tree to respond in defence of his production that "Beautiful plays demand beautiful settings. The whole production is an endeavor to make the play entirely intelligible to the audience" (qtd. in Corbin 9 Oct. 1904). However, the text of the production was seriously cut throughout, including the dialogue of the opening storm scene. Corbin reports, "The shipwreck in the first scene, with a stoutly built vessel manned by infant actors, and laboring through a violent stage storm, necessitated the cutting of the dialogue entire . . ." (9 Oct. 1904). If, in fact, the dialogue in its entirety was cut, the lack of dialogue in the

event of a film substitution of the scene would not be missed, provided the storm sound effects remained intact.¹⁵

The apparatus required for the filmed storm sequence, consisting of little more than a screen or other projection surface, the projection device, and the 100-foot film segment, would take up far less space and require minimal set-up compared to the full stage vessel mentioned in the reviews and common to the extravagant staging of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century theatre. In light of the Victorian taste for spectacle and optical entertainments, the possible substitution of a filmed scene in Tree's touring production of *The Tempest* seems the next step in the incorporation of optical effects as integral elements of the stage performance and the first instance of intermedial theatre.

A detailed description of the storm and the characteristics of the filmed storm sequence appeared in Urban's catalogue and that of George Kleine who brought the film to America. The description in the Charles Urban Trading Company catalogue of August 1909 highlighted the cinematic nature of the recorded storm, providing a good indication of what was captured on film and the techniques used to heighten the effect of the film:

This remarkable picture, taken under the ordinary conditions of stage lighting during representation, illustrates the great advances in animated photography which the motion camera has rendered possible. The shipwreck with all its intense realism is reproduced with startling detail. The lightnings [sic] flash, the billows leap and roll, and break, until on the tossing ship, where the terror-stricken voyagers

¹⁵ A 9 October 1904 review of Herbert Beerbohm Tree's *The Tempest* at His Majesty's Theatre, London, published in the *New York Times* 16 October 1904, makes a point of stating that the stage will be entirely darkened for the representation of the opening storm sequence; therefore, prohibiting the lighting of the candles until the after the first act. The mentioned conditions would be ideal for projection of the filmed storm sequence.

can be seen wildly rushing about the mast snaps and crashes to the deck. Three views are given in the film, each from a more distant point as the wreck recedes, and as the film is issued tinted to the suitably weird moonlight color, the effect obtained is very fine. It is also artistically colored, which greatly heightens the wonderful effect of what is unquestionably one of the greatest triumphs of stage production ever attempted (qtd. in Ball 31-32).

Without the ability to examine the missing film segment, it is impossible to determine whether the work could be considered narrative in nature or was another example of “canned theatre.” The description of the segment and its source strongly suggests the piece was narrative in nature, but the intended purpose of the filmed work implies that it might be simply another example of canned theatre. Regardless, the incorporation of the film segment for the storm sequence could be considered intermedial. The nature and use of the film would determine which level of Klaus Bruhn Jensen’s three level definition of intermediality it represented. Unfortunately, lacking further evidence, the level of intermediality cannot be determined and the question of its effectiveness during this, often difficult to stage, opening scene of *The Tempest* cannot be answered.

Whether it was Tree or Urban who saw the potential of substituting the filmed segment for the opening scene in *The Tempest* production is unclear. Robert Hamilton Ball seems to imply that the idea was Tree’s; however, Charles Urban clearly appeared to have much to gain from the collaboration. He gained a spectacular film segment that enjoyed independent exhibition in England and America. Tree, who did not appear in the filmed segment, gained the notoriety of having his name as the actor/manager of the company attached to the recorded

production. The catalogue entry first credited the film as “photographed through the courtesy of Mr Beerbohm Tree by special and exclusive arrangement,” before embarking on the actual description of the piece (qtd. in Ball 30).

Tree’s use of a cinema tie-in to help promote his production of *King John* raises questions as to whether the filmed opening storm sequence of his acclaimed 1904-1905 production of *The Tempest* was intended to serve a similar purpose. The initial production of *The Tempest* opened 14 Sept. 1904 and ran for 143 performances. The filming of the storm scene apparently occurred prior to the 1905 revival and tour. Had Tree’s primary intent been to create a cinematic tie-in or advertisement, similar to his filming of *King John*, one would expect the filmed scenes to be shot and exhibited with dates and locations corresponding to those of the *original* stage production run. It is possible that the filmed scenes were shot with the intent of exhibiting them in the venues and cities where *The Tempest* toured, but why advertise the tour and not the original production? However, if Ball was correct and the intent was to use the filmed scene within the production, Tree’s use of the filmed scene represents a pioneering move to incorporate the cinematic medium into the theatre production and may be the first case of intermediality.

Erwin Piscator and the “Living Wall”

The collaboration of Urban and Tree was simply the first incident where the cinematic product was intended to be used as an integral part of the theatrical

production.¹⁶ Projections and ultimately film were used prominently in the political plays of German dramatist Erwin Piscator, the father of the epic theatre movement. Piscator's production, *In Spite of Everything* (*Trotz alledem!* Grosses Schauspielhaus, Berlin 12 July 1925), appears to be the first to actually incorporate film in a theatrical production; although, there is some question of precedence. It is possible that Vsevolod Meyerhold may have used film elements in a stage production prior to Piscator's production *In Spite of Everything*. Piscator, himself, contends:

[I]t was often maintained that I [Piscator] got the idea [to use film in the production of *In Spite of Everything*] from the Russians.¹⁷ In fact, I was quite ignorant of what was happening on the soviet stage at this time—very little news about performances and so on came through to us. Even afterwards I never heard that the Russians had employed film with the same function I had had in mind. In any case, the question of priority is irrelevant. It would merely prove that this was no superficial game with technical effects, but a new, emergent form of theater based on the philosophy of historical materialism which we shared (Piscator 93).

The film used in the production of *In Spite of Everything* was documentary in nature, including shots of the war, demobilization and parades of the governmental heads of state, secured from the Reich archives (Piscator 94). Piscator's use of film two decades after the intended use of a filmed storm sequence in Tree's *The Tempest* serves a much different purpose than Tree's proposed substitution.

¹⁶ This may indeed be the first use of film within a theatre production and definitely would be the first incorporation of film into a stage production of Shakespeare if proof of its use could be obtained. Lacking such proof I must presume that this is simply the first suggested or intended use.

¹⁷ Piscator's name was often linked with Meyerhold, who by 1925 had also used constructivist tubular sets, captions and slogans, film and projections.

Where Tree proposed to replace the live production of the scene with the film segment, Piscator used film as supplemental material intended to introduce an additional dimension into the production and provoke the thought of the audience. More than just “moving scenery” the film segments projected on the screens presented what Piscator referred to as “a living wall,” which he considered “the theatre’s fourth dimension.” Piscator stated, “In this way the photographic image conducts the story, becomes its motive force, a piece of living scenery” (qtd. in Willett 60). The difference in the proposed *The Tempest* usage and the actual use of film in Piscator’s productions can largely be explained by the evolution of theatre from the romantic/realistic theatre of spectacle to the more internally motivated theatre of the early twentieth century.

Piscator’s film use is extensive and complex. As Willett states:

[N]o other director used film so extensively or thought about it so systematically as Piscator, who came to employ front projection, back projection, and simultaneous or overlapping projection from more than one source [in a type of photomontage]. In his view slide projections were ‘the literary element’ . . . while film could be of three kinds: instructional, dramatic or commentary-cum-chorus. Instruction film was documentary, historical; it ‘extends the subject matter in terms of time and space.’ Dramatic film furthered the story and saved dialogue; commentary film pointed things out to the audience and emphasized the moral (Willett 113).

Piscator addresses the type of films used in his productions more than the way the films were used. The classification of the types of film Piscator used is still valid in modern production but the way that Piscator employed the film within dramatic

productions would basically fall into the category of media as commentary or virtual scenery. Piscator's scenic use of film tends to be more expressionistic than realistic, and occasionally he seems to use film as a framing device or narrative tool. By using film and other non-verbal elements on stage as integral elements of the production, Piscator succeeded in increasing the amount of information available for the spectator, and in some cases, overcame the temporal/spatial constraints of the physical stage (McAlpine 38, 207; Willett 111).

Piscator seemed to be influenced by the works of cinematic pioneer, Sergei Eisenstein. McAlpine explains:

Piscator's key method of framing the action with the appropriate information was realized through the interaction of set, projections, film, lighting effects, cartoons, and documentary footage. Piscator did not rely on the documentary nature of his materials to make his points. Instead it was the montage of disparate materials which constructed the meaning. With the methods of epic theatre Piscator produced the disjunctures, breaks, unevenness, contrasting collisions which were later theorized by Brecht. Like Eisenstein, Piscator used montage to illustrate relations which were not visible from surface reality. Unlike the montage associated with modernism, which aimed to convey the incoherence, the disjointedness of experience, Piscator's epic techniques were aimed at gaining access to more fundamental coherence based on political analysis.

(252)

Piscator brought together the different pieces of the social and political puzzle through the drama and film elements. Piscator recognized the public's desire for "raw facts." Utilizing the recorded nature of film and ocular bias of society,

Piscator delivered the supplemental information in the production by a medium he considered would achieve the best dramatic effect.

Piscator's early use of projected documentary evidence developed in tandem with an interest in the new documentary genre. McAlpine explains:

Piscator's concern with documentary evidence matches a growing interest in what became the documentary as a genre in the 1930s with the work of John Grierson and others. This perhaps went back to movements in the 1920s away from the "lies" of art and towards raw facts; and it must certainly have had a lot to do with the function of film as an obvious medium for the recording of factual evidence (63).

Previously existing documentary film featured prominently in Piscator's productions. The nonfiction nature of the film is interesting in that it is an extension of the non-narrative, event films or recorded reality of the infant cinema. The inaccessibility of desired film elements following his initial productions, prompted Piscator to another pioneering step: the shooting of a film sequence specifically for use in Alfons Paquet's *Flash Flood* (*Sturmflut*, Volksbühne, Berlin 1926) (Probst 30).

Piscator's multimedia drama illuminates an important fact in the pioneering use of film in the stage productions: the dramatic productions which prompted the use of cinematic elements and seemed most adaptable to multimedia were social and political in nature. Piscator recognized the acceptability of film within the social and politically centred dramas and appreciated the dramatic tension that the incorporation of film within the dramatic work seemed to generate. He notes:

The drastic effect of using film clips showed beyond any theoretical consideration that they were not only right for

presenting political and social mechanisms, that is form the point of view of content, but also in a higher sense, tight from the formal point of view. . . . The momentary surprise when we changed from live scenes to film was very effective. But the dramatic tension that live scene and film clip derived from one another was even stronger. They interacted and built up each other's power, and the intervals the action attained a *furioso* that I have seldom experienced in theater. (Piscator 97)

The use of film within social and politically centred drama is also recognized by Gerhart F. Probst who states, "in many theatres of the world plays have been staged that are based on historical documents, use film clips, photos, newspaper reports, court papers, sound recordings, all of which present sociological, political and economic facts in order to argue a case" (22). Given this tendency toward visual media use in plays with social and political themes, the incorporation of media elements in socially, politically or morally centred plays of Shakespeare should come as no surprise. Despite the impact and influence of film use in Piscator productions, it was forty five years before film was definitively incorporated into a professional stage production of Shakespeare.

CHAPTER 4

CAN THIS COCKPIT HOLD THE VASTY FIELDS OF FRANCE?

The Evolution of Visual Media as Scenery

The impact of mass media and film has affected drama in such a way that it is not surprising to see visual media elements incorporated into the set design or functioning independently as virtual scenery. Virtual or digital scenery has already found its way onstage in many stage productions including professional production of Shakespeare's plays. Film, video, and computer-generated environments now deliver "The vasty fields of France . . ." in *Henry V* unrestricted by the physical limitations of the "unworthy scaffold" in the "wooden O" upon which it is presented (*Henry V* Prologue 10-13). Visual media use within the stage production furthers the artistic possibilities through the annexation of the associated characteristics and perception of the media employed, effectively adding presentational tools to the director's and scenographer's tool box.

Jensen's three-level definition of "Intermediality" seems to roughly reflect the post-cinema evolution of visual elements in stage productions. The very use of projected media presents "separate *material vehicles* of representation" when incorporated within the physical world of stage production, as outlined in Jensen's first level of intermediality (Jensen 2385)¹⁸.

The earliest and most common use of the visual media elements within professional Shakespeare productions, the scenographic use of visual media

¹⁸ Emphasis in original.

elements which fall within this first level of intermediality employ transparent, non-diegetic media. The medium is transparent in that the technology presenting it does not exist within the world of the play, yet the image may exist and be recognised by the characters which inhabit the dramatic environment. Chappel and Kattenbelt explain that,

Immediacy or *transparent immediacy* aims at making the viewers forget the presence of the medium, so that they feel that they have direct access to the object. *Transparency* means that the viewer is no longer aware of the medium because the medium has—so to say—wiped out its traces (Chappel and Kattenbelt 14)¹⁹.

Kattenbelt sees cinema as an outstanding paradigm of the transparent medium:

Classical film narration conceals all aspects of the cinematography in order to give optimal accessibility and *transparency* of the possible world that the film represents. Nothing may disturb the *illusion* or rather impression of reality. Even when the represented world is obviously unreal, everything that happens is plausible. Nothing may remind us of the fact that the film is just a film (Chappel and Kattenbelt 34).

The non-diegetic use of media as scenic elements or mental projections capitalizes on the transparent immediacy of cinema to present the illusion of reality. This is especially true of media incorporation as virtual scenery, the location shot, and the presentation of elements outside the physical constraints of space and time. However, since the image is limited to the projection surface, the flexibility inherent in the created and manipulated visual media elements to exist

¹⁹ Emphasis in original.

outside the physical time and space of the stage remains limited by the very physical world it transcends.

The historic scenographic incorporation of non-diegetic media initially utilized the transparent photo-realistic nature of the medium as a means of projecting a perceived realism. However, with the increased availability of the technology and the movement of theatre away from verisimilitude to expressionism and symbolism, the projected media often became an expressionistic tool, visually representing the emotional feeling of the scene or attempting to create an emotional impact within the audience. The projected visual media seems well suited for representing emotions or thoughts, creating an additional, yet insubstantial picture within the physical reality of the stage production. In seeking to express emotional or subconscious levels, the use of film surpasses the simple recorded reality desired in the early incorporations. The nature of the media is essentially free of the spatial/temporal constraints of the stage, allowing for the representation of thoughts outside the stage production's progression (like memories and dreams).

Unlike other forms of media incorporation, the use of media as a scenic element does not seem to be limited to a particular play or genre within the Shakespeare canon. However, the use of media elements within the scenography tends to occur most frequently within Shakespeare plays involving travel and supernatural environments, especially productions of *Henry V* and *The Tempest*. The seemingly contemporary themes of *Henry V* facilitate an updated approach by directors, allowing media incorporation especially in regard to the movement between locations and within battle scenes. The environment of *The Tempest* is

likewise ideal for visual media incorporation. The power of Prospero to create and control the environment in which he and Miranda live is often projected through the use of virtual scenery within the production. The opening storm sequence in *The Tempest*, which sparked the first intended incorporation, seems to see the most media use.

Although it is commonly believed that Piscator was the first to actually incorporate film in a Shakespeare production, his much publicized and lauded production of *The Merchant of Venice* (1 December 1963) was preceded by the Mermaid Theatre's 1960 production of *Henry V* in London. Opening 25 February 1960, Julius Gellner and Bernard Miles's production of *Henry V* preceded Piscator's production of *The Merchant of Venice* by over three years. This version of Shakespeare's *Henry V* was panned by the critics as irreverent and heretical. Bernard Levin's review for the *Daily Express* begins: "The purists were dying around me like flies. Here a professor of English literature keeled over, there a Gielgud devotee bit the dust" (26 Feb 1960). It was not merely the contemporary dress, weaponry, and mannerisms but the modernization of language and the use of film which seemed to disturb the reviewers.

This controversial *Henry V* incorporated film of the Eighth Army advancing through the El Alamein minefields during the battle scenes, and VE-Day celebrations, which were presumably used during the scenes of the English Victory (Levin, 26 Feb 1960). Leslie Mallory of the *News Chronicle* states: "Gone are the longbows and the halberds of Agincourt. Fluellen, Pistol and Lieutenant Bardolph charge this week as citizen soldiers through the Alamein barrage, projected by newsreel film on a smokescreen of dry-ice fumes" (26 Feb 1960).

The nature of the projection surface used in the Mermaid production is actually unclear. Mallory's description of the film projected on dry-ice fumes is countered by Edward Goring's review in the *Daily Mail*, which simply mentions a screen (24 Feb 1960). It is quite possible that both elements were present. The dry-ice fumes may have served the double purpose of representing the smoke of war while creating a convenient projection surface.

Unlike Tree's intended substitution of the film element for both the actors and set in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the newsreels used in the Mermaid Theatre production were actually incorporated within the battle scenes to supplement the scenery and serve as a backdrop for the actors. I suspect that the VE-Day celebration footage was also incorporated within the action of the play, but little is said in the reviews about that element. Unlike many early uses of film and video within Shakespeare productions, the Gellner and Miles's *Henry V* appears to use the cinematic elements not only as a substitution for set pieces, but as an extension of the visual production, or virtual scenery, in keeping with Jensen's first level of intermediality. It was simply a production before its time. Similar modern dress *Henry V* productions are now as common as their traditional counterparts.

Considering Piscator's history of media incorporation within theatre productions one might expect the use of film in Piscator's 1963 production of *The Merchant of Venice* to be quite elaborate; however, the apparent use of cinematic elements and projections within the production seem in keeping with his general use of the medium within his political dramas and revues of the 1920s and 1930s. The set design for Piscator's *The Merchant of Venice* employed projections and large moveable prisms on rollers to facilitate the rapid changes required to move

quickly between the plays three social milieus (Schmückle and Kleinselbeck 76). Filmed reproductions of the Venetian art and architecture were projected on the prisms as a type of photomontage, framing the scenes and establishing location. The media use not only included projected images to establish scenes, but factual documentary resources related to the economic, social and political facts of the period around 1500 (the period in which the play was set) for the audience's consideration as commentary to transition between the active scenes (Schmückle and Kleinselbeck 76). According to Hans-Ulrich Schmückle and Hermann Kleinselbeck, "The purpose of this was to help awaken understanding for the social situation of a Jew in a Christian society known for its extravagance" (76). It is quite possible that these "projection interludes" included motion picture elements, but the evidence is unclear on this point. What is clear is Piscator's use of his "living wall" to move between locations and times quickly.

Piscator's endeavor to create a fourth dimension, that of thought, through the use of film in his productions could be considered expressionistic; however, the employment of documentary resources hardly seeks to express emotional experience. Instead, Piscator's film uses tended toward a narrative function and broke ground for future directors to explore more prominent expressionistic use of visual media as a scenic element in theatre productions.

Scenic Verisimilitude and Beyond

The movement of theatre away from realism and toward a more non-representational, expressionistic and surrealistic theatre environment is reflected in the film and video usage within multimedia productions. The *Oxford English*

Dictionary Online defines Expressionism as “a style of painting [or of literature, drama, or music] in which the artist seeks to express emotional experience rather than impressions of the physical world” (*OEDonline*). Expressionistic use of film and video in stage productions does not appear until considerably after the initial incorporation of realistic visual media elements within stage productions. The reason behind the apparent delay likely involves the cost and labour of film production. The majority of early film in theatre productions (like those used in the political dramas of Erwin Piscator) consisted primarily of previously recorded film segments, generally documentary in nature. The creation cost of film elements specifically for theatre production was monetarily and technically prohibitive for most productions. Footage created specifically for a production generally had an anticipated post-production life (such as the Tree and Urban *The Tempest* footage) or other monetary justification. The development of video provided a less expensive, accessible alternative to film that opened the door to expressionistic video use of the medium on stage.

Much like cinema, the ability to electronically record images on magnetic tape changed the landscape of society and profoundly affected the arts and entertainment media. As the recording, replaying, and projecting equipment became more user friendly, and less expensive to purchase and employ, video joined film as a scenographic tool of the theatre, opening the floodgates of multimedia theatre productions. The advent of video not only resulted in the increasing use of media elements in theatre productions, but the ways in which the elements were employed also broadened and became more reflective of theatre’s artistic movement and development. Although still incorporated to present photo-

realistic moving scenery, the increased availability of media elements, resulted in an increased use of these visual media elements serving expressionistic or surrealistic purposes in the twenty-first century theatre.

The prominent use of video as scenographic elements can be seen in the archived video of the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2000 production of *The Tempest* at The Other Place (TOP). The production, directed by James Macdonald, uses digital video to represent both realistic and symbolic landscapes within the play production. The limited run at TOP, which opened 30 November 2000 and ran through 6 January 2001, preceded a national UK tour to twelve venues. Built to tour, the simplicity of the set and reliance on video was not surprising. Russell Jackson describes the thrust set designed by Jeremy Herbert as a white platform with "three gentle undulations curving up in the back to a white screen with a narrow platform crossing it about ten feet from the floor level and allowing entrances and exits above from either side of the rear wall" (113). The white set provided the ideal projection surface for the video scenery.

Macdonald's production opened with a video of the sea as one might view it through a telescope. Jackson explains, "a circular monochrome image of waves was projected on the backcloth. The tempest gathered in force, and this projection was replaced by stormy breakers which presently expanded to fill the whole of the space" (113). The real presence of the ship in the opening scene was absent. The levels of the undulating set substituted for the ship's upper deck, below deck area, and the sea. As the sailors and shipboard dignitaries quit the ship, they slid to a lower level of the set bathed in textured blue light, representing the ocean depths. The entrance of Prospero (Philip Voss) and Miranda (Nikki Amuka-Bird) in

the next scene banished the video of the stormy sky to the upper portion of the stage, but with the removal and setting aside of Prospero's magic cloak, the images disappeared leaving a blank screen.

Within Macdonald's production, the video usage seems to be an element of the magic controlled by Prospero (Philip Voss) and Ariel (Gilz Terera). However, Since Prospero and Ariel guide the events in *The Tempest*, their presence during the media representation may be circumstantial. Overall, the realistic video images tended to establish the location and general tone of a scene as the action begins, represents the passage of time, and reinforces prominent actions or events within the scene. The ambiguity of the white set left any representational realism to lighting effects and the video projections, which tended to consist of stormy or choppy seas, moving sky, sunrises and sunsets.

The use of symbolic video in the production was definitely intended as a product of Prospero's magic, particularly in the last two acts of the production. The most prominent and obvious use occurred during the Wedding Masque (*The Tempest* 4.1). Each spirit participating in the masque was accompanied by a projection symbolizing the goddess represented. The entrance of the first goddess, Iris (Hazel Holder) appeared in the projected image of a rainbow. The appearance of the summoned Ceres, played by Ariel (Gilz Terera), was accompanied by the video of waving stalks of ripe wheat. Evidently this projection was changed sometime during the rehearsal or touring process since the video cue sheet for the touring version indicates that the projection for Ceres was one of blue corn. Juno (Sarah Quist), queen of the gods, entered to the projection of a fan of peacock feathers spreading across the stage. The waving grain stalks and

movement of the peacock feathers by slight currents of air left no doubt of the active video involved in the projection. A similar video device was used as Ariel and the goblins chased the thieving Stephano (James Saxon), Trinculo (James Kerridge), and the misguided Caliban (Zubin Varla) through a projected image of long grass (*The Tempest* 4.1). Unlike the movement of the masque projections, the goblin chase is projected from a first person viewpoint. The audience and viewers of the projection are participants in the chase, indicating a change in the presentation and point of view I will explore in the next chapter.

Another symbolic use of video in McDonald's production of *The Tempest* is Prospero's conjuration (*The Tempest* 5.1). Jackson describes Prospero and the lighting effects used during the scene in *Shakespeare Quarterly*: "When Prospero conjured the 'elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves' in 5.1, he was lit with a convergence of yellow, green [or blue], and red spotlights. He broke his staff, and the lighting suddenly snapped to plain white" (113).²⁰ Jackson failed to mention the creation of the charmed circle that Prospero draws with his staff during the conjuration. As Prospero conjured the powers by which he practiced his art, he slowly traced the confines of the magic prison on the ground; a representation of it appears as a fiery ring in real time on the back wall of the set. Ariel imprisons the charmed Alonso, Gonzalo, Sebastian, Antonio, and Adrian within the conjured circle by first leading them into the delineated stage area and meticulously placing each within the represented ring. Although together in prison, Alonso and his company are obviously each individually confined in prisons of their own consciousnesses. The fiery ring burned until Prospero released the

²⁰ The coloured lights Jackson mentions in the article are lighting primary colours, which when combined in the right amounts, result in a rich white light with more dimension than the plain white light that the breaking of the staff signalled.

nobles by dismissing the magic and breaking his staff. Prospero's act of breaking the staff banished the magic and extinguished the fiery ring.

The media use within McDonald's *The Tempest* serves as realistic, expressionistic and symbolic scenic elements at various times within the production. In each case the media is non-diegetic and apparently projected through Prospero's "magic."

Another example of the scenic use of media is Jeannette Lambermont's Stratford Festival 2001 production of *Henry V*, which I viewed on archived video. Although *Henry V* deals prominently with war and the politics and power surrounding the conflict, the script excludes any actual scenes of battle. Thus, the scenic use of cinematic elements often serves as a visual supplement to the script, providing modern audiences the media coverage of armed conflict which they have come to expect. John Russell Brown points out:

Often [in *Henry V*] we are shown a few clips of battlefield newsreels to the accompaniment of very loud stereophonic recordings of music, screams and explosions. With something of a quiet shock we turn back to the play-text and realize that *Henry V* is one of the few history plays without armed conflict. (32)

The incorporated media elements often depict the reality and horrors of war that offset the verbal representation within the play. The visual media elements contrast with the power of language to shape reality in the theatre.

This visual/verbal contrast was at the core of Lambermont's production. In an interview conducted by Janelle Day Jenstad, Lambermont explained that the Chorus seems to be the voice for war as a glorious enterprise with Henry as this

heroic figure, but the reality we see through the play and the video documentation is quite different (Jenstad 39). This “reality” is contrasted with the verbal account of the characters whose information may be viewed as biased by circumstances or unreliable. The scenographic use of the visual media within Shakespeare’s *Henry V* capitalizes on the misconception of the viewed media image as an unmitigated, accurate representation of reality and contrasts that reality with the verbal text delivered by the characters. This use of video exemplifies Jensen’s first level of intermediality in “the combination and adaptation of separate material vehicles of representation and reproduction” (2385).

Lambermont’s multimedia *Henry V* employed video and cinematic elements in diverse ways. Writing for *The Times*, Ontario, Jennifer Fox states, “The star of *Henry V* . . . is director Jeannette Lambermont’s and designer Dany Lyne’s vision” (21 June 2001). Moody, still, photographic images, of actual locations along Henry V’s historical path across France, were processed to make them appear as old, grainy, black and white images and were projected on the massive upstage screen to represent specific locations. These still images were specifically used for interior scenes such as the Great Hall in which Henry receives Canterbury and Ely, which the production’s projection plot specifies as a medieval interior, and in the French palace scenes, which are described as ornate and “classy” with projections of medieval windows or elaborate tapestries. These projected still images were the most realistic scenographic elements of the production.

The use of realistic scenic projections in the production was actually overshadowed by the non-realistic, expressionistic and symbolic or affective media use of video projections in the production. Lindsay Stewart of the weekly

newspaper, *Echo*, described the whole production environment as expressionistic: featuring a sharply raked stage, ramps and a rear projection video screen (9-15 August 2001). Gary Smith of *The Hamilton Spectator* described the feel of the set:

Paying homage to Bertholdt [sic] Brecht and the German expressionists of the 1930s, Lambermont spews across the black, daunting terrain of the designer Dany Lyne's clouded set, a world where honour, truth and personal valour are always cast against the greater forces of destiny.

It is a vision set adrift in cloudy smoke, flickering cinematic images that send soldiers, horses and haunted faces across a vast visual screen that lurches behind a tilted iron girder that might be a metaphor for the world stood askew (6 June 2001).

The prominence of the screen in the set dominated the other elements. Although portrayed by critics as almost constantly in use (Shaltz 33; Sousanis C1; Kate Taylor R3), Lambermont argued that, "Huge chunks of the play and all the major soliloquies were neutrally supported or just black" (qtd in Jenstad 39). This was especially true in the case of the Chorus. When the Chorus spoke, the screen remained blank. Despite Lambermont's argument that the upstage screen was not in continuous use, the prevalence and importance of the projected images to the production was indisputable, and featured prominently in the comments of the reviewers. Some reviewers interpreted the abundant video as redundant and an indication of Lambermont's disregard of Shakespeare's words and the power of language (Sousanis C1). Instead of having the audiences eke out the performance in their mind as instructed by the Chorus (*Henry V* 3.0), Sousanis and others claimed that Lambermont provided the projected images. This

argument would have been valid if the images presented were used as a realistic representation, but the majority of the images were non-realistic, non-literal and symbolic in nature. Lambermont asserts, "We don't, in fact, duplicate anything the Chorus says, with one minor exception used for a very different effect. We never show video while the Chorus is talking. And when we do show video, the images on the screen are highly poetic, non-literal, non-realistic" (qtd in Jenstad 39). The video duplication she refers to is the use of film footage featuring the legs and torsos of horses stampeding toward the camera during the French charge on the English position at Agincourt. Although this footage seems to echo the chorus's "Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them / Printing their proud hooves i' th' receiving earth . . ." (*Henry V* Prologue 26-27), it was actually used as a symbolic or surrealistic representation of the momentum and mass of the living tide sweeping toward the vulnerable, outnumbered English forces during the initial charge at the Battle of Agincourt.

While the projected still images presented a semi-realistic backdrop for the action, the cinematic or video images generally served the expressionistic goal of eliciting an emotional response. Abstract, stylized, expressionistic video comprised the majority of the moving images employed in Lambermont's *Henry V*. Abstract video images of waves and stylized explosions accompanied the scenes of the attack on Harfleur. Flames danced across the upstage screen as Henry incites his men once more to charge the breach at Harfleur (*Henry V* 3.1). The flames gave way to ominous black clouds boiling across the screen as Henry demanded the governor's surrender of the town (*Henry V* 3.3). Unlike the realism of the still projections, these moving images reflect the emotional environment of

the scene. The march of the English through the French countryside was reflected in the video of rain falling on muddy puddles as the army pantomimes trudging through the wet mud. These images trigger emotional responses beyond the realistic representation of the scene. The expressionistic use of video serves to present an emotional or psychological fourth dimension to the three-dimensional world of the production, much like Piscator's documentary sources.

Lambermont and Lyne, played upon the link between memory and the visual by manipulating the video and still images used in the production to make it appear as old footage, much like when television uses black-and-white or silent-film footage to represent stories or historical events which occurred in the past (Jenstad 39). The expressionistic use of video images was established early and framed the action of the production. Ghostly, silent, pre-recorded images of the cast members, void of make-up or costumes, were projected in a loop played as a pre-show, interval and post-show surrealistic "honour roll" of soldiers and innocent civilians caught up in the conflict of the production (Cuthbertson 8-10; Nance 44). Wade Staples, the sound and video designer for the production, states, "At the beginning you are seeing the cast, and at the end, you're seeing the faces of the dead . . ." (qtd in Nance 44). Expressionistic and symbolic in nature, this honour roll framed the action of the play and set the mood of the production. Wade explains, "There [is] so much desolation, death and destruction in war, and the video images were there to convey that in a very contemporary context using contemporary technology" (qtd in Nance 44). The honour roll video images of the actors were shot before a neutral background. The actors were out of makeup, out of character, and were often hard to recognize. Graham Abbey, who played

the title role in *Henry V*, sported a beard in the honour roll although he appeared clean-shaven through the production, and Seana McKenna's head was shaven in the video although her hair had grown back, to some degree, for her portrayal of the Chorus. The attempt to discourage recognition of the represented individual actors or characters was intentional. The silent faces of the honour roll that floated on the upstage screen void of a recognizable time or space represented the lives of those caught up in the political conflict and the casualties of war.

Much of the video use in Lambermont's *Henry V* was recorded specifically for the production, but pre-existing archived film footage of World War I and stampeding horses (mentioned earlier) was also employed in the production. This pre-existing footage was manipulated to create symbolic or surrealistic images for expressionistic representation. Video used to represent the conscription of the English army, referred to in the projections plot as the draft card transition, involved footage of soldiers marching from the Somme which was flipped and married to the original so as to form angled lines that came together, disappearing at the centre. So the seemingly endless military ranks marched at angles to disappear into the void. While representative of the personnel conscripted, the measured way the image of rank and file march through and disappear was disturbing and indicative of the pointless expense of human life in war. The most realistic use of pre-existing video in the production was the images of the battlefield carnage during the exchanges following Agincourt, which served to contrast the victory announced and the terms of peace. In the production's video projection plot this footage was described as a video collage with rhythm

alterations or changes in projection speed: slow to fast, as evidenced in the 1998 Steven Spielberg movie *Saving Private Ryan* (Staples, 10 March 2001).

Exploration into the use of virtual realities and immersive computer environments on stage is largely taking place within university theatres and media departments. During my research, I encountered journal articles and web sites devoted to two notable Shakespeare productions incorporating digitally created scenery or digital environments produced at universities in 2000: the University of Georgia's Interactive Performance Laboratory production of *The Tempest* and a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the University of Kent at Canterbury. Experimentation in intermedial theatre is not surprising in the university environment, but these two productions stand out in the way the media was employed within the respective Shakespeare productions.

The use of digitally created scenery within the traditional scenic environment of the University of Georgia's Interactive Performance Laboratory (IPL)²¹ production of *The Tempest* is largely eclipsed by the use of a motion-capture, computer-animated Ariel discussed in a chapter six. IPL founder David Saltz describes his rationale for the multimedia production of *The Tempest* on the University of Georgia website:

Up to now technology has been used in the theater to create flashy special effects that ultimately serve to distract the audience from the drama and from the vitality of the live performances. . . .We propose a new way to use technology that enhances the text, broadens the expressive range of actors and redefines what it means for a performance to be

²¹ Founded by David Saltz, the goal of the Interactive Performance Laboratory is to allow students to explore the dramatic potential of interactive technologies and ways of using interactive technologies to stage dramatic texts in traditional theatre settings (Saltz 110).

live. . . . Prospero's magic is a perfect metaphor for contemporary digital media. Prospero creates illusions that everyone else in the play accepts as reality, in much the way that digital media is increasingly shaping and manipulating our perception of reality (qtd. in Teague).

The concept that governed the University of Georgia production was that virtually everything that the characters see and experience on Prospero's island is a fiction carefully created by Prospero (Saltz 118). Digital media dominated the stage. Upstage, a thirty-two-foot wide by eighteen foot high (9.75 meters by 5.49 meters) rear-projection screen flanked by two large rock structures dominated the set designed by Allen Partridge. A stage right rock structure served to conceal Prospero's cell. Downstage of this structure a smaller screen about four feet wide and five feet high (1.22 meters by 1.52 meters) was suspended about three feet (or about a meter) off the stage floor. A cage, where Ariel was confined, occupied the second rock structure. The upstage screen remained active through the performance, illuminating images of the sea and the island environment and facilitating Ariel's creation and destruction of the magical banquet and the wedding masque. Most of the projected images served merely as digital scenery: a projected image of the scenic environment. When Prospero releases Ariel (*The Tempest* 5.1), the media projections ceased.

Lumley Studio Theatre at the University of Kent at Canterbury was the stage for a high-tech *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, resulting from a collaboration of the Institute for the Exploration of Virtual Realities (i.e.VR)²² and Kent Interactive

²² The Institute for the Exploration of Virtual Realities (i.e.VR) is an institute existing within the University Theatre and the Department of Theatre and Film at the University of Kansas with the goal of exploring the uses of virtual reality and related technologies and how they may be applied to theatre production and performance.

Digital Design Studio (KIDDS)²³. The production designer, Mark Reaney's, website explains that the production's "scenery" was generated on backstage computers and projected on to the onstage screens. The majority of the scenery was generated in real-time through the use of virtual-reality technologies (Reaney, 8 Feb. 2007). Within the production, the fairy world was the modern fantasy escape of computer games, cyberspace, and science fiction. The website describes the computer backdrops:

The grove in which we first meet Oberon and Titania . . . became in our production the scene of a computer chess game. Titania's bower was constructed in a word processor motif, with words from the play text wafting as the fronds of an enormous willow tree. Other settings included a maze through pages of the world wide web, a drippy paint program cave complete with wandering brushes and paint buckets, a sewer strewn with the remnants of old "Pac-Man" and "Pong" games and an area where the fighting lovers could battle in the midst of violent computer games (Reaney, 24 June 2009).

To increase the realistic viability of the image, the scenery was projected in stereoscopic 3D and the audience was provided with 3D viewing glasses to create the illusion of the projected images sharing the stage with the actors (Reaney, 8 Feb. 2007). These experimental productions may indicate the future of computer-generated scenery.

²³ Like i.e. VR, Kent Interactive Digital Design Studio (KIDDS) is a group researching and developing the use of computers in theatrical visualization

The Establishing Shot and Scenic Transition

The use of the film, video, or digital media to facilitate scene shifts and delineate the location of the action of the play or the scene is not a new practice, as Piscator's productions can attest, but is clearly remediation of dominant media language and elements. Theatre directors and scenographers are adopting these media conventions, generally familiar to the media-savvy audience, to facilitate scene shifts and to establish the scenes within the production, much like an establishing shot in film. An establishing shot loosely fits the criteria as a scenic element. It is generally not pervasive but does little more than establish the scene and then is generally intended to be overlooked. In some cases the persistence of the projected, virtual scene need not be continuous, especially in scenes where the virtual scenery is used in combination with more traditional two- or three-dimensional scenery. As in film, once the location of the scene is established, the attention of the audience quickly focuses on the characters and action of the scene.

The use of visual media elements as location or establishing shots may occur as early as Peter Sellars's 1994 production of *The Merchant of Venice*. According to reviews and papers on the production, a documentary dvd, and communications with Richard Pettengill, dramaturge for the production, the play was performed on a rather bare stage with only tables and chairs, and randomly placed video monitors for a set. Opening at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and then played in London at the Barbican Theatre, the production utilized pre-recorded televised video clips within the monitors to frame the scenes. Pettengill felt that Sellar's use of pre-recorded video clips expressed abstract ideas and

conveyed a sense of simultaneity. In his retrospective critique on the *The Merchant of Venice*, Pettengill observes:

As rehearsal progresses we begin to see various prerecorded video clips in the monitors, each of which resonates in various ways with scenes from the play. When the scene changes to Belmont, for example, we see footage of a posh Bel Air swimming pool, complete with a Mexican worker cleaning the pool and a concrete Buddha looking on. . . . [H]e is employing simultaneity: Shakespeare's scenes in Belmont are shown at the same time as the upscale Bel Air swimming pool, the pool cleaner, and the concrete Buddha. To me this simultaneous version of montage conveys ideas like 'conspicuous consumption', 'superficial nod to spirituality' and 'exploitation of minorities' (307).

The irony of the images of the pool, complete with Hispanic pool cleaner in the midst of a racially cast wooing scene in which Bassanio (John Ortiz) was Latino could not be lost on an attentive audience, but Pettengill's association with the play allowed for in-depth analysis of the media images which may have escaped most audience members. Instead of dwelling on the deeper meaning of the television images, the audience would most likely register the dramatic frame or establishing location shot portrayed by the images and then shift their attention to the live action. According to Pettengill, "Most critics correctly discerned that Sellars's objective with his pre-recorded video imagery was both to visually establish and to critique the setting for each scene." (62). Rather than an expressive effort to convey feelings or abstract ideas (Pettengill 307), the television images appear more as a tool to frame the scenes, like an establishing shot in film. This adoption of film conventions seems to be a furtherance of

Sellers's use of film vocabulary in a media dominated performance, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Dany Scheie's 2002 Shakespeare Santa Cruz production of *Coriolanus*, which I viewed on archived video, is also a notable example of the projected "location shot" or "establishing shot." Scheie's production used both realistic and expressionistic projections in a non-diegetic role throughout the modern-dress *Coriolanus*. Soft vertical screens flanked the central formidable stone gate which dominated the set in the production. A horizontal screen above the huge gate structure spanned the space between the two massive pillars on either side of the wooden double door. Within this flexible set environment, Scheie incorporated representational digital images to establish location of the scene and as expressionistic scenic elements within Rome and the battle scenes. The digital images projected on the screens during scene shifts were like a telescopic glass focusing on a location and then transversing intervening images and objects until the telescopic image rested on another location, progressing through a series of images to indicate movement from one location to the next. The final image defines the location of the scene: projections of Roman architecture signalled a shift to the quiet city, and the panning out and closing of shutters established a shift to the domestic or interior scenes. The digital projections used during shifts tended toward realistic representation in presentation; however, active video during particular scenes served more expressionistic and narrative functions. During battle preparations and the campaigns, a montage of soldiers at attention, bombings, soldiers on the battlefield, fortifications, and other warlike images occupied the vertical screens, serving a more expressionistic and symbolic

function, similar to the approach often taken in productions of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

Media use in Scheie's *Coriolanus* occurred only during representation of the Roman world; during the Volscian scenes the screens remained black. The ethnic casting and the costuming of the Volscians left little question as to lack of media use during these scenes: the Volscians were presented as a "barbarian" or nomadic culture. Media dominated and influenced the "civilized" culture of the Romans, but the Volscians lived more simply, unencumbered by the barrage of media images and propaganda.

Establishing elements used singularly to open and/or close the production tend to define the production not just the scene. This framework outlines and defines the entire production encompassed by the device. Usually, the opening or establishing shot of a sequence delineates the location or setting of the action but can also establish mood, time, or general situation. Like virtual scenery, this use of projected images to frame the action or establish scenes can assume a realistic, expressionistic, or symbolic purpose or serve a combination of uses within a production. However, unlike virtual scenery, the "establishing shot" or framing media elements can function as commentary, much like Piscator's use of film elements in his 1963 production of *The Merchant of Venice* or Jeannette Lambergmont's use of the "honour roll" in the 2001 Stratford Festival production of *Henry V*.

Like the use of visual media as a scenic element, the incorporation of media elements to establish the scenes and to facilitate scene shifts does not seem to be limited to a particular play or genre within the Shakespeare canon. The media

use within the production deals more with the directorial approach to the production than the inherent themes of the play. The visual media device generally is used to define substantial changes in the traditional approach to the work. Two examples of this mentioned in reviews are the Gregory Wolfe 2001 Moonwork Theatre Company production of *What You Will [Twelfth Night]* in the U.S. and Rupert Goold's 2006 RSC production of *The Tempest*.

Wolfe's production of *What You Will [Twelfth Night]* seemed to gain inspiration from Kenneth Branagh's 2000 musical movie adaptation of *Loves Labour's Lost*. Wolfe adopted Branagh's musical approach and use of newsreel footage in the production, turning Shakespeare's play into a musical comedy set in the 1940s and using newsreel footage to provide the backstory. Robert Kole describes the opening of the production:

The play opens with a newsreel film in black and white projected onto a movie screen. In the style of a wartime newsreel, it depicts the sinking of the ocean liner that cast Viola and Sebastian into the sea. The newsreel also shows Orsino's heroic rescue of Viola in his U.S. Navy Patrol boat (14).

The opening black-and-white film-projections frame and define the world of the production by establishing the time frame and environment of the ensuing dramatic action. Kole explains:

Moonwork sets the production in 1940s America using the music and fashions from that era. Olivia is the owner of a nightclub called "Club Illyria," where almost all the action of the play occurs. Malvolio is her manager and Feste her piano player. Orsino is a World War II American naval officer, and his enemy Antonio is a Japanese soldier (14).

The use of the opening newsreel film prepared the audience, alerting them to the liberties taken with the text and orienting them within the newly created dramatic world. In effect this use of media framing serves much the same purpose as an establishing shot in film, which alerts the viewer to the location of the film or a particular film scene.

Rupert Goold's 2006 RSC production of *The Tempest* seemed to use a similar device to open the production as the previously mentioned James MacDonald 2000 media-dominated production of *The Tempest* at TOP. The apparent intent in the 2000 production is that the image was what one might see through a spyglass or telescope. However in the Goold production the opening was presented as if viewed through a porthole. The two approaches have decidedly different implications.

The video installation in Goold's production, designed by Lorna Heavey, was described by Tim Walker of the *Sunday Telegraph* as "stunningly choreographed . . . [with] special effects worthy of a Steven Spielberg blockbuster" (13 Aug. 2006, p. 22). Michael Billington of *The Guardian* also uses a film comparison when describing the video design:

Having started with the shipping forecast, they [Rupert Goold and designer Giles Cadle] give us a porthole-sized view of a capsizing vessel that matches anything in the Titanic [sic] movie (10 August 2006, p. 34).

MacDonald's 2000 production of *The Tempest* placed the viewers at a distance from the storm as if it were viewed from the island. Goold's 2006 production placed the viewers within the ship with the doomed sailors viewing the tempest

from the midst of the storm. Each view of the storm sequence established the audience as observers and placed the action of the production: a temperate or tropical island in MacDonald's production, and an arctic wasteland in Goold's production. The video, in conjunction with the sound and overall production design during the pivotal opening sequence, set the location, tone, and action for the production.

The Stuff that Dreams are Made on

The incorporation of projected visual media such as film, video, or computer-generated images (CGI) to represent memories or dreams makes perfect sense when one considers the characteristics and abilities of the projected media. Not unlike the expressionistic or symbolic use of projected media as scenic elements, the objects or events presented by the medium exists outside the physical space and time of the exhibition space. The medium serves as a window into the mental processes of the characters, or a prophetic window for the characters on stage.

The use of media as a flashback or memory form essentially creates a consecutive or alternate reality through the "separate material vehicles of representation" and presentation of the medium (Jensen 2385). Within these productions, the audience is no longer restricted to a strictly external observation but allowed into the thoughts and memories of the focal character through the medium, unrestricted by the natural temporal progression of the physical environment. Because of the adoption of the media conventions, the images are accepted as memories and constructions of the character's brain. The conscious

ability of the character to stop or control the illusory processes represented by the projected images and the temporal disruption of the narrative events within the staged scene differentiates the flashback or memory form from other mental processes, such as dream sequences.

A notable Shakespeare production that utilized film as a flashback or memory element is the 1997 RSC production of *Hamlet* directed by Matthew Warchus, which I viewed on archived video. Warchus's production, with Alex Jennings in the title role, opened with an independently produced home movie flashback segment created by King Key Movies (UK), representing Hamlet's memories and recollections. Warchus effectively excised all the political aspects of this production of *Hamlet* making the production a domestic tragedy. Nicholas de Jongh explains in his review of Warchus' *Hamlet*:

The very first moments convey the shape of things to come. Instead of the ghost on the battlements—a scene that is excised—Jennings stands black-suited centre-stage letting ashes pour from an urn. Behind him are flashed celluloid images, Hamlet's recollections of his infant self romping with his dear, dead daddy, while a party celebrating the new royal marriage breaks out with cheek to cheek dancing and jazz (9 May 1997).

Benedict Nightingale of the London *Times* likewise opened his review of Warchus' *Hamlet* with a list of scripting and scenic changes at the opening of the production:

No Bernardo, no Marcellus, no ramparts, no midnight, no ghost. Just Alex Jennings's Prince in a black suit, emptying what are presumably the ashes of his father on the ground [actually through a metal grate] while photos of his younger

self cavorting with a dog and his parents flash across the wall behind him (10 May 1997).

Although the reviewers disagreed on several points of the production, including the age of young Hamlet in the film representation, the period in which the production was set, and the effectiveness of Warchus's cut and reorganized production, all of the reviewers commented on the elimination of the political content in favour of the domestic tragedy, and the cinematic influence and elements used within the production. The use of the cinema flashback allowed the audience a view inside the thoughts and memories of the grieving Hamlet while presenting two concurrent realities: that of the physical world in present time where Hamlet is scattering his father's ashes and the wedding party occurs, and the past world of his childhood memories with his father.

The celluloid flashback or opening memory sequence filmed by Rik Statman, Chris Ratcliff and the personnel of King Key Movies is titled on the film company's VTR Recording Report as "Hamlet Prologue/Epilogue" and seemed to serve that function within the production. The film segments framed the action of the production which actually begins with the marriage party for Claudius and Gertrude and ends with Horatio's line "Good night, sweet prince, and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest." (*Hamlet* 5.2); however, the incorporation of the film elements served to disrupt the standard temporal progression and, to a lesser extent, the spatial constraints of the stage production. While Hamlet stood centre stage, emptying the urn of his father's ashes before the audience in the three dimensional space of the physical stage in real time, the concurrent images of the loving dead King and his son, projected on the upstage screen behind him, towers

over the solitary figure of Hamlet (Alex Jennings,) while Claudius's (Paul Freeman's) amplified voice booms the first fourteen or so lines of the "Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death the memory be green . . ." speech, minus line nine referring to the queen as "Th' imperial jointress of this warlike state" (*Hamlet* 1.2.1-14). The film image freezes on the image of the dead King embracing his then five- or six-year-old son as Claudius's monologue concludes and the marriage party breaks through the screen, which was moved aside.

The familiarity of the audience with the convention of film flashback allows for the correct interpretation of the projected images of the father/son home movie segment as Hamlet's memories. This image is reinforced by the grainy, aged and somewhat surreal black-and-white or sepia-tinted images of the film projection, which give it the look often associated with a dream or memory. The ironic overlapping auditory element of Claudius's monologue in relation to the video images leaves the audience uncertain of the actual location. Is the speech, like the movie, a memory? Or is this an element of reality? The conclusion of the speech and breaking through of the marriage celebration banished the projection of his memory, leaving Hamlet standing solitary before the wedding feast which has imposed on this thoughts and mournful actions.

After Hamlet died, the reappearance of this filmed memory footage brings the play full circle, and frames the action. As Horatio delivers an abbreviated monologue from his address, normally addressed to the figure of Fortinbras (*Hamlet* 5.2), Hamlet's film memories once again dominate the upstage screen. Whether the images were again intended to be memories, perhaps a memory shared by Horatio, or a symbolic reuniting of the souls of father and son was

unclear. The production ended with the frozen image of the blissful face of Hamlet in the embrace of his father towering over the bloody carnage of the duel and the central figures of Horatio and the dead Prince Hamlet.

From the opening scene which presented Hamlet's filmed memories of his father, to the very quick-cutting, cinematic pace and style of the production commented on by the reviewers, cinematic elements and style seemed to dominate Warchus's 1997 *Hamlet*. Nicholas de Jongh's review comments that, "Warchus discovers a fluid quick-cutting cinematic style to conveys [sic] a sense of the pleasure-prone palace and of Hamlet haunted by a past the party-goers have forgotten" (9 May 1997). Benedict Nightingale of the *Times* was not as non-committal concerning the cinematic approach, stating "it leaves one boggling at the cheek of a director who seems to think he is patching up a film script for Hollywood, not staging Shakespeare in his home town" (10 May 1997). The reviewers of the New York tour also commented on the obvious cinematic connection. In his review of the RSC tour at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Vincent Canby of the *New York Times* wrote of Warchus's production, "the entire play is like a badly edited film composed entirely of longshots[sic]" (14 June 1998). However, the criticism of the cinematic approach seems to have had more to do with the cutting and reorganizing of the play than the actual use of the film elements.

Use of film to represent subjective perspective of past events or memories has become increasingly common in productions of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. In her 2001 Stratford Festival production of *Henry V* Jeannette Lambermont, originally intended to incorporate recorded sections of *1 Henry IV* 2.3 during *Henry*

V 2.3 as the Eastcheap characters discuss the death of Falstaff. The video is described as footage of Hal and Falstaff drinking, etcetera, shot from the Boy's perspective, which included a scene in which Falstaff hugs Hal, but Hal's face exhibits knowledge of his future betrayal of Falstaff (Staples, 10 March 2001). This video was shot but later cut from the production; however, subsequent productions of *Henry V* often incorporate such recorded sections of *1 Henry IV* with varying effect.

The practice of incorporating recorded segments of *1 Henry IV* within scenes of *Henry V* seems to originate within the cinema itself. Kenneth Branagh's film *Henry V* incorporates a flashback to the days at the Boar's Head as Henry V condemns Bardolph to hang and witnesses his execution. The most common film incursions of *Henry IV* in productions of *Henry V* occurs during the scene reporting the death of Falstaff (*Henry V* 2.3) and the condemnation of Bardolph (*Henry V* 3.6). The recorded memories focus on Hal's relationships with Falstaff and the Eastcheap gang and foreshadows Hal's ostracizing of the group.

Unlike flashbacks or memories, dreams are creations of the subconscious over which we have only limited control. This lack of control separates the dream form from the flashback or memory form in the cinema and on stage. The sleeping state of the character negates any disruption in the temporal presentation. The "action" of the scene is the dream since the dreamer is physically inactive at the time.

Although Shakespeare deals with dreams in a number of his plays, actual dream sequences occur in only three plays: *Richard III*, *Cymbeline*, and *Pericles*. Within the media of theatre and cinema, it is not uncommon to use dreams to

serve a prognostication function. Accounts of prophesy or warning through dreams occur throughout history and are often associated with a message from a divine being or the accurate interpretation and warning of an individual's subconscious. Shakespeare's dream sequences are no different, they serve to predict future events or direct the action of the character within the play.

Shakespeare's actual dream sequences are unusual in that they often violate the characteristics of individuality and insubstantiality of the experience often associated with dreams. As an activity of an individual's subconscious, dreams are generally involuntary and necessarily individual in nature. The mental or subconscious nature of dreams presupposes the lack of physical substance of objects created within the dream state. Only the brief dream sequence in *Pericles* adheres to the individuality and insubstantiality of the dream state in Shakespeare's work. In the brief sequence, which falls in the middle of *Pericles* scene 22, the goddess Diana descends from the heavens and commands Pericles to make a sacrifice at her temple in Ephesus and tell the story of his fortunes. Although this dream has an apparitional quality, it adheres most closely to what we might consider a dream: it is experienced only by Pericles and no physical objects are left by the mental or spiritual images. The same cannot be said of the dream sequences in *Richard III* and *Cymbeline*.

In *Richard III* the dream appears not to be an individual but a shared event. Richard's dream in which the ghosts of his victims haunt and curse him prior to the Battle of Bosworth Field seems to be shared with and offset by the dreams of his rival Richmond in which the same dream figures bless him (*Richard III* 5.5). The simultaneous nature of the dreams occurring in the same space by

the same figures presenting themselves to Richard and Richmond on the same stage allows for the interpretation of this as a shared event. However, the logistics of staging this sequence with the opposing characters on stage visited by the same dream figures may skew the interpretation of what should be perceived to be individual dreams, since the lines do not indicate that Richard witnesses the figures blessing Richmond or that Richmond sees the figures curse Richard.

The use of cinema or video opens new possibilities for effectively staging a parade of eleven nightmare characters (if Shakespeare's list of dream figures remains intact). In 2001 and 2002 at least two professional productions of *Richard III* in North America incorporated video elements as a solution to the Richard/Richmond dream sequence (*Richard III* 5.5). According to reviews, the 2001 Circus Theatricals²⁴ production of *Richard III* at the Odyssey Theatre in West Los Angeles, directed by Casey Biggs, used video segments contributed by the lighting designer Tim Kiley. Kathleen Foley of the *L.A. Times* found the video "especially effective in the play's penultimate nightmare sequence" (17 Sept. 2002). However, aside from its effectiveness the reviewers reveal little about the video employed.

The Stratford Festival 2002 production of *Richard III*, directed by Martha Henry, which I attended, contained an impressive dream sequence using digital video for the apparitions. Staged on the long but shallow proscenium stage of the Avon Theatre in Stratford, Ontario, the production was stylistically set in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. The set for Henry's *Richard III* consisted of a large, bare, gnarled tree just up stage to the right of center (from the audience's

²⁴ Circus Theatricals changed their name to The New American Theatre in February of 2011.

view point). This tree appeared to be part tree, part rebar²⁵ frame, as if the tree was supported by a brace within which, although twisted, it grew. Partial trees, similar to the central piece, stood just upstage of each side of the stage's proscenium frame. The structures that occupied the space were likewise a framework representation of the period architecture, constructed of modern materials and lacking obstructing walls. Although cumbersome, the structures were shiftable and were removed following *Richard III* 4.4 leaving only the trees to occupy the playing space until the tents for the opposing armies were pitched on either side of the stage. A large, white scrim backdrop stretched the entire width of the stage, upstage of the large central tree throughout the performance. Unfortunately, little use was made of this backdrop until the dream sequence, and for much of the performance, its presence was conspicuous and distracting.

The campaign tents in this production were quickly and easily set. The tents consisted of little more than draped fabric, similar to the backdrop, which was attached to the actual proscenium frame. When the tents were erected, the fabric was pulled from behind the proscenium frame and anchored to the stage floor with little effort. A drape of excess fabric, which was thrown over the anchored back section, much like the curtained entrance of an actual tent, was later pulled down to conceal the "sleeping" actors from the waist down. The white backdrop and tents provided the projection surfaces for the dream figures.

The initial approach of the dream images from a point upstage of the central tree was particularly haunting and visually effective. The figures seemed to materialize from the fog roughly where the audience would expect the horizon's vanishing point to be. I noticed something almost indiscernible which seemed to

²⁵ Steel reinforcing rods used to strengthen concrete structures.

materialize in the darkness and approach through a swirling mist, actually appearing to pass the central gnarled tree. As one might expect from a ghostly encounter, I found myself questioning and doubting what I was seeing. The dream figures became larger and more distinct as they approached the audience, but no more substantial. The images of the approaching figures was so effective that it was initially unclear whether the swirling mist which surrounded the figures was contained in the projection or supplemented by practical stage fog through which the image was projected and viewed; however, archive information indicates that both elements were present, contributing to the image and the effect.

Although the approaching dream figures were indistinct, the individuality of the characters was established long before the true identity of the spectres was manifested by the materialization of the figure or figures' disembodied head(s).²⁶ Each approach was obviously filmed separately to ensure the images' individuality. One could not mistake the build and distinct gait of Clarence for the approach of Henry VI. The princes and female figures are likewise obvious by their build and carriage. Care was also taken in the grouping of the characters including the approach of Rivers, Gray, and Vaughan together and the two young princes who materialize hand in hand.

Following the approach of each dream apparition, the figure(s) would fade to be replaced by an oversized projection of the dream character's disembodied head(s) on the stage left tent which cursed Richard, and then faded to reappear on Richmond's stage right tent to offer blessings. Because the projection surface of

²⁶ The dream sequence in the Stratford Festival 2002 *Richard III* was complete, including the often cut characters of Prince Edward and King Henry VI. The concurrent production of the *Henry VI* plays (presented in two parts at the Tom Patterson theatre) and *Richard III* would have made omission of these characters more noticeable to audience members who had attended the *Henry IV* productions. Unfortunately, the Stratford Festival did not cast across the *Henry VI* and *Richard III* productions.

the tent was so close to the actor and only partially concealing, the audience was able to witness the apparent effect that the dream figure had on the sleeping occupant of the tent. As the first figure completed its blessings, another figure could be discerned approaching through the hazy upstage projection. The procession of the approaching figures, their materialization above Richard to curse him and their disappearance and re-materialization over Richmond to bless him gradually increased in speed until the approach, curses, and blessings of the characters overlapped, much as they might in a dream or nightmare.

I found the media projection of the disembodied heads, which alternately curse Richard and bless Richmond, less impressive than the approach of the figures. Unlike the initial misty figures, the projected faces which towered over the characters addressed had a definite two-dimensional quality, highlighted by the crisp clarity of the digital image. Most likely the decision to project the clear colour images of the dream figures' profiles was a result of the desire for identification and detail. Although the appearance of a full figure to the downstage characters would have been more consistent with the approach of the dream figures, the projection of the disembodied heads of the ghostly figures allowed the enlarged projection of Richard's victim's faces and easy identification of the speakers. Although the disembodied heads shared the insubstantial nature inherent in the use of the video projection, the crisp clarity of the image was disturbingly real after the hauntingly effective approach of the figures.

The vast difference in the characteristics of the approach and the manifestation of the dream figures was the one difficulty that the Stratford Festival production had in the realization of this dream sequence in *Richard III* 5.5.

Although the two digital video elements used were effective individually, the two created “realities” had little apparent connection other than their sequential placement. The haunting vision of insubstantial, indistinct, full figures of white approaching from the mists of oblivion was replaced by vivid colour projections of profiles that lacked much of the magic employed in the initial approach. Safely staying within the implied boundaries of the stage conventions instead of exploring the flexibility allowed by the fact that the ghostly manifestations identify themselves through their lines, Martha Henry’s production missed an opportunity to tie the two digital video elements together.

Some might consider the dream sequence in *Richard III* more as a ghostly visitation than a dream. Shakespeare seems to incorporate elements of dream and ghostly visitation within the dream sequences in *Richard III* 5.5. Within the text of the play, the characters are referred to as ghosts, and to a point, the figures are in keeping with the cultural beliefs of Shakespeare’s time concerning ghosts. Ghosts were believed to be victims of murder or foul crimes that resulted in their death, who return to insure the punishment of the individual responsible for their death (Purkiss 164). The dream characters are victims of Richard and do curse him and bless Richmond; however, the sleeping state of Richard and Richmond during the visitation suggests that the visitation is a dream.

The dream of Leonatus Posthumus in Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, likewise seems to exist between the realm of dream and ghostly visitation. Posthumus’s sleeping state places the scene in the realm of dreams, and when Posthumus wakes he credits sleep in creating for him a family, which is lost when he wakes. However, the family members that plead Posthumus’s case are referred to as

ghosts by Jupiter to whom they appeal. This duality places the nature of the scene in question. Is Posthumus visited by a dream or ghosts? If the scene is intended as a dream sequence, it violates the mental nature of the dream when Jupiter leaves Posthumus a tablet on which is written his prophesied future and that of Cymbeline's kingdom. However, if the scene is intended as a ghostly visitation, we are more apt to dismiss the materialization and manipulation of physical matter in the placing of the tablet on the chest of the sleeping Posthumus. The combination of the two possibilities allows the flexibility of incorporating aspects of both dream and ghostly visitation.

In Danny Scheie's 2000 production of *Cymbeline* for Shakespeare Santa Cruz, which I viewed on archived video, the presence of six large monitors placed along the top of the curtained vaudevillian or grand pantomime set signalled the importance that was placed on the visual media elements. The monitors were in almost constant use during the production. Considering the prevalent media use within the production, the use of the monitors to represent and broadcast Posthumus's dream (*Cymbeline* 5.5) was not surprising. Valerie A. Ross describes the video incorporation:

Most ingenious . . . was the use of the screens for the projection of Posthumus' dream of his dead family's ghosts and of Jupiter's descent. The actor playing Posthumus [Hans Alrwies] played all of the ghosts of his relatives (in a pre-recorded dream sequence), a directorial decision that had both a comic and poignant effect. Jupiter then appeared as an animated classical dramatic mask with flaming eyes and a booming voice, which was actually the voice of the director [Danny Scheie], run through a distorting effect (Ross 29).

Within the media element, the crudely animated figure of Jupiter responded to the complaints of Posthumus's family represented in the various monitors overlooking the bound, sleeping figure of Posthumus centre stage. The dramatic mask representation of Jupiter on the screen changed to Jupiter's eagle bearing the tablet, which the eagle drops. The action on the screen of the dropping tablet was echoed in the actual dropping of a paperback Arden edition of *Cymbeline* which served as the prophetic tablet in this production.

Like the video stage presentation of Richard's dream in the Stratford Festival production in which insubstantial figures appeared to the sleepers, the figures of Posthumus's family appeared as pre-recorded broadcast figures to plead his case. However, in pleading Posthumus's case to Jupiter, the ghostly family members did not address or otherwise interact with the sleeping figure. The presentation of the figures as broadcasted television images distanced the figures by removing the image from the stage and placing it within the confines of the video monitors. The possible impact of the scene, reflected in Posthumus's scripted reaction, was muted by the distancing and confining of these images, and rendered implausible the physical existence of the tablet. The transgression of physical laws which made it impossible for insubstantial dream figures to manipulate physical objects or leave physical evidence of their visitation was reinforced by the inability of televised images to pass through the monitor screen which served as a barrier between the world presented on the screen and the physical world. So whether dream or ghostly visitation, the presence of the table was an insurmountable incongruence.

The use of visual media elements within stage productions has evolved and changed from a practical means to combat the spatial and temporal constraints of the stage, to a tool of representation and expression, providing another avenue of communication with the audience. In a sense, the use of film, television and other visual media has changed the perception of theatrical time and space since their first usage; however, the extent of the changes seems minimal and justifiable in light of the media function. Film, video and computer-generated elements when utilized in a scenic function are generally little more than production tools, employing “separate material vehicles of representation and reproduction” capitalizing on the recorded nature of the medium to present visual realities or documentation for the audience, while the art of cinema is generally ignored (Jensen 2385). As virtual scenery, location shot, memory or dream, the scenic incorporation of transparent non-diegetic visual media adheres to Klaus Bruhn Jensen’s first level of intermediality and tends to be the least integral media use within Shakespeare’s plays (Jensen 2385).

CHAPTER 5

THEN WE'LL SHIFT OUR GROUND

Media as a Narrative Tool

The evolution of visual-media elements in theatre productions from their use as virtual scenery to their use as narrative tools impacts the definition of time and space within the world of the theatre production and creates new ways of delivering the dramatic narrative, which tends to fulfil Jensen's second level of intermediality. No longer are film, video and CGI restricted to the presentation of virtual scenery or special effects. These media are being used within the production as devices to define the directorial concept or narrative frame; as a narrative tool to further the action of the play or present simultaneous events; and as a means of providing alternate points of view to the action. This media use is indicative of Jensen's criteria for the second level of intermediality, which "denotes communication through several sensory modalities at once" (2385).

Essentially, another reality or world of representation exists within the multimedia or intermedial production. Multimedia theatre is no longer delineated and defined by the three worlds or realities which traditionally govern stage work: the reality outside the theatre, the reality of the audience of the production, and the created scenographic and acted reality of the play. Visual media elements like film, video, and CGI have added additional simultaneous realities, the media realities, to the three currently accepted in a modern production. This presentation of multiple realities on stage is in keeping with the ideology of the postmodern

movement in theatre and reflects the second level of intermediality. Intermedial elements at this level tend to use diegetic visual media technology as a narrative tool, allowing for the presentation of simultaneous events and flexible points of view facilitated by the technology.

The technological frame establishes the dual realities inherent in a metatheatrical play-within-a-play structure, which is not considered in Jerzy Limon's categorization of the theatrical realities existing within the stage and auditorium space.²⁷ The play-within-a-play structure introduces an added reality within the reality of the pre-existing dramatic environment which is separate from the audience's reality. The introduction of media elements presents a similar separate reality within the reality of the stage environment; however, this separate reality seems to manifest primarily in the conscious presence and control of the diegetic media by the characters within the production.

The incorporation of visual-media elements in a narrative function requires the conscious, diegetic recognition of the practical media device by the characters within a production to work effectively. This media consciousness can vary from scene to scene or character to character. The awareness of the device also implies an ability to control the presentation of the narrative material. Simply put, the character conscious of the media can choose either to watch the narrative material presented or not, and in many cases the character may actually be able to stop the flow of narrative information by altering the presentation, disabling, or simply turning off the device recording or exhibiting the narrative material.

²⁷ Limon expands his categories of theatre spaces (the architectural space, the stage space, the auditorium space, and the fictional space of the production) to include the reality outside the theatre but does not consider the multiple realities present within a production of a play-within-a-play.

The practical incorporation of diegetic film and television within productions can be seen in many modern productions of Shakespeare's work. The 1997 RSC production of *Henry V* directed by Ron Daniels incorporated newsreels as a prop in the action. Paul Taylor of the *Independent* reports:

After the initial march-in, Michael Sheen's Henry and his men are seen back at court watching film footage of the corpse-littered trenches of the Great War, of soldiers going over the top to be massacred. The King's silhouette falls on the screen, the ghastly images tattoo his face (Rev. *Henry V* 13 September 1997).

The king and his lords watched the newsreels in the smoke-filled war room through the Chorus's Prologue and the scene with the French Ambassador (1.2). Trevor Nunn reportedly used a device similar to Daniels's war room footage in the 1999 National Theatre (NT) production of *The Merchant of Venice*. Portia and Nerissa view movie clips of the bachelor suitors in social situations as Portia rails against each in 1.2. The film served as a video catalogue of bachelors much like an athletic scouting tape.

As was established in the previous chapter, the use of projected, broadcast, or digital elements as a modern framework through which to view the dramatic work of Shakespeare is not uncommon in postmodern production. Often the media establishing location shot or frame is non-diegetic in nature; the characters within the production are oblivious to its presence. However, a diegetic use of these elements can also provide a frame through which to view the production. The characters within the world of the play are not only conscious of the incorporated media but in many cases control the technology presenting it. It is

not uncommon to incorporate both diegetic and non-diegetic uses of the visual media in production. Occasionally, the same medium can serve both diegetic and non-diegetic functions at different times, but this approach requires careful definition as to when the element serves a diegetic function and when the characters are oblivious to the device.

One of the most inventive and obvious uses of diegetic digital media to frame the action of a Shakespeare production is the 1999 RSC production of *The Taming of the Shrew* directed by Lindsay Posner, which I viewed on archived video. The production used a computer and digital video projection in the production as a framework or device through which the play is viewed. According to Benedict Nightingale of the *Times*:

These days it is normal to perform *The Shrew* with the “induction” in which the tinker Christopher Sly is found dead drunk outside a tavern, tricked by passing huntsmen into thinking he is really a great lord who has been out of his mind for years, washed, dressed and made to watch the play itself. Some directors also draw on a pirated version of the play call *The Taming of a Shrew*, in which the sleeping Sly is put back in the gutter where he started and, when he wakes, concludes that he has been dreaming. In other words, Shakespeare’s comedy has been a down-and-out’s macho fantasy—and may therefore not be as straightforwardly misogynist a piece as it sometimes seems (29 Oct. 1999).

Posner updated the prologue and epilogue material mentioned by Nightingale, further distancing the audience from the Petruchio and Kate centre of the production. Paul Taylor, of the *Independent*, describes the approach:

Posner positions the Kate and Petruchio story (here set in the correct period)²⁸ within a Christopher Sly framing device that has been brought bang up to date. At the start the drunken Sly (also played by McQuarrie)²⁹ is thrown out of a discotheque and carted off in a stupor by passing nobs. Instead of staging the main drama as a play-within-a-play put on for his deceived benefit, it is here presented as the activity on an Internet site that Sly stumbles upon while making a stymied effort to find porn (3 Nov. 1999).

Cleaned up by the huntsmen and presented to his “wife” (a page in disguise) who repels his lusty advances, Sly is left to his devices. Denied by his “wife,” Sly entertained himself by going online in search of Internet porn. He managed to log onto a *Politics of Power* website, but instead of porn he finds a RSC production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Where the Sly prologue alienates the audience from the problems of the chauvinist reality and abuse represented in the cruel viciousness of the play, Posner further distanced the audience by presenting *Shrew* not as simply the traditional play-within-a-play but as Christopher Sly’s virtual-reality dream. Charles Spencer of the *Daily Telegraph* explains, “If you wanted to ‘explain’ the action, you might see it as Sly’s drunken fantasy about male domination.” (29 Oct. 1999). The virtual reality framework in Posner’s *Taming of the Shrew* serves as an alienation tool by which the audience members became voyeurs into Sly’s fantasy. In a sense the media frame placed the production in the mind of the drunken Sly. The audience could view the Petruchio and Kate story as the fantasy of a drunken sot and, as such, can dismiss it. The use of the computer to create a framework for the production not only allowed the

²⁸ Here Taylor considers the use of period Elizabethan costumes as “correct period.”

²⁹ Stuart McQuarrie played both Christopher Sly and Petruchio in the production.

action of the body of the play to be viewed from a critical distance but allowed Sly to enter the created fantasy as Petruchio.

As a touring production, practicality as well as the production concept may have contributed to the set design. Ashley Martin-Davis's design creates a world of subconscious virtual-reality consisting of little more than a central movable wall, which served as the screen upon which the scenic backdrops and Internet environment were projected. Within the wall was set a central nondescript door.

Michael Billington writes:

As an idea it is ingenious; and the designer, Ashley Martin-Davis, cleverly uses a giant screen to show filmic images dissolving into reality, so that the two horsemen riding towards us in the opening first show turn into a flesh-and-blood Lucentio and Tranio (29 October 1999).

Roger Foss of *What's On* describes the approach:

Once he's [Sly's] logged on to a Politics of Power website it's as if the characters in his fantasy world of males lording it over their female goods and chattels are downloaded on to the stage from the giant computer screen images projected on the backdrop. Virtual reality transforms Sly into Petruchio, and his inevitable subjugation of eligible young Katherine from angry young "Kate the curs'd" to a "wife in all obedience" becomes all the more ironic, especially when, returning to the modern world at the end of the evening, Sly's drunken oblivion is derided by a couple of ladettes while The Prodigy's lyrics ["Smack My Bitch Up"] pound in the background (3 Nov. 1999).

The desktop computer, stage left and downstage of the wall, seemed to control the scenic projections. A projected grid, reminiscent of a perspective grid, radiated

from a downstage centre point, covering the stage and continuing up the back stage wall perpetuated the concept of a digitally created environment. With the exception of the Internet environment and the opening clip of Lucentio and Tranio, most of the projected images served as simple scenic backdrops.

The framework of the digital presentation was not ignored during the interval. A digitized voice declaring that the Internet signal was lost announced the beginning of the interval. During the interval, images of men and women slowly and randomly flashed on a screen matrix as a kind of computer screen saver. The Internet connection was re-established through a new net server at the end of the interval. At the end of the central Petruchio and Kate story, the computer announced, "Network warning, disconnect due to inactivity," and the computer-created environment vanished (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Dir. Posner).

Posner's production incorporated an ending scene from the pirated version of the play *The Taming of a Shrew*, mentioned by Nightingale, in which the sleeping Sly was put back in the gutter where he started. When he woke, he concluded that he had been dreaming. The updated prologue and added epilogue, along with the diegetic use of the computer, provided a frame for the production which allowed the modern audience to view Shakespeare's troubling play of female subjugation from a more comfortable distance.

The non-diegetic, pre-show video "honour roll" in Jeannette Lambergmont's 2001 production of *Henry V*, mentioned in the previous chapter, was only one of two framing elements in the production. Lambergmont used both live and recorded video to establish the metatheatrical expressionistic opening of the production prior to the Chorus's scripted prologue. The non-diegetic, pre-show video "honour

roll” gave the production a sense of a memorial to the victims of the war, its presence during the interval and post-show serving as a reminder of the cost of war. The looped video projected over the stage littered with dummy representatives of war casualties gave the set a sense of a play completed or a rehearsal interrupted. The diegetic live media use within the production was also established prior to the Chorus’s opening prologue to the play. The pre-show warnings and cue calling of the stage manager, heard over the house speakers, accompanied a hand-held camera transmitting a live video feed which searched the backstage area for the actress playing the Chorus. Finding the Chorus, the camera accompanied her final preparations and followed her onstage. When the Chorus entered the stage area, it was already occupied by Henry (Graham Abbey), who was ceremonially dressed in his regalia while the stage was cleared of the dummies and the live video feed of the backstage search for the Chorus was projected on the large upstage screen. With the Chorus’s entrance, the video went dark and the play began. One reviewer saw the media frame as an attempt to establish the play as a documentary film. Jamie Portman of *Southam Newspapers* states, “She [the director Jeannette Lambermont] is asking us to buy into the conceit that what we are seeing is a documentary film representation of a production of *Henry V*” (5 June 2001).

The opening provided a framework for Lambermont’s production of *Henry V* similar to the Christopher Sly computer-accessed frame in Lindsay Posner’s *The Taming of the Shrew*. Whereas Posner framed *The Taming of the Shrew* as a play within a play, or the imagined dream of a drunken Christopher Sly, Lambermont used Brechtian alienation to establish a metatheatrical frame to

distance the audience. This media frame complemented the overall eclectic and existential approach to the production. The production design, dominated by video projections, tended towards non-literal existential representation. Like Posner who adopts *The Taming of a Shrew* epilogue of Sly's return to the gutter and his awakening to the belief that the events of the play has been but a dream, Lambermont completed the established frame by having the hand-held live feed follow the Chorus offstage to her dressing room at the conclusion of the play. Once the Chorus reached the dressing room and closed the door on the video, the live video feed went black and was once again replaced by the "honour roll." Although the approach taken by the two productions is quite different, the framing of the production serves a similar purpose: establishing the context through which to view the production while providing "communication through several sensory modalities at once" in keeping with the second level of Jensen's definition of intermediality (2385).

Staging Simultaneous Events

Although stage conventions can mitigate the limitations inherent in the immediate physical nature of the theatre production, the spatial and temporal constraints imposed by the physicality of the stage production often make it difficult to stage simultaneous events. Since the verbal account of events is free and independent of the space and time of the event, accounts of events that occur beyond the limits of the established theatre production's space and time are generally delivered through a messenger, a witness to the events, or a similar theatrical device. The incorporation of visual media within theatre productions

allows directors more ways to establish the simultaneity of events within a dramatic narrative in keeping with Jensen's second level of intermediality.

Exposure to the simultaneity of "live" broadcasts which allow audiences to see events unfold in real time as they are occurring is common in contemporary society. Although the use of an alternate medium in a narrative function can be seen early in film, the use of the device in Shakespeare films and theatrical productions does not occur until directors begin to modernize the settings and environments of the Shakespeare productions, with the use of broadcast news as a narrative device becoming prominent in productions of the late 1990s and early 2000s.

The use of newscasts, live video or closed-circuit television (CCTV) in lieu of reports from a messenger or outside party is an obvious and easily acceptable narrative use of the media on stage. This presentation of simultaneous events frees the dramatic presentation from the representation of only one line of action at a time and often makes the function of a messenger or narrator redundant.

The use of media elements as narrative tools on stage falls between the use of media as a scenic element (the first level of intermediality) and complex interaction with the media (the third level of intermediality). It engages the audience, establishing simultaneity or providing alternate views of the action, much like that provided by a film or other medium, but it does not actively concern "the interrelations between media as institutions in society" indicative of the third level of intermediality (Jensen 2385).

In theatrical productions of Shakespeare's plays, the narrative use of the broadcast news medium, in lieu of delivery of events through a messenger, can be

seen as early as 1994. Peter Sellars's controversial production of *The Merchant of Venice* employed pre-recorded video to report the news on the Rialto. Richard Christiansen of the *Chicago Tribune* explains that, "News of the Rialto . . . is relayed by a smarmy TV reporter on a tabloid news show" (11 Oct. 1994, p. 24). The use of such fabricated video narrative is not surprising considering the media focus of the production. This initial use of video to serve a narrative function was just a beginning. According to one source, in 1998 the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington D.C. introduced a television in the production design of *Much Ado About Nothing* that served a narrative function. Miranda Johnson-Haddad describes the set of *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Elizabethan Theatre as, "an elaborate Little Italy bar-restaurant, complete with a large, fully equipped bar, stage left, and several booths, tables, and chairs stage right and center" (14). After several characters arrived and settled themselves on stage, Leonato enters and turns on the television over the bar which broadcasts the news of Don Pedro's triumph, opening 1.1 (Johnson-Haddad 14).³⁰

It is not uncommon to find productions which utilize the incorporated media elements for diverse functions. A prime example the incorporation of both diegetic and non-diegetic uses of the visual-media within a production is Dany Scheie's 2000 production of *Cymbeline* for Shakespeare Santa Cruz, which I viewed on archived video. Valerie A. Ross best described the set:

The woodland stage in the Festival Glen was designed as a long runway backed by a proscenium frame of burnished gold, hung with rich scarlet curtains and festooned with strands of campy plastic flags fluttering from the surrounding

³⁰ It should be noted that this is the only review which mentions the media elements. Further inquiry revealed that not only did no other review mention the use of the media, but the production designer did not recall the inclusion or use of the television medium within the production.

trees. Two large union jacks flanked each end of the stage and art deco floor lights added to the overall impression of a mock vaudeville or grand pantomime music hall. Six large television sets were spread out evenly across the upper ledge of the proscenium, serving as supplementary scenic background projection throughout the play, as well as providing a steady stream of provocative video cues (29).

The prominence of the television screens, much like those employed in Sellars's 1994 *The Merchant of Venice*, indicate the extent and prominence of the video use within the production. The multiple monitors in the media-saturated production serve several functions including the use of the televised images as an expressionistic bridge between scenes, as a narrative tool, and as a means of presenting Posthumus's dream, mentioned in the last chapter. When not in use to transition between scenes or further the narrative, the on-stage action was simultaneously broadcast on the screens.

During scene shifts, key entrances and exits, and other pertinent points within the production of *Cymbeline*, the monitors served a non-diegetic function, showing quick-cut montages of images and music similar to that of a contemporary music video, to which the characters were oblivious. Much like Piscator's early use of film in his productions, much of the footage in the video montages was pre-existing, and, in a sense, it helped establish the scene. However, where Piscator used textual information and factual documentary resources in way of a commentary for the audience's consideration, Dany Scheie used images in an attempt to mediate not an intellectual reaction, but an emotional response. The dual use of the screens in Scheie's *Cymbeline* required a shift of

the screens from a non-diegetic, affective function to a diegetic element within the scene.

The conscious presence of the media by the characters within the production allowed Scheie to present events within and outside the scripted production without the need of a messenger. Much like the Folger Theatre's production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, newscasts played a prominent role in Scheie's *Cymbeline* broadcasting Rome's request for tribute and the resulting conflict which underlies the main plot line. Steven Orgel reports, "During the Italian scenes the video monitors played RAI news in Italian and, during the Roman invasion, in Latin . . ." (283). By way of the RAI news, the audience heard along with the play's characters of Rome's request for tribute and Cymbeline's refusal to pay the sworn tribute (*Cymbeline* 3.1), Rome's declaration of war and call to arms (3.5), and the landing of Rome's forces in Britain (3.7). The news programs were broadcast in the native tongue of the country in which the scene was set, accompanied by subtitles in alternate languages for clear understanding by the intended audience within the production and the secondary theatre audience.

The conscious control of the diegetic media was exercised by two prominent characters within the Scheie's production: Cloten and Iachimo. Cloten was observed switching between televised sporting events on the screens as he bemoaned his luck and gaming losses at the opening of 2.3. The audience was given the impression that Cloten had wagered on the various events and was losing in each case. Iachimo's manipulation of the recording medium included his disabling of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera in Innogen's room and the

use of the monitors to present a slide show of the features of Innogen's room to Postumus in order to win the wager. At the top of *Cymbeline* 2.2, the CCTV security image of Innogen's bed and bedchamber is broadcast on the monitors. After Imogen goes to sleep, Iachimo emerges from his concealment within the trunk, which he tricked Innogen into placing in her room for safe-keeping, and easily disables the CCTV camera with a can of black spray paint so he has the freedom to record the features of the room.³¹ Iachimo then presented the images recorded with his digital camera on the monitors as proof to Leonatus that he has lost the wager on Innogen's fidelity (2.4). In each case of diegetic use, the visual-media element is supposedly generated and/or controlled by the characters on stage.

The use of visual media sources on stage capitalizes on the audience's familiarity with media conventions and language. In modernized versions of Shakespeare's plays the presentation of on-stage and off-stage events through "live" presentation and the use of media sources, "denotes communication through several sensory modalities at once," which is an experience common in the postmodern society (Jensen 2385).

Modern CCTV Surveillance in Shakespeare Productions

The ever present and increasing video surveillance and electronic monitoring has also found its way into directorial and design concepts of both cinematic and staged Shakespeare productions, especially those centred on political and/or moral themes. Incorporation of these video surveillance or closed-

³¹ Unfortunately, the use of the surveillance video of Innogen sleeping in her quiet room and Iachimo emerging from the trunk did not appear to be very clear on the archived video. Likely this is due to the inherent problems of recording such media sources on different media.

circuit television (CCTV) elements does not seem to occur until 2000, and seems most prevalent in productions of *Hamlet* during the first decade of the twenty-first century. The heightened political intrigue of the internal and external power struggles in *Hamlet* and the suspicion that one of those in power reached his position through foul play make updated productions of *Hamlet* ideal for the inclusion of CCTV surveillance elements, especially within a culture in which such surveillance has become the norm. Since the CCTV cameras and/or the surveillance video feed exists within the production, perceived or acknowledged by the characters populating the reality of the play production, the CCTV element serves as a diegetic medium.

Several film versions of *Hamlet*, including the modernized 2000 film production of *Hamlet* directed by Michael Almereyda and the reimagined 2009 BBC film version of Gregory Doran's 2008 RSC production of *Hamlet*, feature CCTV and surveillance video as a device to frame the scenes, monitor and capture people and events, and introduce an alternate point of view. The stage incorporation of video surveillance functions primarily as a design element or prop as evidenced in the afore-mentioned 2000 Shakespeare Santa Cruz production of *Cymbeline* and the 2001 RSC production of *Hamlet* directed by Stephen Pimlott.

The use of the video surveillance within the previously mentioned production of *Cymbeline* (2000) was rather straight-forward: a single camera monitoring Innogen's bedchamber and the surveillance image broadcast on the monitors. Prior to the disabling of the CCTV camera, its exact location within the set design was not obvious. This is strikingly different from the more prevalent use of CCTV cameras as an obvious part of the set design, reflected in the 2001 RSC

production of *Hamlet*. Within Pimlott's production the remotely adjusted moving cameras were a noticeably active part of the production.

The stark modern commercial/political tone set through the environment and costumes of Pimlott's *Hamlet*, which I attended, reflects the suspicious modern surveillance sensibility. The deep massive setting, designed by Alison Chitty, incorporated motorized track-lights and cameras which followed the movements of prominent characters (especially those of Hamlet), contributing to the tone of corporate/political intrigue within the production. The obvious presence of the CCTV cameras was assumed to be a tool and reflection of the distrustful new administration. Samuel West, who played Hamlet in the production, reflects the questions inherent in the current surveillance society in his comments on the CCTV cameras to interviewer Abigail Rokison:

Once you put in CCTV cameras that move, you have to decide what is worth your focus. The phrase 'potential subversive' is bandied around, but what it actually means is someone who doesn't like what we do, which is Hamlet. So of course Hamlet gets followed most of the time (West 2002).

In the current age of pervasive video surveillance, the presence of the CCTV cameras was often overlooked by the audience until well into the production³²; however, Hamlet appeared acutely aware of the constant surveillance. The images captured by these CCTV cameras were never actually seen by the audience, but West mentions that, up until the first preview, a bank of nine monitors was placed upstage centre, which apparently was intended to broadcast

³² Interviewer Abigail Rokison states she was unaware of the CCTV cameras until Hamlet's reaction to Ophelia and them when he asks "Where is your father?" (*Hamlet* 3.1).

the CCTV images captured by the cameras. According to West, Pimlott cut the monitors because “they were the wrong sort of sexy” (West 2002). Reportedly, one intended use of the bank of monitors was to broadcast recorded images of West playing the “To be, or not to be . . .” soliloquy (*Hamlet* 3.1)³³ in different ways, presumably during the presentation of the soliloquy onstage. West explains, “We filmed me doing ‘To be or not to be’ in various ways We wanted to make various points about media representation, but it wasn’t right” (West 2002). In answer to further inquiry on the intended use of the CCTV images during the “To be . . .” soliloquy, West described the broadcast images intended during the soliloquy as mute, fractured, and edited images of the scene which were not the same performance as the live one he was giving. He went on to explain,

There also wasn’t enough speed or image manipulation to make it exciting, and at any rate it was very distracting. It seemed better in the end to let the audience imagine who and what was on the other end of the CCTV cameras, and to what incriminating use the footage might be put to later. (West, 27 June 2008)

The inclusion of surveillance cameras within stage productions of Shakespeare plays is more common than the use of the surveillance video common in film productions, because of the nature of the medium. The quick cutting shots and controlled focus of the film medium allow for intercut views of the CCTV images. This approach is not as effective in the open stage environment where the individual audience members ultimately have control over their focus.

³³ According to *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. Eds. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.

However, a few stage productions have experimented with the use of both the CCTV cameras and the surveillance video feed within the final production.

Although Gregory Doran's 2008 RSC production of *Hamlet* apparently fostered an atmosphere of surveillance, there is no evidence of the use of CCTV cameras or surveillance video within the reviews of the production; however, in the reimaged 2009 BBC film version of Doran's production, surveillance elements are prominent. The reflective nature of Robert Jones's set and the prevalent sense of surveillance in Doran's 2008 production of *Hamlet* was mentioned by several reviewers.³⁴ Laura Grace Goodwin described the set as one in which "Small yet vivid details . . . enlivened Doran's harshly elegant Elsinore, with its polished floor and mirrored wall/window that offered a perfect position for spying" (119). David Conrad actually described Hamlet as inhabiting, "a panopticon of black mirrors . . ." (10 August 2008). Conrad's description here implies a double meaning, referring to both the physical design of Elsinore and Hamlet's psychological state.

The use of the reflective set seemed to serve a dual purpose, as it "offered a perfect position for spying" (Goodwin 119) and it reflected the image of the audience back at them. In this way, it required the audience to see themselves as a part of the drama (Billen, 25 August 2008). The reflection of the audience was fundamentally a reflection of the current society and culture. The audience saw themselves in the events on stage and the environment in which the drama played out. In Dominic Cavendish's interview with Gregory Doran concerning this

³⁴ The sense of surveillance prevalent in the production design was mentioned in reviews by David Benedict, *Variety* 6 August 2008, Andrew Billen "Fit for a Prince." *New Statesman*. 25 August 2008, Jeremy Lopez "Shakespeare and Middleton at the RSC and in London, 2008" *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 60.3 (Fall 2009), and Paul Taylor, *Independent* 6 August 2008.

production of *Hamlet*, Cavendish suggests that “his [Doran’s] production deploying mirrors to emphasise [sic] the atmosphere of continual surveillance at Elsinore, the evening will evidently be charged with thoughts about our own Big Brother society” (23 July 2008). The surveillance society reflected in Doran’s *Hamlet* is our own, regardless of the lack of apparent CCTV cameras within the stage production design, so the inclusion of the CCTV elements within the 2009 filmed production of Doran’s *Hamlet* seems a natural progression when transferring from the stage to the cinematic medium.

The atmosphere of hyper- surveillance within the 2009 BBC film version is reinforced by the intercutting of the surveillance video with the regular narrative elements. Hamlet is quite aware of the constant surveillance. After the departure of Polonius, the Players, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and prior to Hamlet’s “rogue and peasant slave” soliloquy (*Hamlet* 2.2.551), Hamlet tears the CCTV camera observing him from its mounting. As Hamlet dashes the camera to the ground, he declares, “Now³⁵ I am alone” (*Hamlet* 2.2.551). For a brief time Hamlet assumes control and power over the images.

The change in medium from stage to film facilitated the inclusion of the CCTV cameras and footage within Doran’s film translation of *Hamlet*. The use of CCTV cameras on stage can usually only indicate or suggest the surveillance. The shared physicality of the stage space means the audience shares the situation with the characters within the drama who may realize they are being observed but be oblivious to who is observing, when they are the focus of observation, and to what use the information may be put. In those few instances when the theatre audience is granted access to the surveillance video, there are

³⁵ Emphasis added.

often problems, including a split focus and difficulty seeing or interpreting the video. The inherent difference in the stage and cinema audiences is also a factor in the acceptance of the CCTV images. The stage audience generally has a limited point of view determined by the physical reality of the seating location, building architecture, and production design. The audience members observe the elements of the production from a fixed point of view, and, ultimately, the individual members determine their viewing focus. Film and video are not limited by the physical realities of stage performance. The quick-cutting point-of-view of film and video allow the viewer to observe the events from various viewpoints determined by the director and camera. The audience is presented the product in a finished, predetermined format.

Although the power and political atmosphere make the presence and use of CCTV cameras common to productions of *Hamlet*, other productions dealing with political and social unrest have also employed the use of surveillance. The National Theatre's 2004 production of *Measure for Measure*, directed by Simon McBurney, which I viewed on archived video, was a production which apparently placed Vienna in a type of police state where "[i]mages of social control and modern-style surveillance abound . . ." according to John Gross (30 May 2004). Four monitors, serving several different functions, were incorporated into the minimal thrust set of the production. The media elements used within the monitors served a narrative function, a surveillance function, and also served as a means to alter the audience point of view.

The most prominent narrative use of the video monitors within the production was the pre-recorded public announcements broadcast of the Duke

handing over the power and governance of the city in his absence to Angelo (*Measure for Measure* 1.1), and the media broadcast of Claudio's arrest (1.2), which was shown as the event took place on stage. In the first instance, the video of the Duke instilling Angelo as ruler in his absence supplemented the scene, serving as a type of segue into the following scenes; however, the media broadcast of the arrest of Claudio, as an on-scene report, occurs simultaneously as the audience watched the events unfold onstage, giving the scene a sense of duality.

The most obvious use of the CCTV in McBurney's *Measure for Measure* was during the prison scenes. Benedict Nightingale states, "The monitors, which are mainly used for public pronouncements and for CCTV on Vienna's death row, reinforce the production's emphasis on power and control" (28 May 2004, p. 27). The endless electronic surveillance provided the disguised Duke (David Troughton) with the ability to easily monitor Angelo's (Paul Rhys's) performance during his absence (Brown, 30 May 2004, p. 71). Rachel Halliburton observes, "Simon McBurney's modern production emphasizes the sex with his CCTV perspective of a corrupt world." She goes on to state that,

[I]mages on screens around the stage emphasise [sic] that this is a domain for porn and peeping Toms, as well as hammering home over tones of repressive political surveillance. Here, if Big Brother is watching you, you're likely to be either *in flagrante* or in jail (12 June 2004).

The reference to human voyeuristic tendencies is worth note, given the voyeuristic nature of film and television (discussed in "The Cinematic Gaze" in chapter two).

This desire to see is evident in the twenty-first century media popularity of “reality” programs.

Media and the Changing Point of View

Increasing familiarity with multimedia and the shifting point-of-view common in film, video, and digital entertainments has made the adoption of visual media conventions or language within stage productions more common and accepted. It is not surprising that productions which include video as a set element, a framing device, or a narrative device would take that media one step farther to employ cinematic remediation by introducing cinematic visuals into the production. Even the use of surveillance footage within a stage production serves more than a simple narrative function; it essentially changes the audience’s perspective. This change in the point-of-view seems to result from the societal influence of media and the ever-changing media perspective which seeks to place the audience in the best possible location to view the action of a scene.

Although theatre still lacks the fluid change in perspective of cinema and digital media, some productions employ media elements, especially video, to combat the physical limitations of the production and provide the audience an alternate perspective of events. Generally this altered point of view serves either to present a media substitute for an obstructed stage view, thus providing the stationary audience the framing flexibility of film, or to introduce the film close-up into the production. In either case the addition of the media element is in keeping with Jensen’s second level of intermediality (2385).

The introduction of the close-up shot as the most common form of alternate perspective seems natural considering the physical limitation of the singular point-of-view generally imposed on the theatre audience. Even when the traditionally stationary theatre audience is allowed freedom of movement by the production-specific theatre conventions and the theatre architecture, the intimacy of the close-up shot, provided by the video or digital projection, is not possible within the dictates of theatre conventions and decorum.

An early use of video or broadcast media to alter the audience perception or point of view was the 1983 Royal Shakespeare Company production of *Julius Caesar* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, directed by Ron Daniels, researched through production photos, production papers, reviews and articles on the production. During the playing of the scene of the Roman Senate (*Julius Caesar* 3.1), a large screen was lowered to accommodate media projections. Three television cameramen recorded the “news” image from the front and from both sides during the scene. Selected close-up shots from the cameras were projected on the large screen behind the action in real time. The large, grainy, black-and-white images of the murder of Caesar (Joseph O’Conor), and the funeral speeches of Brutus (Peter McEnery) and Antony (David Schofield) projected on the screen allowed a close-up scrutiny of the characters not generally possible in live theatre without the aid of video enhancement. Reviews on the use and effectiveness of the incorporated video elements were mixed. Anthony Thorncroft, reviewer for the *Financial Times*, felt the video use is a bit confusing but very strong. In his description of the media use, Thorncroft explains:

[Ron] Daniels tackles the simplicity [of the play] by making the actions even more obvious. At two key moments—the

murder of Caesar and the orations by Brutus and Marc Antony, over his body—a screen descends over the stage to show close-ups of the actors. Caesar’s death agonies are magnified and Brutus’s plain words and Marc Antony’s sophistry are rammed home. It is distracting to begin with—do you watch actor or screen?—but the impact is undeniable, especially when the cameras switch to reactions of the mob (31 March 1983).

The initial confusion Thorncroft felt over the introduction of the video image into the theatrical world of Daniels’s production was mirrored by John Barber of the *Daily Telegraph*, who found the video use repetitious. He admits that the effect is eye catching and, as a quick effect, the video use might be splendid, but, as used, he found the effect distracting and confusing.

The initial confusion over this early inclusion of video media is understandable. The inclusion of visual media elements introduced additional realities into the existing reality of the theatre production. In effect, the audience is given the ability to perceive multiple perspectives without physically moving. Although we like to fancy ourselves as more sophisticated than the nineteenth-century audiences, this initial exposure to additional or unique realities in the environment of the theatre mirrors the confusion, and at times the terror, of first-time viewers of the infant cinema. Exposure to multiple focus or multiple realities through computer environments and modern news and entertainment media has familiarized audiences to the use of reinforcing video images, thus minimizing the confusion in more current multimedia productions. The type of reinforcing video close-up utilized in the 1983 RSC production of *Julius Caesar* is now a staple of major concerts and other “live” show venues.

Over ten years after Ron Daniels's *Julius Caesar*, visual filmic language and conventions seemed to dominate the previously mentioned Peter Sellars's 1994 production of *The Merchant of Venice* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre. Sellars's *The Merchant of Venice* was a theatre production rife with film visuals. The scene design consisted of an empty stage backed with a white cyclorama, and furnished with modern utilitarian office furniture. As many as fifteen video monitors were suspended or positioned on stage,³⁶ establishing the use of media visuals as a key production element. The media visuals often served the dual function of both substituting for an obstructed view and providing a close-up of prominent characters during key scenes.

The use of the video close-ups seemed to free Sellars to employ unorthodox and rather untheatrical blocking of some of the scenes, by allowing him to place the actors at a distance from the audience or with their backs to the audience. The use of a mediatized view to substitute for an obstructed view created by unorthodox blocking is exemplified in two scenes within Sellars's production: Bassanio's suit to Antonio and the trial scene (*The Merchant of Venice* 1.1 and 4.1). In Bassanio's suit to Antonio (1.1), Sellars situated the actors far upstage with their backs to the audience as Bassanio presented his suit to Antonio in an intimate conversation. Their position in the scene precluded direct audience observation. Mediating video provided the audiences a close-up view of the actor's faces, substituting for the lost direct perception of the scene. The intent appears to have been to provide an "intimate view" of the scene. Instead, the media seems to have removed the immediacy and ephemera of the moment,

³⁶ Peter Holland reported fifteen video monitors located on stage or suspended above the Barbican stage in his review of the production for *The Times* "Literary Supplement," 2 December 1994.

providing a distant voyeuristic view of the exchange and the resulting show of affection.

Sellars appears to have taken a slightly different approach to the trial scene (*The Merchant of Venice* 4.1). During the trial scene, the Duke sat with his back to the audience, once again precluding audience view; however, his face was shown in the monitors. Unlike the previous, intimate scene, this public spectacle used video much like a media news event. This approach is similar to Ron Daniels's use of the video reinforcement in his 1983 production of *Julius Caesar*, but instead of supplementing the live production, the video was substituted for portions of the live scene which the audience could not view directly.

Richard Pettengill, Peter Sellars's dramaturg for the production, notes a tendency towards the cinematic language in the blocking of *The Merchant of Venice*:

Increasingly, as rehearsals progress, Sellars's choices appear to be veering toward an emphasis on cinematic paraphernalia and perspective. . . . Sellars literally forces audiences to relinquish the inherent freedom of the live spectatorial experience; they are forced to view the scene in accordance with the placement of the image within the small screen, rather than being able to exercise choice as to where to fix their gaze (Pettengill 309).

In effect, where the film visuals in Ron Daniels's 1983 RSC production of *Julius Caesar* introduced a dual focus, Sellars compelled the audience to focus on the media interpretation instead of the live image.

Sellars explained in an interview with Michael Billington that in most theatres the audience is not close enough to see what is in the actors' eyes, but

with the use of video monitors, those audience members in the upper balcony can really see what is happening in the actors' eyes (Delgado 228). Sellars and Pettengill both identified the use of the video as an attempt to increase the production's intimacy; however, Pettengill reportedly was concerned that instead of the televisual or cinematic elements increasing the production's intimacy, it would distract and confuse the audience (305). Using Shylock's prominent speech as an example, he explains:

[H]e [Sellars] is placing certain scenes, such as Shylock's 'Hath not a Jew eyes' speech, in the nine television monitors³⁷ mounted around the proscenium and on the stage. If one were to watch the scene from right in front of one of the monitors, the effect might be powerful—you would see the sweat on Shylock's brow—but in the cavernous Goodman space it looks to most of the audience like nine tiny talking heads (305).

Some reviewers found the use of the cinematic close-up for Shylock's famous "Hath not a Jew eyes?" monologue (3.1) quite effective within the production while others thought the approach stripped the scene of any visceral immediacy.³⁸ The use of video and cinematic visual language to increase the intimacy of scenes, although possessed of the element of simultaneity, apparently failed since it removed the scene from the physical reality of the audience by routing it through the media, effectively placing it solely in an additional created reality. However, the increased exposure to digital environments have altered the societal definition

³⁷ It appears that Sellars expanded the nine monitors used in the production at the Goodman Theatre to fifteen monitors at the Barbican. Whether the additional monitors were added specifically for the Barbican or prior to the Barbican performance is unclear.

³⁸ The loss of immediacy which resulted as an effect of the media use was mentioned by both Richard Christiansen. "Provocative 'Merchant' Shakespeare Drama Takes Some Mesmerizing Twists at the Goodman." *Chicago Tribune* 11 Oct. 1994:24, and David Richards "Theatre Review: Sellars's Merchant of Venice Beach." *New York Times*. 18 October 1994.

of “live” and “real” to the point that a similar production in the contemporary theatre could elicit a much different response.

Simon McBurney’s 2004 production of *Measure for Measure* at the National Theatre, mentioned earlier in the chapter, takes a similar approach to the blocking and media use during the trial scenes as Sellars employed in *The Merchant of Venice*. As Angelo sits as judge in *Measure for Measure* 2.1 and hears Isabella’s plea for Claudio’s life in *Measure for Measure* 2.2, a close-up of Angelo’s face is projected on the four screens incorporated into the set. The projection of Angelo is necessary considering that the blocking of the scene positions him facing upstage with his back to much of the audience. The screens go black as judgment is reached and the court is concluded (2.1). The revival of the device in the following scene (2.2) is interesting but reflects the production interpretation of the scene. In this production, Isabella approaches Angelo to plead for her brother’s life, not in a private chamber, but in the court where he has just heard Elbow’s case. As Isabella pleads for Claudio, she stands on the block before Angelo as if being charged herself. Although the media interpretation and presentation of the scenes seems to reflect the trial scene in Sellars’s *The Merchant of Venice*, instead of highlighting prominent characters and speeches during the scenes, McBurney seems to limit the video close-up to Angelo sitting in judgment.

Jeannette Lamberg’s 2001 Stratford Festival production of *Henry V*, mentioned earlier in this chapter and in the previous chapter, incorporated multiple film techniques, including the use of the cinematic close-up. The element of the live video feed framing the production introduced cinematic language and alternate points of view within the production, as well as allowing a flexibility of staging

which placed the audience in the best possible position to view certain elements of the action. The live camera, wielded by the character of the Boy, who served as videographer for the production, allowed for this flexible viewpoint and close-up focus on the faces of conflict in the play.

In several instances, Lambermont used enlarged, close-up projections of faces, frozen and projected on the backdrop, for the audience to view and consider. One of the events the Boy records is the hanging of Bardolph. The projected video freezes on an image of Bardolph's face just prior to his hanging, which remained through King Harry's "We would have all such offenders so cut off . . ." speech (*Henry V* 3.6). This image was later supplanted by the live video of the faces of the exiting army soldiers. The image again froze on the face of the last and most important character, that of Henry, as he left the stage. The "frozen close-up" device was used again in *Henry V* 4.7 with the killing of the boys. The reviewers all seemed to comment on this scene, as the Boy, who served as the videographer, was killed when the French attack the boys in the luggage.

Although difficult to see on the archived video, the video projection plot for the production details an interesting switch in which the camera was positioned to catch Garçon as he approached the dead Boy, and looked into the camera before picking it up, assuming the videographer's role and recording the carnage. The final image of the scene was the face of the Boy, which was projected on the backdrop into the next scene. The use of the frozen-face images in Lambermont's *Henry V* almost appears to fall into the expressionistic use of scenic projections, discussed in the previous chapter; however, the use of live video and close-up shots of events as they transpired on stage presents an alternate view of the

events. The source of the media elements differentiates these elements from the other images within the production which were used as a type of expressionistic scenery.

Unlike the straight-forward expressionistic impact of the “frozen close-up” device, the use of a mediatized views to change the physical and perceptual point of view within Lambermont’s production is more complex and encompassing. The use of the live video to facilitate a physical staging choice was first used in Lambermont’s staging of the siege of Harfleur (*Henry V* 3.3.84-141). The Boy, serving as King Henry V’s videographer, captured Henry’s ultimatum to the Governor of Harfleur and the governor’s surrender of the town. However, only the Governor’s response to Henry was projected onstage for the audience to view. In keeping with the idea of the English army besieging a fortified French town, the Governor of Harfleur surrendered the town from the railing of the balcony seating. This placement meant that audience members in the stalls were unable to see the actor and most of those in the balcony were only able to see his back. The projected media element resolved a physical sight issue providing the audience a mediatized view to combat the obstructed live view. The video projection plot for the production seems to indicate that initially both the live video of Henry V’s threat and the Governor of Harfleur’s surrender were going to be projected for the audience view. The fact that Henry’s threats were not broadcast, hints at the power of the media to selectively frame the interpretation of events, which will be explored in the next chapter dealing with Jensen’s third level of intermediality.

Two other scenes in Lambermont’s production of *Henry V* actually used the live video for monologues delivered on stage. Unlike the broadcast of the

surrender of Harfleur, the video in these two scenes was not intended to solve a visual problem, unless the inability of the unaided stage to employ a film close-up is considered an obstructed view. Unlike the duplicate nature of Ron Daniels's *Julius Ceasar* in which the projected images accompanied the live address to the crowd and audience, the video monologues in Lambermont's *Henry V* served to separate and distance the audience from the stage character while providing a close-up, media-directed address. The first such video monologue in the production was the often cut Boy's monologue in 3.2. After Fluellen chased Bardolph, Pistol and Nym off to the breach, the Boy/videographer turned the camera on himself and delivered his monologue into the video camera while lying prone on the stage. The live video feed of this monologue was then projected in real time on the upstage screen. Justin Shaltz seemed moved by the video use in this scene. In his review for the *Shakespeare Bulletin* he states:

The Boy's contempt for the Eastcheap drunkards appears in an intense, self-videotaped confession. Amid the billowing smoke and the noise of war, the Boy's frightened face fills the upstage screen, as desperation quivers in his voice (34).

Although I suspect that the director intended the close-up, personal nature of the video to draw in and impact the audience, it seemed to have the opposite effect. The video use distanced and separated the audience from the action, resulting in a loss of intimacy. The routing of the monologue through the video medium, placed the image in a different reality, removing it from the immediate reality of the stage and the audience. Pistol's final speech (*Henry V* 5.1) was likewise delivered to the camera, now wielded by Garçon. Pistol's image in close-up was projected on the

upstage screen, as he lamented his wife's death and disclosed his intent to steal to England and there to steal (5.1.76-85). His address to the camera became simply another media image of the French war.

Unlike the use of film or video as a narrative tool, this use of the live video feed serves a different purpose. The narrative use of video in stage production generally presents scripted or unscripted events which occur off stage; thus, the only view of the event is through the video or broadcast medium. This on-stage monologue delivery into the camera, changes the audience perspective or point of view of onstage events, introducing another reality to the stage. The media allows the incorporation of cinematic visual language, but often compromises the intimacy of the immediate physicality in the attempt for increased visual intimacy.

The incorporation of the cinematic language in the 2001 RSC *Hamlet*, directed by Steven Pimlott, allowed for the character scrutiny possible with a video close-up, while avoiding the often dual focus of previous productions employing the device. Mentioned earlier in the chapter, the modernized production did not shy away from the use of video to encourage the audience to observe Claudius and Gertrude during "The Mousetrap." In the Pimlott production, Hamlet (Samuel West) was very much the director of "The Mousetrap," seeing to the particulars of light placement and the stage/audience environment, and actively controlling the production and media delivery, including enlisting Horatio to record the reactions of Claudius and Gertrude. Horatio (John Dougall) consciously assumed an active role in Hamlet's conspiracy by accepting the video camera pressed into his hands by Hamlet on the line, "Observe my uncle . . ." (*Hamlet* 3.2). This production escaped the dual focus through the use of a stage device: Hamlet (Samuel West)

claps his hands twice indicating a transition between the live action and the projection of the video close-up image. The live video feed from the camera Horatio wielded was enlarged and projected on a framed mobile screen placed upstage centre of Claudius and Gertrude who were seated in chairs downstage to either side of the screen with their backs to the audience. The Player King and Player Queen began the metatheatrical production of "The Mousetrap" standing centre stage between Claudius and Gertrude and downstage of the screen. After the first exchange between the Player King and Queen the characters moved to positions joining their living counterparts, Claudius and Gertrude, delivering their lines as much to their double as to the other player. At key points in "The Mousetrap" Hamlet's hand claps froze the actions of the players, often in accusatory attitudes focused at Claudius or Gertrude, and signalled the live video close-up, enlarged and back-projected on the central screen for observation and scrutiny. The use of the hand claps to freeze the action avoided the dual focus of the earlier production by effectively pausing the live performance to shift the audience focus to the media. The use of the video close-up allowed the audience to observe Claudius's and Gertrude's reactions to telling lines and events within "The Mousetrap" in close-up detail not possible, even if they were positioned facing the audience.

The use of the video in Pimlott's production was not necessarily intended to increase intimacy as Sellars and Lambermont attempt, but simply to provide an observational tool. The approach, which I found slightly jarring at first, seemed to accomplish Hamlet's intended purpose of placing Claudius's and Gertrude's reactions under a microscope, while resolving the question of focus during the

scene. During “The Mousetrap” the audience is often divided as to where the primary focus of their attention should be: on the players, on Hamlet, on Claudius and Gertrude, or on some other members of the court. Samuel West believes that the focus should be split during the scene, but he relates, “I used hand claps to freeze the action, so as to make absolutely clear the moments where the audience (which includes the court) should be watching Claudius or Gertrude” (West, 21 Dec. 2004). It is unclear if the silence of the reviewers regarding the stage device and use of video close-ups was due to the lack of dual focus or increased familiarity with visual media in theatre productions, but I suspect both contributed to the reviewers’ general silence on the media use.

Where the early cinema historically borrowed from theatre, adopting and adapting its stage pictures and conventions, the popularity of cinema, television newscasts, and the explosion of digital entertainment formats has created an environment where theatre now frequently adopts devices from other media. The exponentially increasing rate of information and visual stimulus of the now common digital technology is having a profound effect on the stage and the dramatic narrative by not only altering the delivery of the narrative, but changing the way we view multimedia theatre productions. As a narrative tool of theatre, media can reflect a sense of simultaneity of events, presenting scripted or unscripted events happening off-stage or within the story through alternate media sources. Some productions even use visual media to reflect the pervasive voyeuristic surveillance in our society or to alter the audience’s focus or point of view by providing the generally stationary audience a dual focus or alternate view of important events or individuals through the selective lens of the media. With the

interdisciplinary and collaborative nature of theatre, and the historically and culturally driven nature of theatre conventions, it should come as no surprise that, as the technologies have become more accessible, the technologies and practices of other media forms such as cinema, video, broadcast media, and computer environments, would be remediated within the theatrical art and its presentation, essentially allowing the “communication [and presentation of] . . . several *sensory modalities* at once” within the traditional theatrical form in keeping with Jensen’s second level of intermediality (2385).

CHAPTER 6

O BRAVE NEW WORLD THAT HAS SUCH PEOPLE IN'T!

Supernatural Media

Over the last decade, with the exponential explosion of digital entertainment and complex computer environments, the gulf separating the various forms of visual media seems to have narrowed. The prevalence and increasing dependence on media and media interaction affects the way in which audiences relate to the media. The constant interaction with and through media in society has created a population unfazed by interaction with digitally created representations or avatars.

The advent of computers and digital technology has literally opened new windows for theatre presentation. Computer operating systems allow and encourage multitasking, granting user access to multiple sites simultaneously. The exponentially increasing rate of information and visual stimulus of the now dominant digital technology is having a profound effect on the stage. The speed of change in theatre is matched only by its ability to absorb technological advances into the art, which has been outpaced by the audience's exposure to and acceptance of new technologies and their conventions. The development of new media technology and the evolutionary changes these media have affected on human perception have, in turn, altered our sense of what is "real" and what constitutes "liveness."

In his work with interactive media in production, David Z. Saltz, Assistant Professor of Drama and Director of the Interactive Performance Laboratory at the University of Georgia explores the relationship of the performer with interactive media in performance. In his paper “Live Media: Interactive Technology and Theatre,” he suggests that “interactive media technologies have . . . produc[ed] an artistic and cultural revolution . . .” (107). Saltz focuses on the use of interactive media as opposed to what he refers to as linear media (optical and analogue devices like film and VCRs) within theatre production, identifying a connection between the interactive experience and “the way theatre and performance artist have long valorized the concept of ‘liveness’” (107). Saltz asserts, “When live performers and media interact dramatically, a fascinating ontological question arises: is interactive media itself “live” or not?” (127). He goes on to suggest that “[a]s media becomes truly interactive . . . it no longer stands in opposition to live performance . . . it becomes a species of live performance,” indicating a change in the art and its perception by the audience (Saltz 127).

Klaus Bruhn Jensen’s third level of his three level definition of intermediality pertains to “interrelations between media as *institutions* in society” in terms of “convergence and conglomeration,” which concerns audience relation and interaction with media (2385). The key element of this level of intermediality is the “interrelation” or interaction with or through the media (Jensen 2385). Two different types of media incorporation within productions of Shakespeare plays seem to fall under this level of intermediality: productions that incorporate the transparent characteristic of projected media technology to represent apparitions, ghosts or supernatural characters, and productions that explore the use and role

of media in society and politics. This third level of intermediality involves the most complex and integrated incorporation of visual media elements within stage productions, and involves both diegetic and non-diegetic use of media elements. Where the representation, presentation and interaction of media and live characters onstage usually involves a non-diegetic or mixed approach to the media elements, which capitalizes on the transparency of the projected medium, the exploration of media's role in society and politics, which generally occurs in Shakespeare's history plays, generally involves the use of diegetic media.

The altered dimensionality of projected or broadcast visual media elements seem a good fit for portraying non-physical manifestations of incorporeal creatures on stage. Lacking physical constraints, the insubstantial two-dimensional media images possess a freedom of movement and adaptability of form which we associate with such manifestations. The limitations of the media consist primarily in the difficulty of melding the two-dimensional projected image with the three-dimensional physical world of the stage. As the technology advances and actors and audiences adapt to the multi-dimensional, multimedia images, one can expect to encounter more common use of film, video, and especially computer-generated images in lieu of physical performers representing these unearthly characters and manifestations.

The insubstantial media presentation of dreams, apparitions and ghosts change little across the categories; what does change is the active incorporation of the image projected and the audience's perception. Although the representation of insubstantial or supernatural beings through transparent, non-diegetic media is similar to the presentation of media elements representing mental processes like

memories and dreams, the key difference is the media interaction with live actors on stage. It is this “interrelation” or interaction with or through the media which differentiates the representation of these characters as elements of the third level of intermediality, where mental processes, lacking that character interaction with the media, constitutes elements of the first level of intermediality (Jensen 2385).

The desire to represent insubstantial apparitions, ghosts and supernatural characters on stage with live actors is evident as early as Henry Pepper’s 1862 Royal Polytechnic production of Charles Dickens’ Christmas story, *The Haunted Man and the Ghost’s Bargain* (Pepper 12), which highlighted the ghostly effect of Pepper’s Ghost developed by Henry Dircks and John Henry Pepper (Pepper 7-8). Several stage tableaux followed Henry Pepper’s initial production, including “the Ghost in *Hamlet*, pronounced by a leading R. A. as being nearly perfect . . .” (Heard 231).

As merely light and shadow, the projected media image is a ghost of natural things recorded and realities created in the specific medium. The detailed representation of entities not sharing the physical reality of the stage space and unrestricted by physical laws endues the projection with an unnatural quality fitting for the presentation of apparitions, ghosts and supernatural figures. In the preface of *New Screen Media: Cinema/Art/Narrative*, Timothy Druckrey asserts:

Almost from its beginnings (in the films of Méliès, for example,) the cinema has attempted to construct ‘realities’ that are quite causally implausible, if not impossible. Built into the very syntax of film (through mise-en-scène, montage, flashbacks and, increasingly, special effects, etc.) are specific distortions of temporality, space, causality and linearity that defy the ‘laws’ of physics. (xxi)

The way the created realities of the media defy or distort the laws of physics makes the media an effective substitute or representation of apparitions and ghosts, which are not traditionally restricted by physical laws. However, the flexibility inherent in the created and manipulated visual media elements to exist outside the physical time and space of the stage remains limited by the very physical world it transcends. The projected image is limited to the projection surface. The extent to which the projection surface is integrated into the set design and stage environment tends to reflect how seamlessly the projection is integrated into the production.

The perception of the projected image itself adds to the unnatural quality. Mechanical recording and display devices have not yet been able to match human optical perception or a flawless representation of reality. The dimensionality of the figure is a key difference of the cinematic and theatre media and is fundamental to the incorporation of projected media elements as apparitions, ghosts and supernatural characters. Essentially, the cinematic image is two-dimensional with an illusion of three-dimensionality. Arnheim states, "The effect of film is neither absolutely two-dimensional nor absolutely three-dimensional, but something between. Film pictures are at once plane and solid" (20). Although 3-D technology has improved substantially and is now generally available, the created 3-D image still is unable to match the natural perception of the three-dimensional image. The perception of the film, video or digital media image as neither absolutely two-dimensional nor absolutely three-dimensional contributes to the alienation of the image from the physical reality of the world and the stage; thus, the use of the projected media to represent physically insubstantial images and

figures such as dreams, apparitions, ghosts and supernatural characters is often remarkably effective.

The Way of Apparitions

The practical use of visual media elements as a way of presenting conjured apparitions in Shakespeare varies little from the presentation of dream sequences. What do change are the circumstances and characters' responses to the apparitions. Unlike the dream sequence, which appears to a sleeping individual, apparitions appear to more than one conscious individual. The apparitions are generally conjured or summoned by supernatural means; however, they are not necessarily controlled by the summoner or the entreating party. Although the act of conjuring could imply a diegetic use of the employed media, the interpretation of the conjuring act as an act of magic or supernatural divination and the lack of an apparent media device relegate the summoning of apparitions to a non-diegetic use of media. The interaction between the apparition and the on stage characters within the a play is usually minimal, generally limited to questions and the prophetic responses of the supernatural entities summoned; however, even this minimal interaction between the media represented apparition and the physical actors would constitute "interrelation" or interaction with or through the media (Jensen 2385).

The most obvious apparition scene appears in *Macbeth* 4.1 as Macbeth returns to seek the counsel of the witches in regard to his future actions and inheritance; however, Prospero's wedding masque in *The Tempest* 4.1 might also be considered an apparition, as may the rising of Asnath before Eleanor, the

Duchess of Gloucester, in *2 Henry VI* 1.4. These conjured images are called or created by magic and generally share the negative connotation of the witches and sorcerers who summon them. Of the three apparition scenes in Shakespeare, two are performed by a group of three witches or a witch and a male conjurer. The exception to this general rule is Shakespeare's Prospero. Only in *The Tempest* is the apparition conjured by a single individual. The basis of this exception could be founded on the characterization of Prospero as a wronged leader, establishing him as a member of the nobility, and a studious man who has acquired his power through his learning.

The most common example of visual media elements being used to represent an apparition is found in productions of *Macbeth*. Macbeth seeks out the witches in *Macbeth* 4.1 to secure answers to his questions regarding future events. In response to Macbeth's often unvoiced questions, the witches conjure their "masters" who appear as prophetic images and tell or show Macbeth the answers to his questions. The answers the images provide are prophetic warning to Macbeth which he takes as assurances of his success: the parade of Banquo's issue being the exception. The conscious and active state of Macbeth, and the witches' warning to Macbeth that the images are not to be questioned, indicates that the images are not dream images and can be seen by all those present.

Two RSC productions of *Macbeth* use visual media elements to present apparitions. In 1996 at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Tim Albery directed a production of *Macbeth* with Roger Allam in the title role. Within the archived video I viewed of the production, the apparitions seemed to appear on a small upstage monitor or screen placed in a wall behind a kneeling Macbeth. The figures that

responded to Macbeth's unasked questions appeared and disappeared on the screen culminating in a figure with the crown and branch in photo-negative announcing the final prophesy. However, only the prophetic answers to Macbeth's initial unasked questions appeared in the images on the screen. The parade of Banquo's issue were solid and quite real, appearing from various parts of the stage, crossing and re-crossing, while the screen remained blank. The inconsistency of the media use for the apparitions resulted in an ineffective image. In his review of the production, Nicholas de Jongh wrote, "[T]he witches present Macbeth with a silly film show of the future awaiting him" (17 May 1996). One can hear echoes of De Jongh's 1996 review in the later review of Dominic Cooke's 2004 *Macbeth* production.

Dominic Cooke's 2004 RSC production of *Macbeth*, which I viewed, incorporated a rear-projected video representation of the apparitions. Unlike many productions, Cooke did not cut the second witch's speech in *Macbeth* at "Something wicked this way comes." The line continues "Open, locks, whoever knocks" (*Macbeth* 4.1.63-64). Macbeth knocks and enters the witches' lair through a large central door in the set, leaving the door open. The apparitions, which are rear projected on a black scrim, appeared through the open doorway. Thick stage fog was piped around the oversized door to mute the images and make them more ghostly. The witches' cauldron likewise ejected a thick fog. The appearances of the apparitions were choreographed to the witches' actions, appearing only when the witches placed their hands on Macbeth situated within the pentagram projected on the floor. Macbeth became the conduit or medium for the apparitions, writhing as the witches seemed to press the images into his head.

The prophetic answers to Macbeth's unasked questions were revealed by three images: first the image of an elderly man warns Macbeth of Macduff; the second image of a child claims none born of woman can harm Macbeth; the last image, that of a man in his prime wearing a crown, reports that none will vanquish Macbeth until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Hill (*Macbeth* 4.1.87-110). Macbeth's demand to know whether Banquo's issue would ever reign in the kingdom was met, not by a progression of kings, but by an image that morphed from one king to the next, constantly changing form.

Few press reviews mentioned the projections and those which did reacted negatively to the use of the video medium in this capacity. Michael Billington of *The Guardian* states, "the apparitions are no more than filmic projections. . . ." (19 March 2004). Kate Bassett of *The Independent on Sunday* found the witches convincing, "except when weirdly acquiring a home cinema for video-recorded visions of Banquo's heirs" (21 March 2004). Robert Gore-Langton of the *Express* even went so far as to refer to the apparitions as "a series of naff holograms. . . ." (26 March 2004). Only one reviewer seemed to give much thought to the video within the production. *The Independent* reviewer Paul Taylor comments:

He's [Greg Hicks as Macbeth is] a dimmed star, stuck in a production that thinks you can do the terrifying succession of apparitions at his second meeting with the witches as a naff succession of talking passport photographs projected on to smoke. One of the reasons that the sequence does not have the desired effect is that it bleeds meaning from Macbeth's appalled line: "What! Will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?" If the apparitions are however fluidly, presented one by one, the idea of the interminability is blunted (23 March 2004).

Several reviewers did not even mention the video incorporation within the production. The lack of comment on the film/video media within the production could be, a telling sign of the acceptance of such media incursion in theatre, or represent an indifference to the included element. In either case it indicates an increased familiarity with such media inclusions.

Although the media presentation of the apparitions in Prospero's wedding masque in *The Tempest* 4.1 and the rising of Asnath before Eleanor, the Duchess of Gloucester, in *2 Henry VI* 1.4 are possible, elements of the play in production seem to present problems with the media representation. The lack of media use for the apparition scene in *2 Henry VI* (1.4) may be due, in part, to the overall lack of productions of the play's full text. The common condensing of the three *Henry VI* plays into two, often results in the elimination of the apparition scene. *Henry VI* productions also do not appear to easily accommodate updating or modernization. The 2002 Stratford Festival presentation of *The War of the Roses*, which I attended, retained the early setting and included the apparition scene. The spirit of Asnath was represented as a shadow-play on huge silk banners held by the Witch (Margery Jordan,) the Conjuror (Roger Bollingbroke,) and other characters. The shadow image of Asnath on the silk projection surface shifts and ripples which makes its insubstantial nature apparent. Unfortunately, the shadow images were not visible from some of the seats in the production's thrust-stage arrangement.

The apparent reluctance to substitute a visual media element for the wedding masque in *The Tempest* may rest in Ariel's reference to playing Ceres in the masque and the involvement of Miranda and Ferdinand dancing with the masque players. The consistency of representing Ariel as a three-dimensional

physical being throughout the production limits the believable shift to a less substantial medium and the interactive nature of the dance seems to make the substitution of a media element prohibitive. In addition the “wedding masque” could be considered a dramatic presentation created and enacted by Ariel and his/her companion spirits, making the masque not an apparition but an act performed by the airy spirits of the island Prospero commands.

Spirit of Health or Goblin Damned

Ghosts seem to round out Shakespeare’s portrayal of staged insubstantial manifestations, which includes dreams, apparitions and ghosts. One might add gods and fairy folk to this category of representation, but Shakespeare’s gods, fairies, and supernatural beings are either presented in dreams or apparitions, or they are presented as actual physical beings with form and substance, actively interacting with the world of the play and its inhabitants. Ghosts and spirits tend to avoid this contact but are not necessarily restricted from it.

Shakespeare’s ghosts generally adhere to the classical tradition and popular cultural beliefs in regards to ghosts: the ghosts are all murder victims, and they return to ensure the punishment of the individual responsible for their death (Purkiss 164). No outside influence or power controls the actions of ghosts: they act of their own volition, exercising a free will. They are not a mere medium for the message; they represent themselves in seeking punishment or revenge for their deaths. *Hamlet* provides Shakespeare’s most famous ghost, followed closely by the ghost of Banquo in *Macbeth* 3.4 and Caesar’s ghost which appears to Brutus in *Julius Caesar* 4.2.

Like apparitions, Shakespeare's ghosts can appear to multiple characters, as is the case of the late King Hamlet's ghost appearing to Bernardo, Marcellus, and Horatio on the battlements of Elsinore (*Hamlet* 1.1), but the ghost's communication is a private affair. Shakespeare's ghosts usually communicate to the one responsible for their death or the person entrusted with enacting their revenge. Hamlet is visited by the ghost of his father who prompts him to revenge his death. Banquo appears to Macbeth and points to him as his murderer (*Macbeth* 3.4). Caesar's ghost appears on the eve of battle and informs Brutus that he will join him that day in death (*Julius Caesar* 4.2). Although Shakespeare's ghosts can appear to multiple people, often only one individual character within the scene can see the ghost: Banquo appears in the midst of a feast but can be seen only by Macbeth (*Macbeth* 3.4), and Hamlet's father appears while Hamlet chides Gertrude in her closet, but she cannot see the ghost even when Hamlet directs her gaze (*Hamlet* 3.3).

Prior to 2008, only one of the three ghosts that haunt Shakespeare's plays appears to have been successfully represented by a recorded medium in a professional production: the Ghost of Hamlet's father. The apparent lack of film or video substitution in *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar* may be due to limitations inherent in the dramatic situation present during the ghost's appearance. Film and video presentation of images require suitable unobstructed surfaces upon which to project the media image to be successful. In *Macbeth* Banquo's ghost appears to Macbeth in the midst of a feast (*Macbeth* 3.4). The ghost sits at the table, which leaves Macbeth without a place at the feast. The busy atmosphere of the banquet setting and the textual indication of Macbeth perceiving this ghost figure occupying

his place at the feasting table, would make an insubstantial projection difficult to substitute.

The dramatic situation surrounding the appearance of Caesar's Ghost to Brutus appears more favourable. The Ghost of Caesar appears to Brutus in his tent prior to the battle with the forces of Octavius and Antony at Philippi. Since it is the dead of night, those with Brutus sleep. It is only the sleepless, troubled Brutus who sees and speaks with the ghost in the candle-lit tent. The use of the tent as a projection surface and the inactivity of the other characters would make the situation suitable to a film or video representation of the ghost. Ivo von Hove's 2008-2009 production of *The Roman Tragedies*, discussed later in the chapter, is the only production to date that seems to have used a mediatized representation of Caesar's ghost.

The altered dimensionality of projected media elements can provide directors with a solution for staging supernatural events within Shakespeare's plays. The prominence and scripted staging of the Ghost of King Hamlet in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* makes it a prime candidate for successful media substitution. When the ghost of Hamlet's father is represented through media elements, the obvious interaction between Hamlet and the ghost of his father places the media representation of the ghost in the third level of Jensen's three level definition of intermediality.

The 2001 New Jersey Shakespeare Festival's production of *Hamlet* directed by Tom Gilroy and starring Jared Harris employed digital video to represent the ghost of Hamlet's father. The description of this production on the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey website hails "a groundbreaking digital

installation with Richard Harris as the Ghost of Hamlet's Father" ("*Hamlet*" 2001). This bare stage production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which like the 1997 RSC production eliminates Fortinbras and most political aspects of the play, reducing it to a domestic tragedy, provides an ideal atmosphere for a projected representation of the Ghost of King Hamlet. In *Variety*, Robert L. Daniels describes the set environment: "Visually colorless, with the exception of a massive moon, the production is staged upon a barren platform accented by flimsy scrims and an occasional footstool" (12 August 2001). The open, unobstructed nature of the set and abundant of projection surfaces make the environment ideal for a digital representation of the Ghost of King Hamlet and provides the necessary freedom for media interpretation.

The digital installation of Richard Harris as the Ghost of King Hamlet, created by Ira Deutchman and Beth Schacter in association with Studionext of New York, appears to have been one of the prominent points of the production. Daniels's otherwise unimpressed review of the production mentions the presentation of the Ghost favourably:

The most interesting presence in the play is a filmed cameo by Richard Harris, Jared's notable parent, as the Ghost of Hamlet's father. Silver-haired and bearded, the veteran stage and screen star adds enormous strength with his crusty image. His gravely [sic] voice booms with daunting authority. "He was a man, Take him for all in all." Young Hamlet reminds us, and Harris the elder defines the role with the eloquence of a grand weary monarch "doomed for a certain term to walk the night" (12 August 2001).

The digital video image of Richard Harris, as the Ghost of Hamlet's father projected on stage smoke differed from other stage projections Neil Genzlinger of the *New York Times* had seen. He maintains:

The effect is not a simple projection onto a square screen, a device seen often in the theater today. Richard Harris's performance was filmed digitally, so that his image could be taken apart, doubled up, moved around in surprising ways (12 August 2001).

The effect of the digital representation is perhaps best described by John Timpane in the *Shakespeare Bulletin*:

The Ghost is played by Harris' own father Richard via the magic of digital projection. The son who is bodily there, in an eerie parallel to the play, must contend with a father who is both present and absent. In a montage effect recalling the out-of-focus, layered discomforts of Peter Brook's *King Lear*, many Ghosts overlay other Ghosts as the words eke forth. He is everywhere and yet hard to see. It is an interesting idea: the senior Harris is tremendous as an elderly, confused and outraged spirit (8-9).

The insubstantial nature of the projected ghost in the production creates effects not generally realized in standard productions with a present actor representing the ghost of Hamlet's father. Physical laws which would restrict a live actor on stage do not apply. The ghost can disappear and reappear from any part of the stage containing a projection surface and can actually appear simultaneously in multiple locations. This ability to instantly shift or appear in multiple locations makes the characterization of the ghost as a spirit, unconfined to the physicality of the earth, more plausible within the production. The textual indication that striking

at the object is futile is more plausible since the image is unsubstantial and the audience can see the weapon pass through the image. The mobility of the image also makes Hamlet's "Then we'll shift our ground" (*Hamlet* 1.5) to swear the others to secrecy, more urgent, as the ghost seems to occupy the whole stage space, demanding that the men swear.

Although media representation of the appearance of Julius Caesar's ghost to Brutus prior to the battle at Phillipi (*Julius Caesar* 4.2) is apparently rare, the Toneelgroep Amsterdam production of Shakespeare's *Roman Tragedies* (a marathon production of *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*), which will be considered more fully later in the next chapter, incorporated a media representation of Caesar's ghost in their production which toured to the Barbican Theatre in November of 2009. According to reviews and articles on the updated production, the video representation of the ghost worked brilliantly.³⁹ According to Christian M. Billing,

[A]s Fernhout's Brutus sat on one sofa, Koolschijn's Caesar came to sit catercorner on another. Picked up by two cameras, the ghost of Caesar was produced by digital superimposition. An image of Brutus appeared fully on one side of the monitor with Caesar overlaid next to him, now apparently on the same sofa but at about sixty-five-percent opacity (431).

Billing addresses the review of the effect from the point of view of the screen spectators, referring to the screened effect as "a digitized version of the Pepper's ghost effect" (431). Andrew Eglinton considers the total effect of the media

³⁹ The successful portrayal of Julius Caesar's Ghost to Brutus is described in the reviews by Christian M. Billing "The Roman Tragedies." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 61.3 (Fall 2010), and Andrew Eglinton "Reflections on a Decade of Punchdrunk Theatre." *Theatre Forum* 37 (Summer/Fall 2010) 46-64.

representation of Caesar's ghost, not just what appears on the screen. Eglinton states, "when we must see Caesar's ghost—we see him onscreen, though Brutus speaks to an empty chair . . ." (Eglinton 62). Although Caesar is physically present on another part of the stage, the media creates the altered representation of a presence next Brutus, who Brutus addresses but is seen in close proximity only in the media screens.

Airy Spirits

Aside from ghosts, several other airy manifestations or supernatural creatures occupy Shakespeare's plays. Generally these characters are either presented in a dream or apparition, or they share the physicality of the characters inhabiting the world of the play. These supernatural characters seem to share the characteristics of apparitions and ghosts: they can be seen and heard by multiple people, but they generally interact with only one individual. The difference between the gods, fairies, and "airy spirits" within Shakespeare's plays seems to be the amount of contact and interaction they have with the human characters inhabiting the play. The most prominent groups of supernatural characters in Shakespeare's work are the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the spirits within *The Tempest*. Although the fairies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* seem to possess a shared physicality with the people populating the world of the play, Ariel and the airy spirits of *The Tempest*, seem to exist outside the spatial and temporal reality of the physical world.

I have encountered no instances of media representation of the fairy-folk of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to date. This could be due to the interaction between

the fairy-folk and the human characters within the play. Such prevalent interaction between the supernatural and physical world often makes the projected media representation prohibitive. There are, however, productions of *The Tempest* worth note for their visual media incorporation.

The media-dominated Royal Shakespeare Company TOP and touring production of *The Tempest* in 2000, covered in chapter four, used projected video images to symbolically represent the various goddesses within the wedding masque, although live actors played each of the represented characters. The projections simply served as a symbolic identifier for each goddess. However, within the same production the representation of the airy spirits creating the solemn and strange music and beckoning Alonso and his followers to the strange feast in *The Tempest* 3.3 apparently was originally intended to be represented by the circling images of the a capella singers' faces projected on the upper set backdrop. Early production photos show the projections of the singers' faces on the white set and the reaction of the actors to the strange music and creatures surrounding them. The intended representation of the attending spirits was apparently not realized in the production. The projected spirits do not appear in the archived video of the production, nor are they mentioned in the reviews or production video cue sheets. In lieu of the projected images, reviews indicate that the black-clad spirits which created the a capella music emerged from the audience and surrounded the stage, occupying the no-man's-land between the stage and the audience. I could find no mention as to the reason behind cutting the video representation of the spirits in the archived production notes. Perhaps, like the physicality imposed upon the ghost of Banquo which occupies Macbeth's

seat at the banquet, the physical requirements of the attending spirits, which in the script are responsible for setting the feast before Alonso and his party, led the director to rethink the projections. Once the attending spirits are represented physically or through projected media, representation of the spirits through another means generally transgresses the established convention for the production and jars the audience's perception of the character(s).

Although not a professional production, articles, reviews and web pages associated with the University of Georgia, identified a notable production of *The Tempest* performed in 2000 by the University of Georgia's Interactive Performance Laboratory (IPL)⁴⁰. Previously mentioned in chapter four, David Z. Saltz's production incorporated a motion-capture, computer-animated Ariel. According to Saltz, the challenge of depicting the play's magic, and particularly the character of Ariel as the ultimate embodiment of magic, were what drew him to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. He believes:

Ariel exists on a different plane of reality than the other characters, including Caliban. Ariel is not a flesh and blood being: he is an insubstantial "airy spirit" with no fixed form, invisible to everyone except Prospero, the only character aware of his existence. He has the ability to appear and disappear in a flash and transform himself into any form he desires. How can a human actor represent the ethereal nature of this character? (Saltz 118).

Saltz, whose research focuses on the interaction between live performance and digital media, appears to be the first to employ real-time motion-capture

⁴⁰ Founded by David Saltz, the goal of the Interactive Performance Laboratory is to allow students to explore the dramatic potential of interactive technologies and ways of using interactive technologies to stage dramatic texts in traditional theatre settings (Saltz 110).

technology in a live theatre production of a Shakespeare play. The motion-capture and digital technology enabled Saltz to create a virtual puppet representation of Ariel in keeping with the character's incorporeal and magical nature. Saltz defended his choice to represent Ariel as a computer animated virtual puppet:

Technology has always been a key element of this play: stage directions in the 1623 Folio call for various "quaint devices" to accomplish Ariel's feats. The quaint devices of present-day interactive technology are uniquely suited to meeting the play's challenges (Saltz 118).

Ariel was, in effect, a dual character. Jennifer Snow, as Ariel, controlled the virtual puppet, which appeared on the large screen in various forms, performing Prospero's work, or interacting with Prospero via a small screen down stage right. However, Snow was also Ariel confined in full view of the audience in the motion-capture cage stage left. Although apparent to the audience, the other characters onstage appeared oblivious to the physical Ariel in the motion capture cage. Within this production Ariel is more confined and oppressed than Caliban. Saltz explains:

The other live actors never acknowledged the live Ariel in her motion capture suit. When they interacted with Ariel, it was always with the projected animations she guided. The only exception came at the end of the play, when Prospero finally sets Ariel free: Prospero liberated Ariel by opening her cage and removing the sensors from her body, at which point the actress ran through the audience and out of the theatre, leaving Prospero alone in an empty, media-free world, his "magic" gone (Saltz 120-121).

The dual nature of Ariel presented the freedom of form and incorporeal nature of the character, while serving as a constant reminder of Ariel's confinement.

The ability of the Ariel to change forms and control elements was realized through the media representation in Saltz's production. From the monstrous harpy that dominated the large upstage screen, to the form of an undulating bubble which the singing Ariel assumed, the technological media was not confined by the dictates of the physical actor. Within the wedding masque, the virtual Ariel divided into two images and danced with both Miranda and Ferdinand and then with the images of the goddesses. The character's control of the elements is illustrated in the opening scene, when Ariel actually "played" the sea (Saltz 123). Snow's movements, as Ariel in the motion capture cage, controlled the sea, which was represented on the main screen, causing the storm and waves which troubled Alonso's ship. Saltz describes the scene and media interaction:

The most unusual application of the motion capture technology occurred at the very top of the play when Ariel creates the tempest. The scene takes place on the deck of the ship; the projection screen at the back of the stage showed the stormy sea behind the characters. Snow held her arms in a crucifix pose, creating a line parallel to the horizon. Her arms represented the surface of the ocean, and as she swayed side to side and pitched forward and back, the sea moved with her. In this way, the actress "played" the sea, which became not merely an inanimate setting but an active agent (123).

Saltz initially imagined the scene as Ariel dancing the storm. Snow likewise controlled the image of the bubble, which was the embodiment of the singing Ariel. Voice recognition software changed the shape of the bubble, and her volume while singing changed the size. The actual movement of the bubble around the upstage screen was controlled by Snow directing it with her hand.

Although the technology allows the representation of Ariel as an incorporeal magical spirit, there were apparent limits in the production. The need for a suitable surface on which to project the media image restricted Ariel's appearances to one of the two screens, until such time as the duality of her character ceased and the physical Ariel was released. The use of media basically divided the stage into acting zones where key groups performed. According to Frances Teague, one of the dramaturges for the production, the isolation of the groups into home areas on the stage resulted in somewhat choppy blocking but helped audiences unfamiliar with the play to keep the plot lines straight (4). She continues:

The special stations for special effects created an unconventional sense of stage space. First, the play's magic was localized in particular spots, the screens, and whenever characters moved toward these places, the audience realized an effect was about to occur. Second, the nature of the performer's instrument changed, since Ariel's body was simultaneously present physically in three dimensions on the stage left platform and present virtually in two dimensions either upstage center or downstage right on a screen. The character, and the magic, became the space for that moment (Teague 5).

Teague also describes the virtual character animations as rather primitive and not particularly believable (3). However, as a pioneering step in virtual interactive theatre production, it is a production worth note.

A less elaborate and more limited approach to the character of Ariel and the magic in *The Tempest* can be seen in Aaron Posner's 2007 Folger Theatre production of *The Tempest*, researched through articles and reviews. According

to Brad Hathaway reviewer for *Potomac Stages*, “Tony Cisek’s set consists of three circular platforms, each with patterns mirroring magical symbols that look as if they could be from Tolkien’s middle-earth. These patterns are prominent as well on a circular screen at the back of the playing space” (9 August 2007). This screen served as a projection surface for the clouds, agitated oceans, terrified faces, lightning, ghosts, and other projections designed by John Boesche.⁴¹ Ariel inhabits this immense scrim-covered suspended circle located upstage centre. Celia Sharpe states, “Maribeth [sic] Fritzky as Ariel dwells in a heavenly position in this astrolabe, where she directs the affairs and the weather conditions of the mortals below” (2007). The use of the screen here is similar to the existential scenic use of projections in Lambermont’s 2001 *Henry V*; however, the interaction with and presence of Ariel (Marybeth Fritzky) within the images made the projections more than simple moving expressionistic scenery. Although Ariel was not represented through the visual media, the character’s interaction with the media projected on the surface of the scrim-covered cage implied Ariel’s creation and control of the images. Pressley’s description of the opening shipwreck scene illustrates this:

Folger Theatre’s “The Tempest” exerts visceral fascination mere seconds into the Aaron Posner production. A round screen above the stage fills with footage of heavy seas, and Dan Covey’s lighting design pinpoints actress Marybeth Fritzky as sirenlike sprite Ariel—a live figure hovering amid the waves and fleetingly glimpsed celluloid sailors, luring them to shipwreck. (17 May 2007, p. C-04)

⁴¹ Descriptions of the projections were present in reviews of the production by Susan Berlin, Brad Hathaway, Nelson Pressley, and Lorraine Treanor.

The projections and effect of Ariel within the projection surface was a common thread amongst the reviews. Overall, the representations of Ariel within the Saltz and Posner productions were actually quite similar. Both Ariels were visibly confined: Jennifer Snow's Ariel was imprisoned within the large cage and wiring of the motion-capture device, and Marybeth Fritzky's Ariel was imprisoned within the heavenly astrolabe suspended over the stage. Although in Posner's production Ariel lacks the direct practical control of the magical elements granted to Ariel within Saltz's production, the bodily presence of Ariel within the image, interacting with the magic, presented a perceived control in Posner's production. The presence of Ariel within the image provided a dimensionality not present in Saltz's production. These two productions shared the limitation of all theatre productions employing projected media elements: they are limited by the availability of projection surfaces incorporated into the production design. The visual media use is bound by the confines of the screen or projection surface.

According to reviews in *Variety* and *The New York Times*, Montreal-based, 4D Art's 2006 one-act adaptation of *La Tempête* (*The Tempest*) was a production which incorporated media to represent not the "airy spirits" of Prospero's island, but the characters shipwrecked, which were "played by pre-recorded actors projected and reflected onto thin air" (Rizzo, 19 June 2006). Frank Rizzo of the *Variety* reports the skills of the recorded performers were solid, which helped the recorded medium to share the space with the live actors. Charles Isherwood states, "When the shipwrecked survivors stagger ashore on Prospéro's island, after a swirling light-and-sound show representing the storm of the title, you do marvel at their eerie, lifelike quality. They seem to have three dimensions, and

move about Anick La Bissonnière's rocky stage with the same ease and weight of the live actors . . ." (17 Nov. 2006). This was aided by the fact that the recorded segments were "edited down into short bursts" so as not to tax the audience and yet contained "all the tools film possesses, including fadeouts, close-ups, slo-mo and dramatic changes of perspective" (Rizzo, 19 June 2006). According to Rizzo, in some cases the use of the recorded characters fell short, but overall, he thought the conceit worked well. According to the reviews, the highlight of the production was the transformation of Ferdinand from a virtual performer to a corporeal one. Rizzo states, "The king's shipwrecked son Ferdinand begins as a virtual perf [sic] until the love of Miranda not only deepens his spirit but gives him substance as well, transforming him into a flesh-and-blood character onstage. It is a transcendent moment of technology and theater" (19 June 2006). Isherwood praises "the synchronization between the live and taped performances . . . [which] creates a few moments of tingling theatrical novelty, particularly when Ferdinand and Miranda touch hands, declare their love, and—presto!—the filmy presence takes corporeal form" (17 Nov. 2006).

Both the characters of *La Tempête* (*The Tempest*) and the media representation of ghosts and supernatural beings might be considered a form of virtual puppets. In a sense they do create a double of a performer in the form of the recorded representation; however, the performer in these instances *is* the recorded double. The performers control the avatar only to the extent that they control their body during the recording of the image which is then fixed, not during the projection of the image. So does a virtual puppet, by definition, require live

control, thus maintaining the spontaneity of live theatre? This is implied, but it may not be the case.

At the beginning of the twentieth century Edward Gordon Craig published “The Actor and the Über-marionette,” in which he argued that actors were not artists because their stage presentation was at the mercy of emotion and, thus, the result was a product of an accidental nature, not created by design as art is (89). It appears that through technology the “Über-marionette” has been realized in computer-generated virtual puppets. According to Craig, actors should be like über-marionettes, divorced of emotion, achieving a state of mechanical perfection by making the body the slave of the mind in harmony with scenic representation (88). In effect the presentation of Ariel in the University of Georgia’s *The Tempest* could be considered a mediatized Über-marionette. Although the actor/puppeteer controls the movements of the virtual puppet, all other aspects of the puppet’s presentation are controlled or mediated through the computer apparatus, programs, and the projection medium, making it void of emotion.

We are not yet at a point where “live” and digital actors can easily share the same theatre stage and interact with media created characters without limitation. To achieve a relatively unrestricted interaction between live and digital actors, the technology must advance to a point that not only can the digital and live actor occupy the same space, but the computer-generated image must be believable and occur in real time, as a virtual puppet. The time spent perfecting the computer generated image must shrink and eventually disappear so as to allow the instantaneous generation and interaction required of the simultaneous acting and interacting situation of “live” theatre. This advancement in the technology and the

art of performance capture and CGI is just over the horizon. Real-time presentation of digital characters is likely within the next ten to twenty years. Perhaps Gordon Craig's Über-marionette in the guise of the virtual puppet is the future of theatre. The University of Georgia's incorporation of the motion capture and CGI technology to create a virtual puppet to represent Ariel in *The Tempest* has shown that the technology is viable on stage, even in the production of plays like those of the Shakespeare canon but there are still limitations to overcome.

The problem with "live" stage applications of digital acting is not the performance capture, CGI, or even the projection technology but the projection logistics necessary to employ the technology on stage. The image projection is limited to set areas with a suitable projection surface. A flat projection screen is suitable for simple projections not requiring complex interaction with the live performers, but projection of two-dimensional CGI creations into a three-dimensional universe will require advances in set design, costuming and/or puppetry, as well as the projected image. However, advances in textiles may eventually yield a fabric which could either render the digital actor invisible to the audience and provide a suitable surface for presentation of the computer-generated image, or generate the created image on the fabric itself, making puppet and puppeteer one. It sounds like science fiction, but textiles which render objects invisible in the magnetic and infrared spectrums and textiles with the ability to change colour and transmit light have already been developed through the use of nanoparticles incorporated into textiles and metamaterials.⁴² Scientists are

⁴² The ability of a specially crafted fabric to make objects invisible in some electromagnetic spectrums is reported on *Good Morning America* in the segment "No Longer Light Years Away: Invisibility is a Possibility." By Jeremy Hubbard. The development of a fabric that can change color was reported *The Economist* article "Dressed to Dazzle" 9 July 2004.

currently expanding the research into the possibility of textiles which could render objects invisible to other electromagnetic spectrums including the visual spectrum.

With the advances in performance capture, CGI, and projection technology, it is quite possible that we could see computer-generated characters or virtual puppets interacting with live characters on stage in the future. At some point in the future, a performance capture and CGI presentation of ghosts and supernatural characters in Shakespeare's plays may be the common production method. Digital media has already been incorporated within "live" theatre productions to represent the ghost of Hamlet's father in *Hamlet* and Ariel in *The Tempest*. This use of media representations and the interaction between the character and the media avatar places the incorporation of the media firmly within Jensen's one of the two types of third level intermediality, dealing with the "interrelations between media" in terms of "convergence and conglomeration" (2385).

CHAPTER 7

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE, AND ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS

Postmodernist, Intermedial Wooster Group *Hamlet*

Productions of Shakespeare's plays which employ diegetic media sources to explore the societal relationship and interaction with media constitute the second type of production within Klaus Bruhn Jensen's third level of intermediality (2385). Chapple and Kattenbelt propose that intermediality operates "in the space in-between" and involves how "something that appears fixed [changes and] becomes different" and the spectator's perception of that change (12). They explain that,

Intermediality is a space where the boundaries soften—and we are in-between and within a mixing of spaces, media and realities. Thus, intermediality becomes a process of transformation of thoughts and processes where something different is formed through performance (12)⁴³.

Increasingly, the characteristics which differentiate the media are being used in cooperation to create an intermedial theatre event.

Jensen's third level of intermediality dealing with the "interrelations between media as *institutions* in society" in terms of "convergence and conglomeration," seems to reflect the mediatized nature of the postmodern society (2385).⁴⁴

Theatre within the postmodern society is one of fragmentation, juxtaposition and

⁴³ Italic emphasis as in original.

⁴⁴ Italic emphasis as in original.

intermediality, often involving the dissection and reproduction of images instead of original creation and an “obsessive exploration of representation and its limits” (Fortier 180). The Wooster Group’s 2007 production of *Hamlet*, directed by Elizabeth LeCompte, which I researched through reviews and articles, is a prime example of a postmodern intermedial performance employing diegetic media which falls within Jensen’s third level of intermediality.

The New York based, avant-garde Wooster Group is well known for using classic dramatic works and contemporary media as building material to create theatrical productions which reflect upon the nature of the involved arts. Theresa Smalec and Johan Callens describe the Wooster Group’s 2007 production of *Hamlet* as an exploration of reproduction and the relationship between originals and their copies (Smalec 277; Callens 539-540). Each production of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* is haunted by the ghosts of centuries of previous performances. As Sarah Werner points out, “The Wooster Group’s *Hamlet* makes this pull of the theatrical past the main thrust of its production” (323). The Wooster Group did not use one of the printed texts of Shakespeare’s play as the primary production text, but instead used Bill Colleran’s filmic record of the 1964 Broadway production of *Hamlet* directed by John Gielgud as the film’s primary text.⁴⁵ Instead of delving into the text, the Wooster Group, under the direction of Elizabeth LeCompte, launched “an archaeological excursion into an icon of America’s cultural past, Richard Burton’s *Hamlet*,” according to the program notes (Hetrick, 9 Oct. 2007).

⁴⁵ The use of John Gielgud’s film production as the primary text for the stage production was mentioned by Johan Callens (539), Thomas Cartelli (148), Amy Cook (111) and Sarah Werner (323).

The 1964 Broadway production of *Hamlet* starring Richard Burton was something of an experiment in itself. Produced with a minimal set and actors in rehearsal clothes, the production was shot with seventeen cameras and edited into a film. The film was shown in 2,000 different movie houses for two days (23-24 September 1964) in a simultaneous performance trumpeted as “Theatrofilm.”⁴⁶ After the film run, all copies of the film were supposedly destroyed except two: one was consigned to the BFI archives in London; however, another copy of the film was apparently discovered in Richard Burton’s estate, following his death, which his widow allowed to be distributed as a DVD (Cartelli 149). According to Thomas Cartelli,

The idea of bringing a live theatre experience to thousands of viewers in different cities was trumpeted (by Burton among others) as a new art-form called ‘Theatrofilm,’ made possible through ‘the miracle of Electronovision’, which was, in fact, one of several technological predecessors for recording moving pictures on videotape. The Electronovision process deployed ‘was basically a multi-camera TV-style recording’ for which ‘Studio video cameras were positioned in the orchestra, boxes and balconies to mimic the audience point of view’, with a ‘kinescope film recording [later being]⁴⁷ made of the video image for theatrical release’⁴⁸ (148).

This is an interesting example of theatre-film-theatre remediation, within a postmodern society in which the focus has shifted from original creation to remediation.

⁴⁶ Johan Callens (539), Thomas Cartelli (148), and Sarah Werner (323) each describes the adoption of the term “Theatrofilm” to describe the simultaneous production.

⁴⁷ Cartelli’s addition.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Cartelli from www.braintrustdv.com/essays/back-to-future.html.

The program notes for the Wooster Group's production claimed that,

The Group's *Hamlet* attempts to reverse this process [of mediatization], reconstructing a hypothetical theater piece from the fragmentary evidence of the edited film, like an archaeologist inferring an improbable temple from a collection of ruins. Channeling the ghost of the 1964 performance, the Group descends into a kind of madness, intentionally replacing its own spirit with the spirit of another.⁴⁹ (qtd. in Hetrick, 9 Oct. 2007; Werner 323)

The production design and performance reflected the desire to recreate the 1964 *Theatrofilm* production of the Broadway performance. Ben Edward's original design for the Burton production was replicated for the Wooster Group stage production, with the exception of an absent stairway and the addition of a large screen and flat screen monitors, upon which the re-edited⁵⁰ "*Theatrofilm*" and scenes from other filmed productions of *Hamlet* were projected. Reviewer Louise Kennedy explains that "The film, by turns altered, partially erased, speeded up, slowed down, or radically interrupted by a screen full of staticky[sic] snow, plays on the back wall throughout [the production], as the Wooster actors imitate, parody, comment upon, or ignore the ghostly presences behind them" (15 Nov. 2007). While the Colleran "*Theatrofilm*" streamed on the screens and monitors, and in headsets and speakers, the actors imitated not only the action, speech, and tempo of the screen performance, but they went so far as to physically attempt to recreate the shots of Colleran's cameras by scooting up and downstage or shifting

⁴⁹ The Wooster Group. "Program Note." Playbill 123.10 n.p. 2007 quoted in Hetrick Playbill.com review "Wooster Group's *Hamlet* Begins Public Theatre Engagement Oct.9" and Sarah Werner review "Two *Hamlets*: Wooster Group and Synthetic Theater."

⁵⁰ The "*Theatrofilm*" *Hamlet* was apparently re-edited to reinstate the poetic meter and the picture was altered in some scenes to "erase" performers. It was also edited in performance by the actors who ordered the fast-forwarding of the film in order to skip parts of scenes or substitute segments of other *Hamlet* productions (Cartelli 151; Callens 545; Werner).

to new positions in an attempt to mimic a zoom or pan shot (Callens 540; Solomon, 15 Nov. 2007). According to *Variety* reviewer David Rooney, “The cast even ape the flickering, jerking movements of old film subjects . . .” (31 Oct. 2007). Alisa Solomon described the approach in her review of the production:

Using video casts, plasma screens, voice synthesisers and various means of digital alchemy, the performers mimic—and mess with—a production of the most iconic play of all; neither doing *Hamlet*, exactly, nor deconstructively undoing it . . . The performers synchronise themselves to the film with fanatic fidelity—matching vocal patterns, gestures and movements with the actors on screen (15 Nov. 2007).

Even reviewers who recognized the deeper intent of the play selection and production approach, often found the literalism of representation distracting, amusing, gratuitous, and even goofy (Bolton 85; Cartelli 151; Smalec 277).

The Wooster Group was doing more than it states in “reconstructing a hypothetical theater piece from the fragmentary evidence of the edited film,”⁵¹ they took liberties with the film to open the film to interaction with the live performers (qtd. in Hetrick, 9 Oct. 2007; Werner 323). This is similar, in many ways to the productions in chapter five which use media representations of supernatural characters, and the productions in this chapter which explore the interaction of society with the media. Like these productions, the Wooster Group *Hamlet* seems to fall within the third level of intermediality as outlined by Klaus Bruhn Jensen.

The 1964 “Theatrofilm” version of the film was edited and manipulated, for the Wooster Group, to create a vehicle through which to explore themes, including

⁵¹ The Wooster Group. “Program Note.” Playbill 123.10 n.p. 2007 quoted in Hetrick Playbill.com review “Wooster Group’s *Hamlet* Begins Public Theatre Engagement Oct.9” and Sarah Werner review “Two *Hamlets*: Wooster Group and Synthetic Theater.”

“the fraught relationship between originals and their copies” (Smalec 277); memory and representation (Mentz 154); immediacy and the ephemeral nature of theatre (Cook 111); the haunted stage (Werner 323); and intermediality (Chapple and Kattenbelt 12). The re-editing of the Burton film precluded the staging of a side-by-side dialogue with the film and opened the film up “for the Wooster actors themselves to displace, enter into, colonize, speak over, and re-inhabit” the image, according to Cartelli (150). Theresa Smalec sees the “equivocal acting and set designs,” the “visual forms of ‘ghosting’,” and “the use of various tropes of impairment,” as means to explore the levels of relationship between originals and their copies (277). Callens best describes the editing done to the original “Theatrofilm” by the Wooster Group and the “tropes of impairment” which they employed prior to and during performance:

Reid Farrington and Anna Henckel-Donnersmarck edited and manipulated the video image for the Wooster Group’s production in such a way that Gielgud’s cast comes and goes in an uncanny way, at times fading from Edwards’s set to the point of being totally erased. The layered soundtrack . . . equally adds to the mesmerizing atmosphere, the crackle of static vying with the visual “noise” that at times frames the projected image, even infiltrating it through insets, just as elements from the recorded live action (a colored costume, a hand) infiltrate the prerecorded film, thereby demonstrating the ghostly permeability of the interface between past and present performance. On the one hand, the treatment of the film materializes the spectral logic of Shakespeare’s play, and on the other, the erasures of the filmed actors function as a complement to the Wooster Group’s nonidentificatory-acting practice by

preventing the theatre audience's total immersion into the film at the expense of the live actors, whose live presences are nonetheless remediated onto the monitors (545) .

Not only was the film element in the production edited and manipulated prior to the stage production, but the actors, especially Scott Shepherd as Hamlet, verbally cued jump cuts and fast-forwarding of the film element during the performance, skipping scenes which would have been difficult to stage given the doubling of characters and shortening of the overall production (Mentz 154). The Wooster Group *Hamlet* was not so much a recreation of a theatre or film performance as it was an examination of representation, or as Amy Cook believes, "It was a *manifestation*⁵² of theatre's ability to constitute us by, in, through and in between performances" (113). The approach is very similar to Brecht's idea of a theatre of alienation (Willett 191-103).

Although much of the academic writing on the Wooster Group's *Hamlet* deals with the production's visual elements, Matthew J. Bolton, Johan Callens and Steve Mentz found the audio mixing and layering to be particularly effective. Bolton goes so far as to admit that "[m]ore than once during the Wooster Group production, I found myself closing my eyes and simply listening to the play. . . . For it was in the refiguring of the human voice that the Wooster Group triumphed" (85). The vocal-track of the production was remastered to accentuate the meter of the verse and Dan Dobson, Joby Emmons, Watt Tierney, John Collins, and Jim Dawson created a rich, layered soundtrack for the production. With the film visuals and audio playing in the background, live performers often spoke in chorus

⁵² Emphasis in original.

with their film counterparts, commented on the screen performance or particulars of the play, or the screen performers served as an echo for the live actors.

The nature of the 2007 *Hamlet* should come as no surprise since the Wooster Group is credited as being “[o]ne of the first experimental theatre companies to bring video monitors on stage and enter into dialogue with them in the course of a production . . .” (Cartelli 149). The Ghost of King Hamlet was not embodied in this production, which may be a reflection of the 1964 Broadway and “Theatrofilm” production in which the ghost existed only as a shadow projected on the upstage wall of the set and the prerecorded, disembodied voice of John Gielgud rendering the ghost’s lines. The Wooster Group production was haunted by the past theatre and film productions of *Hamlet*. The ghost of this production was the Burton film and all past productions. “As a play about acting, about measuring up to expectations, about the injunctions of ghosts and the debilitating weight of history,” Solomon finds *Hamlet*, “a perfect Wooster Group vehicle for holding a mirror up to representation” (15 Nov. 2007). She felt that the Group demonstrated “. . . the impossibility of capturing for posterity the essence of a transitory art . . .” while at the same time questioning the enterprise of live performance, to the point of ultimately questioning “What kind of live theatre can anyone make any more when the great western tradition—Shakespeare—haunts every stage?” (15 Nov. 2007).

The complex layering and intermediality of the Wooster Group *Hamlet* invites comment. As the live performers interacted with their screen counterparts and at times were mediatized and inserted into the screen image, to substitute for erased figures or to replace unrendered scenes, this production brings into focus

Auslander's question of what constitutes "liveness" in an increasingly intermedial postmodern theatre. According to Cartelli,

What seemed to start out as a kind of stage-actors' revenge against the threat posed to 'liveness' by innovations like 'Theatrofilm', in which living actors control the speed and pacing of the painstakingly 'distressed' video recording, and living bodies erase and displace the fading shadows of electronic reproduction, devolved . . . into a collective 'decent' into much of the 'kind of madness' of relentless replication described in the program notes. (152)

Haunted by the past productions and the increasing dependence on mediatized interpretation, the Wooster Group's 2007 *Hamlet* and Toneelgroep, Amsterdam, *Roman Tragedies*, discussed later in the chapter, may be a window into the future of postmodern, intermedial theatre. Both productions raise questions concerning mediatization of the stage and society.

Mediatization of War, Politics and Propaganda

The now common modernization of Shakespeare's dramatic environment or displacement of the plays into an ambiguous time or location has opened the plays to examinations of the role of media in society and the use of media technologies to further the drama. Production concepts of Shakespeare's histories and tragedies dealing with political themes at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century frequently reflect contemporary corporate culture. These productions commonly employ the use of diegetic media sources to reflect the mediatization of the postmodern society and to explore the use of media and interpretation of events within society. With streaming news coverage of

world events our fingertips and reporters embedded with combat troops and political campaigns, the question of media's role in the events is relevant.

The use of media elements representative of the contemporary media machine is now quite common. This movement can be seen as early as 1983 with Ron Daniels' RSC production of *Julius Caesar*, discussed in chapter five, and the English Shakespeare Company production of *The War of the Roses* in 1989. By the last years of the twentieth century, *Richard III* and other politically centred productions and characters personify the contemporary corporate warrior wielding (or manipulating) media influence. The focus on conflict and the acquisition and retention of power in these plays facilitates the updating of these political productions and allows the director to reflect current societal demand and reliance on information collected, framed, and distributed to us through various media sources.

Daniels's production incorporated the media during the Roman Senate scenes (*Julius Caesar* 3.1) to highlight the "short distance between rhetoric and propaganda" (Edwards 30). Where the London reviewers of Ron Daniels's 1983 RSC production concentrated on the duplication and confusion resulting from the video inclusion, the reviewers from the provincial papers concentrated on the directorial concept and function of the video use within the production. Bryan Jarman of the *South Wales Argus* comments on the parallel between the current popular broadcast media and the use of the video elements within the production:

[W]e are used to seeing momentous events on the shaky monochrome film that was used here.

But, far more importantly, the device, repeated for Brutus' and Antony's funeral orations, underlined the

political duplicity which is at the heart of the play, showing how effectively modern media can disseminate lies (Jarman, 30 March 1983).

A review for *The Banbury Focus* considered the video use a daring experiment. The review admitted the video reinforcement of the funeral speeches was a challenge to actors and audience, but considered it a technical achievement which encouraged comparison between the play and the current events vividly reported on our television screens. Daniels's use of media within the production of *Julius Caesar*, allowed him to explore the question of how the news media frame what we see. In determining what we see, what is worthy of closer investigation, and what is of interest, those responsible for covering the news story or event are, in effect, manipulating the viewers' perception and interpretation of the event.

According to reviews and articles, the English Shakespeare Company's 1989 production of *The War of the Roses* directed by Michael Bogdanov incorporated an eclectic mix of nineteenth- and twentieth-century periods in the production design of the Shakespeare histories presented. MacDonald P. Jackson explains that "locations, dress and props become more modern as the cycle progresses. *Richard II* is largely Regency; Richard III assumes the seat of power before a desktop computer . . ." (209). The media use within the cycle seemed to be limited to the production of *Richard III*. According to the reviews, prior to the final speech of the production there was a brief black-out. When the lights came up "a TV crew [focus] their camera on Richmond, who sits at a desk with a sheaf of notes. Three monitors screen Richmond's image in head-and-shoulders close-up while the new leader delivers the play's last speech as a prepared newscast to the nation" (M. Jackson 208). The newscast or address to

the nation apparently closed with the national anthem “God Save the King.” The image of Richard and Richmond as contemporary politicians able to manipulate the media and wield propaganda is an image that reappears frequently in contemporary production.

According to reviews and articles, Moonwork Theatre’s 1998 production of *Richard III* at the Stella Adler Conservatory directed by Gregory Wolfe also employed a contemporary approach to Shakespeare’s play. Les Gutman explains that “Wolfe’s basic concept is that pomp and circumstance has been supplanted by a corporate culture, and that television has become a dominant means of communication.” *New York Times* reviewer D. J. R. Bruckner’s interpretation of Wolfe’s approach surpassed the cursory appearances described by Gutman. Bruckner writes, “The underlying assumption is simple: all the characters are creations of the current entertainment and news media. It is realized in such depth and detail, however, that the play becomes a satire on modern gullibility” (12 Feb. 1998). The incorporation of video as a narrative tool in this environment of media-created characters was integral to the production. The domination of media was prominently in the set design. Gutman described the seat of power, or throne, presented in the play as consisting of a swivel chair with a remote control for the massive television screen which served as a backdrop for the production. According to the reviews, the “television” or video screen backdrop was used as a scenic element during the battle scenes. However, the dream sequence where the ghosts of Richard’s victims haunt him and bless Richmond (*Richard III* 5.5) was not presented through media but in the three-dimensional reality of the stage environment.

The theme of media as institutions in society often equates to media elements within the production being used several ways. Wolfe's *Richard III* incorporates visual media as a narrative tool and visual media to present an alternate focus or point of view, discussed in the previous chapter. The narrative function of the media imbues the production with a modern sense of simultaneity and multiplicity common in the modern media. Bruckner highlights the characters' multiplicity and simultaneity within the production when he relates that "Characters walking offstage may emerge on a giant television screen that is the set's backdrop: fighting battles, massaging constituents or giving press conferences" (12 Feb. 1998).

The media machine was responsible for much of the information Richard receives and acts upon within Wolfe's production. Many narrative events on and off stage were presented or supplemented by the televised video medium within the production. News of King Edward's death and the concern of the citizens over the political ramifications in *Richard III* 2.3 were relegated to media reports and interviews of breakfasters in a diner, presumably viewed by Richard on the prominent upstage screen (Bruckner, 12 Feb. 1998). Events occurring offstage were brought directly into the visual world of the stage through the screen instead of relying on the verbal account of events delivered by the characters or messengers. Richard (and the play's audience) watched young Elizabeth go to Richmond on cable news, instead of the information being lost in the brief two line mention of the espousal at the end of *Richard III* (4.5).

Both Richard and Richmond used the broadcast media as a political tool. The mob manipulation by Richard when he initially feigned refusal of the crown

was compounded by the television medium, making the audience question the idea of unbiased or objective reporting of events. Are the images represented by the recorded medium faithful to the event? Did the cameras catch all the pertinent information? Bruckner relates:

When Richard's rent-a-mobs demand that he accept the crown, the coordination of the crowds jostling forests of television equipment on screen and Richard's charade of refusals onstage actually makes you worry about whether truth can be known in a media-saturated world.

Shakespeare's language is rigorously respected, and it is never more resonant or comic than when a network anchor, with all the requisite attitude and insinuating glance, ends her broadcast with a common proverb like "All may be well; but, if God sort it so," 'Tis more than we deserve or I expect (12 Feb. 1998).

Likewise, Richmond used the media to further his political ends. Richmond's speech to the troops in *Richard III* 5.5 was presented in the form of a campaign ad "Paid for by the Coalition for Richmond for King" (Bruckner, 12 Feb. 1998).

The 2003 National Theatre production of *Henry V* directed by Nicholas Hytner, which I viewed on archived video, expands the use of televised "news coverage" and war propaganda. Hytner used a television newscasts format for announcements of a political or military nature. The focus on media propaganda within the production was pervasive. Paul Taylor's review for the *Independent* notes that "many of Henry's speeches are delivered to camera for the propaganda war and later watched on television, with French subtitles, by the enemy. . ." (15 May 2003, p. 16). King Henry's declaration of war on France in the last lines of *Henry V* 1.2 took the form of a televised address to the nation visible intermittently

on the television at the pub as Pistol flipped television channels between the announcement and a snooker match. True to the idea of simultaneity, Henry's declaration of war is viewed by the French court with the addition of French subtitles. The use of broadcast media was not restricted to the English forces. King Charles' announcement that Henry and the English forces passed the River Somme preceding his "Up princes . . ." speech of *Henry V* 3.5 was presented as a live address to the people of France projected on a screen behind him while he speaks from the podium, implying its broadcast.

Television cameras were not exclusive to the court or press room within the production but, like the modern media coverage of armed conflict, were embedded with the troops, presenting major events or announcements. Susannah Clapp of the *Observer* explains, "When the king, surrounded by cameras, delivers his speech to the citizens of Harfleur, he quickly gestures to the broadcasters to cut the sound before he issues his bloodiest threats" (18 May 2003, p. 11). Unlike the Stratford, Ontario, production discussed in earlier chapters, Hytner restricts the Harfleur Governor's surrender to an audio cue. In the following scene, Katherine and Alice appeared to watch King Henry's threats and the fall of Harfleur (complete with subtitles) prior to Katherine's English lesson.

The media propaganda within Hytner's *Henry V* did not subside with the victory of the English. Following the English victory and preceding the meeting between the French and English sovereigns, a 45-second video referred to as the "Agincourt Carol: Snapshots of War" was broadcast on the screen. This video celebrating the English victory began with the title imposed on the waving Union Jack, followed by shots of King Henry speaking, troops marching, various shots of

Henry and other prominent figures' faces (with the main focus being on Henry) and ended with the subtitle "Victory" over the waving Union Jack. The video montage is reminiscent of many similar video constructions commemorating or recalling prominent events common within modern television broadcasting. Paul Taylor of the *Independent* sees the piece as sanctimonious: "The stink of sanctimony pollutes the celebration of victory here as we watch a sentimentally edited documentary about the war, screened with a rap soundtrack thanking God for having the wisdom to back the right army" (15 May 2003, p. 16). The projection of this victory montage highlights the manipulative representation of broadcast media, which appears to be an increasingly popular focus of twenty-first century performances of Shakespeare's plays with strong political elements.

Trevor Nunn seems to have been influenced by Nicholas Hytner (*Henry V* 2003), Ron Daniels (*Julius Caesar* 1983), and others in the political use of the media within his 2005 production of *Richard II* at the Old Vic. A few of the reviews and articles I researched directly compared Nunn's approach to that of Hytner's 2003 *Henry V* at the National Theatre. Reviewers identified similarities in Nunn's and Hytner's focus on the media and its role in power and politics within their productions, but the general consensus appears to be that the media-centric approach seemed more fitting and effective in the political environment of *Henry V*.⁵³

Nunn's *Richard II*, with Kevin Spacey in the title role, studied the contemporary reliance on information presented through the media and its effect on politics in this updated media-heavy production. Although the time frame and

⁵³ The connection between Nunn's and Hytner's production of *Henry V* was noted in reviews by Kate Basett *The Independent* 9 Oct. 2005, Nicholas De Jongh *Evening Standard* 5 Oct. 2005, and Natasha Tripney *MusicOMH*.

location of Hildegard Bechtler's sparse set of shiftable white walls and dark panelling was initially unclear, the contemporary, media-centric, political approach of Nunn's *Richard II* is suggested by the prominent video screens within the set and flanking the stage. Kate Wilkinson explains:

Nunn made extensive use of modern technology and media, and the production was fast-paced in the manner of a political thriller. . . . Four television screens adorned the stage, with two large concert sized screens over the auditorium boxes to stage left and right; these helped to create a different level of meaning, showing the characters as twenty-first century political operators with manipulative power (12 November 2005, p. 17).

This aggressively contemporary production definitely highlighted our current media age, complete with mobile phones, CCTV screens, imbedded journalists, CNN-style news coverage, and a photo-shoot for the queen; however, the use of the technology within the production met with mixed reviews. Although several reviewers simply reported the video use, especially the use of the video for Gaunt's "This England" speech, many reviewers did not feel the technology added to the production, and some thought it was overdone and distracting.⁵⁴ Katherine Duncan-Jones goes so far as to say that "It [the technology within the production] gives the misleading impression that the directors would like to have been making a film rather than staging a play" (14 Oct. 2005, p. 20). The influence of current film and media coverage is apparent within the production and recognized by the reviewers. Michael W. Shurgot even compares the video use in Nunn's *Richard II*

⁵⁴ Several reviewers including Katherine Duncan-Jones *Times Literary Supplement* 14 Oct. 2005: 20; Lizzie Loveridge *CurtainUp*, 4 Oct 2005; Charles Spenser *Daily Telegraph* 6 Oct 2005: 26; Patricia Tatspaugh *Daily Telegraph* 6 Oct 2005: 26; and Benedict Nightingale Rev. *Richard II*. *Times* 6 Oct. 2005, Times 2:25 felt the use of technology for Gaunt's "This England" speech was distracting and overdone.

to two other productions turned to film: Julie Taymor's *Titus* and Richard Loncraine's *Richard II* (102).

Like many twenty-first century productions of Shakespeare's plays, Nunn's *Richard II* utilized video broadcasts/projections to serve multiple purposes. Tatspaugh touches on the various functions of the media use in her review when she explains that, "Projections covered scene changes, highlighted events, and opened out the action" (323). The use of media projections began early in the Nunn's *Richard II*. According to reviews, prior to the beginning action, a glass case with the royal regalia dominated the bare platform and the lighting on the case formed a distinct cross on the floor. Tatspaugh explains how two women help Kevin Spacey as Richard II into the royal regalia, and "[a]s the music grew louder, projections of crowds waving Union Jacks appear on the large screens on the dress circle boxes" (323). This expressionistic use of video was repeated throughout the production. Kate Bassett mentions another use of video during Richard's procession: "Huge video screens . . . flash up live footage of Spacey processing, interspersed with actual newsreels of political cavalcades" (9 Oct. 2005). The duality of these images was an apparent attempt to connect the theatrical events to actual historical and current events, in effect using the newsreel footage as commentary.

Nunn also used the technology in the Old Vic *Richard II* to record and replay key scenes or moments within the production, such as Gaunt's "This England" speech and Bolingbroke's departure speech. Julian Glover's delivery of John of Gaunt's "This England" speech (*Richard II* 2.1) was by far the most commented upon aspect of Nunn's *Richard II*. In the absence of King Richard,

Gaunt delivered his monologue from his wheelchair directly to the camera as a televised national address. This delivery to the camera, which was broadcast live on screen, presents a duality in performance first observed in Ron Daniel's *Julius Caesar* (1983) and more recently in Nicholas Hytner's *Henry V* (2003). At first glance, the delivery of John of Gaunt's "This England" speech (*Richard II* 2.1) to the camera appears as an attempt to change the audience's perspective or point of view; however, the focus of the camera address seems primarily to serve a narrative function. The video footage from this delivery to the camera allowed for the repeated use of the speech as sound bites and media reinforcement in other scenes. Even Katherine Duncan-Jones, the reviewer most critical of the technology use in the production, agreed that the initial use of the technology to present "This England" (*Richard II* 2.1) was effective, although she and others thought the repetition of the recorded scenes through the production was overdone and heavy-handed.⁵⁵ Duncan Jones explains:

The screens are . . . used to show us repeated clips of scenes we have seen on stage, most notably the admonitory punch lines from Gaunt's "This England" speech. The speech itself is superbly done by Julian Glover, and here, at least, the device of handling a celebrated passage as a carefully prepared photo opportunity works fairly well. After all, Gaunt knows that Richard isn't going to listen to him, and in any case the King is not present when the speech is delivered, so the idea that he might decide to deliver his final message to the nation at large is plausible. But the constant repetition of the chosen

⁵⁵ Several reviewers including Katherine Duncan-Jones *Times Literary Supplement* 14 Oct. 2005: 20; Lizzie Loveridge *CurtainUp*, 4 Oct 2005; Charles Spenser *Daily Telegraph* 6 Oct 2005: 26; Patricia Tatspaugh *Daily Telegraph* 6 Oct 2005: 26; and Benedict Nightingale *Times* 6 Oct. 2005 felt the use of technology for Gaunt's "This England" speech was distracting and overdone.

soundbite on screen trivializes Gaunt's words, while also distracting the audience from the carefully passed forward flow of the action (14 Oct. 2005, p. 20).

Later in the production, the broadcast of Gaunt's "This England" speech was interspersed with footage of rioting protesters. This use of video differs slightly from Richard's procession, in that the riot footage appears to follow the initial delivery of Gaunt's speech, although in subsequent showings, it may have been interspersed with the televised sound bites of the speech.

Like other directors of Shakespeare's political plays, Nunn takes advantage of an updated contemporary staging of the play to comment on the media's prevalent role in society and politics, highlighting the constant presence of media forces around the powerful elite and the manipulation of the media as a political tool. The contemporary setting which allows the technology and media-centric approach in updated productions of Shakespeare plays often alters the narrative approach and pace within the production. The pace of these updated productions tends to be quicker than the traditional staging, mirroring the fast paced society in which we live and the increasing pace of the media to which we are constantly exposed. The narrative likewise is often broken up and repeated as broadcasted sound-bites. Victoria Segal touches on the narrative pace of Nunn's media laden *Richard II* in her review:

From the outset, the narrative thrusts forward at the pace of CNN, rolling news footage revealing each shift of fortune. This is a production rooted in the media age: the screens display footage of riots and funerals, or replay events that have just happened on stage; embedded cameramen circle military camps; the Queen (Genevieve O'Reilly) is

interrupted in the middle of a Diana-style photo session; and CCTV cameras lurk in the corners of parliament. Even the dying John of Gaunt (a superbly commanding Julian Glover) gives his “scept’red isle” speech on camera, allowing it to be repeated in packaged sound bites. Despite his adoration, “this England” is a place of harsh political reality, a nation controlled by mass communication and convulsed by change (9 Oct. 2005, p. 21)

Tatspaugh describes the production as having a feel which paralleled around-the-clock newscasts, which seems to be the intent (323). One can argue that Nunn’s use of media in *Richard II* did serve to change the perspective of the audience, like several productions before it. In translating or moving a scene from one medium to another, one is perforce changing the audience’s point of view, by the addition of a separate, often simultaneous “reality” to the world of the production. Although John of Gaunt’s “This England” speech (*Richard II* 2.1) was apparently broadcast or projected while being filmed, the focus was on the process and the re-use of the image as media reinforcement, not the close-up or altered perspective. The altered perspective is inherent in the translation from one medium to another, as it changes the relationship between the audience and the object or performance viewed.

Postmodern *Roman Tragedies*

Perhaps the most media-centric postmodern approach production of Shakespeare’s history plays to date was Ivo van Hove’s 2007-2009 production of *The Roman Tragedies*, performed in Dutch, which toured to the Dialog Festival in Wroclaw, Poland, and London as part of the Barbican International Theatre Events

(BITE) season in 2009. According to articles, reviews and papers on the production, Van Hove's heavily edited, modernized, and conflated production of *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* without interval, focused on the impact of media within contemporary postmodern society. Helen Shaw asserts that, "[cutting] the war and the common people scenes" from each play allowed Van Hove to focus on the private lives of the politicians, concentrating on themes of power, politics and media impact" (Eglinton and Shaw⁵⁶ 60).

As is generally the case, diegetic media figured prominently in the production. The set consisted of a corporate conference centre or convention space with beige sofas, potted plants and stuffed chairs in various configurations, desks and tables set up for press conferences, and occasional platforms. Screens⁵⁷ and cameras were prevalent. Several camera operators apparently shared the stage with the actors, actively filming actors preparing or scenes in process for live feed to the various on-stage screens. This live feed facilitated audience view of the multiple acting areas. According to Peter Kirwan,

The deep stage [at the Barbican] and multiple compartmentalized acting areas meant that the action was never directly visible to all audience members at any one time. Instead, scenes were filmed by a combination of fixed cameras and roving operators, with live relay sending images instantaneously to the dozens of TV monitors arranged around the acting area, and to a big screen above the stage for those in the auditorium (478).

⁵⁶ Helen Shaw's review of Ivo van Hove's *Roman Tragedies* appears as the second part of Andres Eglinton's article "Reflections on a Punchdrunk: Decade of Theatre." *Theatre Forum* 37 (Summer/Fall 2010) 46-64.

⁵⁷ "[A]pproximately seventeen Samsung LCD flat screens or Sony cathode-ray monitors" occupied the playing space according to Christian M. Billing in the Fall 2010 Shakespeare Quarterly review.

The onstage screens delivered both live and recorded images, and at times presented split screen or multi-screen format, presenting the idea of twenty-four hour politics and the pervasiveness of around the clock news coverage in the contemporary information age. The bottom edge of the large screen⁵⁸ contained a news banner or scroller broadcasting scores, financial gains and losses, and the amount of time to the death of prominent characters. On the left and right of the main stage were common areas, which included hair and make-up stations, first aid stations, a bar and Internet café, and computers on which audience members could check their email or leave comments, some of which were transmitted to the large screen display (Scott 348-349). An ekkyklema bound by two Plexiglas sheets occupied “dead” centre stage (Scott 353).

The audience played a prominent role in Van Hove’s *Roman Tragedies*. After the initial scenes, the audience was invited to share the stage space with the actors, roaming and observing the proceedings from any position they chose.

Christan M. Billing states,

Numerous opportunities were provided for the audience to move from the auditorium to the stage and even outside the theater; if they did so they became part of a living scenography. This was drama with a very different rhythm yet an experience in which audience members were never separated from the action taking place around them (417-418).

Billing notes that the audience’s freedom was not without limits, as there were times at which audience members had to leave the stage and audience members were not allowed to enter or pass through the glass ekkyklema.

⁵⁸ According to Christian M. Billing the screen was approximately five meters by fifteen meters (Fall 2010, p. 419).

The audience became the common masses: witness participants of history unfolding before them. Helen Shaw suggests that by cutting the scenes of the common people, van Hove was left “with the bones of Shakespeare’s dramas and the freedom to cloak them in our (the spectators’) flesh” (Eglinton and Shaw 60). Billing found the use of the audience effective, commenting that “[w]hen van Hove used his spectators as dumb-show crowds, it said more than the well-blocked actions and mutterings of background artistes in more conventional interpretations of the plays” (416). Helen Shaw sees the use of the audience/crowd as a “masterful stroke . . . introduc[ing] the ‘truth’ of mass behavior into a piece about the mob” (Eglinton and Shaw 60). She illustrates this citing the crowd’s impact during *Coriolanus*:

As Coriolanus feels hounded by the tyranny of public opinion, the actor himself must thread between slouching, munching audience members, and those watchers in the bleachers sympathize with how he must hate them.
(Eglinton and Shaw 60).

Initially the crowd in *Coriolanus* “moved hesitantly,” which could be expected when a well established conventional boundary is relaxed or removed, but they gained confidence and began to exercise their freedom (Eglinton and Shaw 60).

According to Shaw,

In *Julius Caesar*, the audience/mob had fallen in love with the freedom in the form, but then began to treat it rather too casually . . . Finally, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the presence of so many breathing, reclining voyeurs heightened the sense of lassitude that saturates Cleopatra’s Egypt. We [the audience] are heaps of flesh, slumping groggily after five hours of Shakespeare, sprawling below the lovers like a

rug on which they could disport themselves (Eglinton and Shaw 60).

Van Hove's audience became an active presence, complicit in the action. Sarah Scott feels, "Van Hove pushed the boundaries of theatrical convention by blurring audience and actor, watcher and watched, actor and bystander by presenting an all-too-often disturbing portrait of twenty-first century witnesses to world politics" (350).

The mediated emotional distancing of the audience and the general pessimism regarding the likelihood of social or political change was reflected in van Hove's postmodern approach to the plays. It appears that van Hove's intent was to focus on political media and the separation between those in power and the constituents. The Roman tribunes in *Coriolanus* emerge from the audience and "direct their discontent toward a political stage of which they were not a part" (Billing 421). These tribunes served as representatives of Western democracy, but they were talked down to and largely ignored. As Billing states, "the formal Roman integration of ordinary citizen voices was . . . clearly evident, but what those voices said was considered with contempt. These men were an annoyance, considered simple herders of unsophisticated plebeian cattle" (421). Although the audience/crowd occupied the stage with the performers/politicians, it had little voice or impact on the grey suited power players.

Van Hove also explores historical representation and the way modern technology is manipulated to further political agendas. The traditional separation of the audience from the world of the play allows the audience to distance themselves from the implications of the tribunes' treatment in *Coriolanus*. Van

Hove's approach eliminates the separation, forcing consideration of the implications. Early in his review, Billing suggests that cutting the war scenes and the lower classes from *The Roman Tragedies* allowed van Hove to "explore how technologically mediated channels of political representation . . . militate against meaningful dialogue between social groups in the modern world" (415). He states that, "[f]or van Hove, rather than facilitating communication, modern media often prevent engagement and political debate, separating ordinary people from elite politicians . . ." (415). In lieu of actual communication within the postmodern society we rely on the interpretation of events through media. Billing observes,

Politically, we are used to "mediatized" spins on reality, not to our own perceptions of reality itself. *The Roman Tragedies* thus was treated as a politicalized media stream in which actors, technicians, and audience members participated in the manufacture and distribution of sophisticated visual, aural, and script-based discourse, all channeled in real time through various outlets (417).

The reality of events transpiring in the shared physical common spaces allowed the audience to view and interpret the scenes without mediation, while the prevalent screens provided a mediated interpretation of the concurrent event, allowing the audience to see the manipulation of the image and often an altered interpretation of the events. Ironically, Billing notes that "most of those [the audience] onstage watched the performance on television," so those closest to the action chose the mediated view over the unaltered physical view (421).

Each reviewer noted the intoxicating focal draw of the media over the presentation of the live event. Admittedly, part of the attraction to the video was the audience's reliance on the English subtitles; however, even the most

seasoned Shakespeare audience members, not reliant on the subtitles, found themselves drawn to the screened presentation. Scott admits, “I wanted to become enveloped by the acting in front of me, but my best intentions were often thwarted by the provocative flashing of the mass media images” (351). Billings notes,

There was no escaping the version of events that the technicians, stage right in the video-editing suite, wanted audience members to see. Even the most experienced professional theatergoers struggled to watch the actors in person, rather than on screen—which was precisely the point (421).

Van Hove’s use of media in his approach to *The Roman Tragedies* perfectly reflects Klaus Bruhn Jensen’s third level of intermediality, exploring the interrelation of media, society and politics.

The use of recorded and live-video within *The Roman Tragedies* was in itself interesting. Although Billing considered the video use anthropocentric and theatrical, he refers to the use of the recorded and live-video in terms of “collage” and “juxtaposition” commonly associated with the work of early filmmakers (418-419). The comparisons of productions incorporating media sources with the work of the cinematic pioneer Sergei Eisenstein and his concept of montage is common from the work of Piscator through the intermedial production at the end of the twentieth century. Academics and artists often associated the juxtaposition of the projected image and the live action of the stage production with Eisenstein’s collision montage, which juxtaposed shots and images to convey ideas and emotions independent of the image sources. The familiarity of the twenty-first

century postmodern society to collision and juxtaposed images within the constant media bombardment seems to have muted this association. However, unlike the use of the terms to describe the combination of the media elements and live performance, Billing uses the terms in relation to the two types of media, recorded and live-video media, within the live performance.

Shakespeare's histories and tragedies containing dominant political themes easily accommodate the tenets of postmodern performance and an audience accustomed to viewing and interpreting the world through technology. Fortier suggests, "postmodern productions do not contain explicit commentary or take political positions, but raise uncertainties by representing our own compromises without taking a clear position," in affect raising questions not providing solutions or clarification (181). The incorporation of diegetic media within politically themed plays is a reflection and extension of postmodernism: further separating the audience from events but presenting a simulated intimacy, providing a pluralistic view of events, and raising questions about truth and representation. Productions of these plays which explore the use and role of media in society and politics tend to focus on the "interrelation" or interaction with or through the media, which is the key element of Jensen's third level of intermediality (2385).

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Adaptation, Remediation and Equilibrium

Although the death of “live” theatre has been predicted with each new entertainment medium to assume cultural dominance, theatre adapts, incorporates/remediates, and survives. Even though Bolter and Grusin consider stage drama “moribund” in their article “Remediation,” their own argument indicates that theatre in some form will continue (357). They declare, “The very act of remediation . . . ensures that the older medium cannot be entirely effaced. The new media remains dependent upon the older one, in acknowledged and unacknowledged ways” and they later go on to state that, “*all* mediation is remediation” (Bolter and Grusin 1996, pp. 341, 345). Although they primarily consider mediatized sources not “live” entertainments in their article, the argument appears equally valid for “live” entertainments.

Theatre’s nature as a hypermedium, allowing the incorporation of new ideas and technologies within the art, seems to be its salvation. The idea of theatre as a hypermedium, mirrors the adaptability of Shakespeare’s plays to new movements and theatrical approaches. It also reflects postmodern ideas of remediation or exchange of ideas and practices, inviting the incorporation of other media within performances underlying Bolter and Grunsin’s work on “remediation” and Chapple and Kattenbelt’s work on “intermediality.”

Chapple and Kattenbelt suggest that “intermediality is positioned in-between several *conceptual frameworks*⁵⁹ and *artistic/philosophical movements*”⁶⁰ (12). They go on to say that they “see intermediality as part of a wider movement in which all postmodern arts and media are involved,” incorporating some but not all of the features of postmodernism (Chapple and Kattenbelt 12). According to Chapple and Kattenbelt, “Intermediality is associated with the blurring of generic boundaries, crossover and hybrid performances, intertextuality, intermediality, hypermediality and a self-conscious reflexivity that displays the devices of performance in performance” which 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” (11). This, in turn, is “generating new cultural, social and psychological meanings in performance,” (Chapple and Kattenbelt 11) reflecting the plurality of the postmodern society in which “people act out and exchange many different ways of understanding rather than relying on one overarching truth” (Fortier 176).

The medial focus of early twenty-first century society and the increasing frequency of media use within stage productions suggest that the future of theatre is one of intermediality: a blending of visual media forms within the hypermedium of theatre. Chapple and Kattenbelt contend that “intermediality includes within its constituent elements a blend of the art forms of theatre, film, television and digital media which lead to an engagement with theoretical frameworks drawn from

⁵⁹ Emphasis in original.

⁶⁰ Emphasis in original.

selected areas of performance, perception and media theories and philosophical approaches to performance”(20). This makes sense in the postmodern society.

Audience familiarity with cinema, television, video and digital media formats and the availability of video and digital recording devices have opened theatre productions to alternate perspectives, resulting in the incursion of mediatization in the live event. In effect, theatre is striving to fill the needs and stresses created by new technologies which are, in turn, developed to meet the needs of the changing audience (McLuhan 183).

Paul Valéry predicted, “Just as water, gas, and electricity are brought into our houses from far off to satisfy our needs in response to a minimal effort, so we shall be supplied with visual or auditory *images*, which will appear and disappear at a simple movement of the hand, hardly more than a sign” (226). This prediction has been realized first in the advent of the television but more recently in the digital and telecommunication media. The contemporary audience is accustomed to viewing and interpreting the world through technology. Mediatization in itself implies a postmodern approach, since it presents a reproduction through mechanical or digital means. An element of postmodernism, the separation and isolation of the increasingly individualized audience has created a society largely dependent on the interpretation and representation of events through the media. The influence of other media sources has profoundly affected theatre and the very concept of “live” performance. At issue is the evolving definition of “live” and “real”: terms that are determined by changing cultural and historical perceptions.

In their work on Walter Benjamin, Norbert Bolz and Willem van Reijen indicate that mediation is not simply a question of employing the available

technologies, but a matter of what Philip Auslander calls “media epistemology”

(36). Bolz and Van Reijen explain:

Now, the modern age has progressively given the functions of perception a technical structure and objectified them. Frameworks and instruments intrude into reality. Yet, this should not be understood as meaning simply that our world-view is being increasingly dominated by technical equipment. Even more important is the fact that we often perceive reality only through the mediation of machines (microscope, telescope, television). These frameworks not only distort the ‘natural’ face of the world, but perform our perception of it [the world] (71).

Walter Benjamin regarded evolution in “the mode of human sense perception” as being driven by both natural and societal factors (216). Human sense perception has evolved, prompted by technological change and the indoctrination of a postmodern society, trained practically from birth in the signs, tools and conventions of prevalent media sources and emerging technologies.

Contemporary audiences accustomed to viewing the world through technology are not only untroubled by the mediatization of the live event, we have often come to expect it. Auslander contends:

[T]he general response of live performance to the oppression and economic superiority of mediatized forms has been to become as much like them as possible. From ball games that incorporate instant-replay screens, to rock concerts that recreate the images of music videos, to live stage versions of television shows and movies, to dance and performance art’s incorporation of video, evidence of

the incursion of mediatization into the live event is available across the entire spectrum of performance genres (7).

As theatre and other “live” entertainment forms remediate the elements and practices of mediatized forms, they open the door for intermedial performance. However, the technological media possesses different ontology than that of non-mediatized production.

Building on the work of Lev Manovich, who identifies layers of media and computer driven logic and interfaces affecting society (46), Chapple and Kattenbelt suggest that, in this computer-driven, digital-media society,

When theatre productions include digital technology an additional coding becomes present on the stage and is framed by the performance. Because digital media objects have a different ontology from non-digital media objects on the stage, so there is an empirical and qualitative difference between the digital and non-digital objects operative in the stage space. Thus digitization plays a part in conceptualising the changing space of theatre performance (18).

Because computers have become media machines, Chappel and Katterbelt believe that the computer layer and the cultural layer are becoming composited together, creating “a new computer culture that is a *blend* of human and computer meanings—of traditional ways in which culture modelled [sic] the world and the computer’s control over our ways of representing it” (18-19). This embodiment of the computer culture has had a profound impact on art (the theatre) and society (the audience). Interest in the effect of new technologies on human perception

and the arts is not a new phenomenon, and according to Mark Fortier, “the postmodern condition has only served to heighten such interests” (178).

Audiences are familiar with computer environments, which allow us to multitask, and hyperlinks within the digital medium, allowing us to access related information, going ever deeper into the material. Thus, the idea of theatre as a hypermedium, incorporating different media and their respective ontology within the production and opening intermedial texts and dialogues upon the stage, does not seem so strange. Each medium presents a different “reality” within the theatre production, adding new dimensions and meanings to the production.

The exponential explosion of intermedial theatre performances over the last decade seems to indicate a narrowing of the gulf separating the various visual media forms and a changing of audience expectations. Theatre is seeking equilibrium through remediation in the media saturated postmodern society, adopting the conventions, language, presentational style, and in some cases presentation of diegetic media elements within the production.

The extent to which the nature and presentation of theatre is changing indicates an expanding tendency toward intermediality, initiated through the evolution and domination of new technologies within society and their affect on human perception. Chapple and Kattenbelt assert that,

Intermediality is about changes in theatre practice and thus about changing perceptions of performance, which become visible through the process of staging. We locate intermediality at a meeting point in-between the performers, the observers, and the confluence of media involved in a performance at a particular moment in time (12).

They claim that discourse regarding “the relationships between the arts and media have taken place throughout the whole twentieth century,” but that the theories and tenets of intermediality began to be outlined from the late 1980s onward (13). However the mediatization of theatre can be seen as early as 1905 with the intended incorporation of a filmed storm sequence to open Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s touring production of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, or Erwin Piscator’s productions in the 1920s.

Intermediality and the Future of Shakespeare

Although Gary Taylor suggests that Shakespeare’s reputation is shrinking, Shakespeare’s works continue to be produced and continue to be relevant for contemporary audiences. Lorne Buchman writes that,

An exploration of the plays in performance unveils the relationship of visual and aural material of character and setting, of spoken language and physical gesture, of a whisper and a tear—all of which function according to the larger relationship between the time and space attributes of production. With every new conceptual focus, those relationships change, new contexts emerge, and the elements in Shakespeare’s drama unfold in endless permutations that have kept the plays alive for four centuries. (145)

The complex interrelation of artistic elements, audience perception and reception, and the presentation of space and time within the production are factors in the changing conceptual focus of dramatic, cinematic, and digital production. Given Shakespeare’s status in the theatrical canon and the tendency towards traditional

representation, influenced by its production history, movements and innovations in staging are often late in affecting productions of Shakespeare's plays; however, the movement toward postmodern intermedial productions occurs early in the twentieth century with Tree's intended incorporation of film for the storm sequence in *The Tempest* and the actual incorporation of film elements in Julius Gellner and Bernard Miles's *Henry V* and Erwin Piscator's *Merchant of Venice* in the 1960s.

In each instance of visual media incorporation within staged productions of Shakespeare's plays adheres to one or more level of Klaus Bruhn Jensen's three level definition of intermediality, which would indicate its designation as an intermedial production. The earliest and generally the most prevalent intermedial incursions within western theatre and productions of Shakespeare's plays are representative of Jensen's first level of intermediality dealing with "the combination and adaptation of separate *material vehicles* of representation and reproduction, sometimes called *multimedia*" (2385). The possible exception is Piscator's production of *The Merchant of Venice*, discussed in chapter three, which seems to encompass both the first and second level of Jensen's definition. Generally the "vehicles of representation and reproduction" in the first level of intermediality are non-diegetic elements within the theatre production, like scenery, expressionistic elements, or the presentation of memories and dreams, which combat the spatial and temporal constraints of the stage.

As computer-generated images become more realistic and the projection technology improves, it is feasible that more theatres will employ media elements to supplement or replace the traditional set designs. The uses of such virtual sets often allow productions increased flexibility within the presentational reality.

Already the Chorus's opening prologue apology in *Henry V* seems unnecessary, as often the cockpit does indeed hold the lofty fields of France, or at least a reasonable facsimile of them. The increased flexibility of the digital medium could actually result in theatre productions which resemble film, by allowing for shorter scenes and quick-cuts, similar to film shots. It is already possible to see the influence of cinematic language and media conventions within staged productions.

The apparent temporal constraints of the stage are also uniquely addressed by the incorporation of visual media. The created nature of the cinematic and digital media and the fractured temporal organization allow diverse time representation through the film medium, generally in the form of the flashback or the memory form. Unlike the classic Hollywood cinematic convention of establishing the character and then fading or otherwise transitioning into scenes outside the primary narrative plotline, the incorporation of non-diegetic and diegetic visual media elements within the theatre production allows for the representation of concurrent temporal realities on stage and the fractured temporal organization common to the cinema and digital formats.

The incorporation of diegetic media elements within Shakespeare productions around the mid-1990s, tend to fall into Jensen's second level of intermediality which "denotes communication through several *sensory modalities*⁶¹ at once" allowing the presentation of multiple perspectives and simultaneous situations (2385). The use of diegetic media on stage seems to result from the increased availability and user friendly nature of the technology which resulted in an increasingly media-centric society. The presentation of offstage and

⁶¹ Italic emphasis in original.

unscripted events through video and broadcast media sources within Shakespeare productions allows the audience to simultaneously view events occurring as the characters on stage. This device often makes the function of the Messenger redundant and easily cut.

This pattern of diegetic media use in live performances seems likely to continue. The incorporation of mediatized views allows alternative staging and is prevalent in other live events like concerts and sporting events. The technology provides a media view of events for audiences whose view would otherwise be obscured and frees spectators from their generally stationary position, allowing them alternate mediatized points of view. The introduction of cinematic language allows incorporation of the film close-up shot, which can give the audience an intimate view of an actor's performance.

The most recent and complex intermedial Shakespeare productions involve the third level of Jensen's definition of intermediality, concerning "the interrelations between media as *institutions*⁶² in society, as addressed in technological and economic terms such as convergence and conglomeration" (2385). Robin Nelson suggest this level of intermediality addresses "the capacity for convergence of digital technologies" (16). This level of intermediality involves the interaction between the media and the characters within the play and the interrelation of media within society, which could involve either the non-diegetic interaction of a play character with a media creation, such as the projected ghost of Hamlet's father or a CGI virtual Ariel puppet, or the diegetic use of media on stage to explore the "interrelations between media" addressed in terms of "convergence

⁶² Italic emphasis in original.

and conglomeration” or the societal relationship with media (2385). The Wooster Group’s *Hamlet*, which explores the relationship with media in terms of mediatization and reproduction, or productions such as Ivo van Hove’s *Roman Tragedies* which explores the political manipulation of media and truth, fall within this complex level of intermediality. Both the non-diegetic and diegetic approach to Jensen’s third level of intermediality involves interaction between the “live” and mediatized, which defines this level of intermediality. This reflection on society’s relationship with media through intermediality reflects the shift in the concept of “liveness” and remediation of new technologies and conventions by the theatre to meet the changing expectations of the audience.

The question remains, why do some Shakespeare plays seem more adaptable to media incorporation? What would explain the lack of intermedial productions of Shakespeare’s plays with themes of truth, love, honour, friendship, and family? Taking into account the popularity and frequency of production, it appears that various factors affect the incorporation of media within Shakespeare productions, but all the factors seem to relate to societal change.

Why does intermediality most often take place in production of Shakespeare’s histories, tragedies and dark comedies? There seems to be two reasons. These plays often incorporate supernatural elements, and the altered physicality of media projections substitutes well for the supernatural characters and elements in the plays with a different spatial/temporal nature: in essence technology substitutes for magic and the spiritual realm. These plays also tend to contain political or social themes. As a society we have grown accustomed to viewing social and political aspects of the world through technology. Daily

audiences in the developed world are exposed to political, social or moral themes through news programs, films and television entertainment, thus the adoption of media conventions and language within plays dealing with similar themes makes sense. Postmodern productions of Shakespeare's histories, tragedies and dark comedies often explore the role and manipulation of media sources in the interpretation of events. This is interesting considering that Benjamin sees art in the age of mechanical reproduction as being based on politics (218). Love, truth, honour, friendship, and family are feelings or ideas generally experienced physically, mentally and emotionally through life experience, not through mediatized sources. These themes relate to the intimate association of individuals in close proximity. The separation and isolation of the media would interfere with the presentation of these themes in stage productions. As a result it is not as common to see Shakespeare's comedies and plays with non-political themes incorporating intermedial sources.

Intermedial Shakespeare productions seems to be the most current phase in the evolution of theatre as it once again seeks equilibrium in the wake of the development and ascension to dominance of new presentational forms and technology. The product of the postmodern society, theatre is adopting multiple presentational forms and their conventions. Although different visual media elements within the production may have different natures and ontologies, each is an integral element in the intermedial production, opening Shakespeare's plays to new interpretations and approaches. If done well, intermedial Shakespeare productions could support Shakespeare's adaptability and relevance through the twenty-first-century. Used as a type of hypertext, the visual media elements add

dimensions and a contemporary focus to the existing themes and structures of Shakespeare's plays.

The very technology which some feel threatens theatre, rather challenges theatre practitioners and provides new technological tools and opportunities for production and remediation, even within the commonly produced Shakespeare plays. McLuhan states what history has shown to be true, that "Artists in various fields are always the first to discover how to enable one medium to use or to release the power of another" (54). It is the constant challenge of the art and medium that engages most theatre practitioners, and these artists are generally willing to push the envelope and implement new technology. In his article "Live Media: Interactive Technology and Theatre," David Z. Saltz declares that "interactive technologies . . . are giving rise to new art forms that defy traditional disciplinary boundaries" (110). He goes on to explain that the goals of the University of Georgia's Interactive Performance Laboratory (IPL) "is to allow students to investigate dramatic potential" of interactive technologies and "ways of using interactive technology to stage dramatic texts in traditional theatre settings" (110). The very existence of the University of Georgia's Interactive Performance Laboratory (IPL), the Institute for the Exploration of Virtual Realities (i.e. VR) within the Department of Theatre and Film at the University of Kansas, and Kent Interactive Digital Design Studio (KIDDS) at the University of Kent at Canterbury at the turn of the century and the 2010 development of a Projection Design concentration within Yale University's School of Drama M.F.A. program in Production Design, indicate a growing trend in mediatization and intermedial theatre production, which is likely to continue to grow exponentially.

The future of theatre is one of an art with an increasing palette of design and presentation options provided by new technologies yet rooted in the desire for intimate, ephemeral “live” performance and the illusion of unmediated, although possibly mediatized, audience experience. Increasingly, the very characteristics which differentiate the media are being used in cooperation to create an intermedial theatre event which may be the future of the theatre art and Shakespeare productions.

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⁶³ Shaw's review is part of the larger article by Andrew Eglinton, "Reflections on a Decade of Punchdrunk Theatre." *Theatre Forum* 37 (Summer/Fall 2010) 46-64.

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