

A woman stands in the center of a futuristic, glowing digital stage. The stage is composed of two large, rectangular, glowing pink portals that lead to a bright red, illuminated area. The woman is silhouetted against the red light. The overall atmosphere is high-tech and vibrant.

DIGITAL

STAGES

with Beatriz Cabur

Good morning, everyone!

My name is Beatriz Cabur, and I like diving in the ocean.

I have been professionally working in theatre since 1998, and in digital theatre since 2012.

I would like to hear from you before we start.

PART 1.- CONCEPTS

PART 2.- EXPERIENCES

PART 3.- PRACTICE

A person stands in the center of a futuristic, glowing digital stage. The stage is composed of two large, rectangular, glowing pink portals that lead to a bright red, glowing area. The person is silhouetted against the red light. The overall scene is set against a dark background with a pink and red color palette.

DIGITAL

STAGES

PART 1 - CONCEPTS

LIVESTREAMED THEATRE?

ONLINE THEATRE?

DIGITAL THEATRE?

AREN'T ALL THESE THE SAME?

...AND WHAT ABOUT RECORDED THEATRE AVAILABLE ONLINE?

WHAT WAS DIGITAL THEATRE?

The term **Digital Theatre** was being used before the Covid-19 pandemic to refer to shows created by theatre makers, using multimedia assets and actors, to be experienced in a theatre venue.

LANTERNA MAGIKA (1958) JOSEF SVOBODA



"The play of the actors cannot exist without the film, and vice-versa, they become one thing, a synthesis and fusion of actors and projection. Moreover, the same actors appear on stage and screen, and interact with each other. The film has a dramatic function."

Josef Svoboda, 1958.

On the essential non-autonomy of each medium, film and living actor

WHAT DEFINED DIGITAL THEATRE?

- 1.- There had to be some form of digital technology in the staging
- 2.- There had to be an actor performing live "on stage"
- 3.- It had to have a preestablished structure
- 4.- There had to be verbal, visual and/or musical elements in it

SONTAG:REBORN (2013) THE BUILDERS ASSOCIATION



Adapted from Susan Sontag's early journals by performer Moe Angelos, *Sontag: Reborn* traces Sontag's private life from the age of 14 to her emergence as a world-renowned author and activist. The young Sontag wrestles with her emerging sexuality and precocious intelligence, fraught with doubt and insecurity yet driven by her wilfulness, ambition and voracious curiosity. The refuge of her diary became integral to her development as a writer, Sontag says herself, "*In the journal I do not just express myself more openly than I could in person. I create myself.*"

Directed by Marianne Weems and using The Builders Association's signature synthesis of poetic video and sound, this tightly-crafted story of self-discovery and sexual identity is both exuberant and intimate, exploring the private life, loves and idiosyncrasies of the iconic intellectual.

WHAT DEFINES LIVESTREAMED THEATRE

Livestreamed Theatre refers to shows created by theatre makers, using online tools, software, hardware, digital assets, and actors, to be experienced online live.

There must be an open bidirectional channel between the audience and “the stage”, that allows them to communicate live.

**IF THE ENERGY OF THE
AUDIENCE AFFECTS THE
PERFORMANCE...
IT IS THEATRE.**

A digitized human being becomes other.... Once digitized, the image of a human being is released from its origin and can transform itself into a multitude of landscapes; it becomes a system unimpeded by any conceptual limits.

Ollivier Dyens.

Metal and Flesh: The Evolution of Man: Technology Takes Over

CHILDBIRTH-19 (2020) BY BEATRIZ CABUR



Childbirth-19 is a digital theatre play specifically written to be livestreamed and performed live online. The play depicts childbirth in times of Covid-19 and tackles how the experience of pregnancy and labour is shaped by systemic trauma, as due to coronavirus, childbirth interventions and mistreatments have increased, disregarding women's needs and rights.

Based on real life experiences by collecting the stories of mothers and women who have assisted women in labour or work in defending their rights during the COVID-19 pandemic. Childbirth-19 reflected their experiences and amplified their voices.

WHAT IS BROADCASTED THEATRE?

Broadcasted Theatre is when a live show happening in a theatre can be watched in a cinema at the same time it is happening.

The actors on stage deliver their performances as they normally would any other night. But to make sure the audiences watching in cinema have the best seat in the house, the position of the cameras is set to capture each moment in the production.

All technical teams make sure that every element on stage such as lighting, hair and make-up look fantastic on the big screen.

WHAT IS SCREENED THEATRE?

The live footage from a broadcasted show is packaged and shared, unedited, and then cinemas around the world can screen it at a time that suits them.



**National
Theatre
home**

The best of British theatre

**BROADCASTED, SCREENED, RECORDED AND ONLINE THEATRE
BUT NOT DIGITAL NOR LIVESTREAMED**

WHAT IS ONLINE THEATRE?

Online Theatre refers to shows created by theatre makers, using online tools, software, hardware, digital assets, and actors, to be experienced online.

Online Theatre does not need to be live.

Think about how recorded theatre becomes "recorded theatre" and it's not considered just "theatre" anymore when it is stored in video format.

In that same way "livestreamed theatre" becomes "online theatre".

"Online theatre" can also refer to any theatre that is available online.

DOGS OR CATS; AUGMENTED BODY! (2022)

BY JAERIN SON



Dogs or Cats; Augmented Body is an interdisciplinary experimental puppetry show that combines bunraku-marionette puppetry and shadow puppetry. Based on Jaerin Son's immigrating experiences, DC;AB tells the story of a female bot and her human physical therapist's burgeoning friendship.

Inspired by Cyborg Feminism and Posthumanism theories along with Artaudian post-dramatic tradition, DC;AB touches on the visual aesthetics of theatre and its double; Bilingualism (Korean and English), Auditing experiences and Spectating experiences (spoken lines vs projected subtitles), live camera & live sound mixing along with performers' ephemeral presence on stage.

SO, WHAT IS A DIGITAL STAGE?

A **digital stage** is an online shared non-physical space in which artists meet to rehearse, create, or perform a piece. It is a place situated between here and there, but it is not a liminal space. We are not in transit. The digital stage is the destination. It is the "ahí".

The digital stage only fully exists in our minds, and as in onsite theatre we will work towards building a unique shared "reality".

The final product of what is created in a digital stage does not necessarily need to be an online piece or even digital theatre.

PERFORMINGDIGITAL.STUDIO



The course has run in [GHEA21](#) institutions across three continents from 2021 onwards. We ask, how can theatre work with, reflect on, and challenge an increasingly digitized world?

The course:

Showcases efforts of faculty, students, and institutions to bridge geographies and time zones to create a digital creative hub.

Investigates how newly dispersed digital formats have expanded our idea of theatre and challenged established digital practices.

Asks how these new networked performance experiences have altered common social and cultural functions of theatre.

<https://performingdigital.studio/>

The digital defines the edges of the biological and vice versa, through their simultaneous presence onstage. Its contrast opens up dialogue between the two natures, creating a semi-fictional "dialogic interaction" (McNally 2001, p. 124) relevant to our current social evolution. This dialogic interaction allows audience and performance creators alike to better conceptualize our selves in relation to our changing environment.

(Masura 2020, p. 205) Digital Theatre: The Making and Meaning of Live Mediated Performance, US & UK 1990-2020. Palgrave Studies in Performance and Technology

Digital Theatre before the pandemic

Happens in a Theatre Venue - Experienced live in a Theatre Venue

Livestreamed Theatre

Happens anywhere - Experienced live anywhere you are watching it through your device connected live to internet

Broadcasted Theatre

Happens in a Theatre Venue - Experienced live in a cinema venue

Screened Theatre

Happened in a Theatre Venue - Experienced in a cinema venue

Recorded Theatre

Happened in a Theatre Venue - Experienced anywhere you are watching it, online or offline

Online Theatre

Happens anywhere - Experienced anywhere you are watching it, online live, or online recorded

SOME FORMAL POSSIBILITIES

1.- The entire work is broadcasted live to a delocalized audience with respect to the entire cast. (*The Collectors*) **BT**

2.- All scenarios have equal status and all actors are livestreamed in another stage and thanks to telepresence the two are in a common space in which drama is possible.

DT

"Virtual Dinner Party" took place in (between) New York and Berlin. Both the New York and Berlin stages had a table and diners seated at it, both tables ended in a screen that gave the illusion of extending that table. Creating a space that was neither that one nor the other, but a perceptual common space.

3.- A part of the cast is delocalized with respect to other actors and the audience and the other cast are in the same space. (*New Yorkers in The Plane*) **DT**

4.- The livestream is only used in parts of the play while other scenes take place in the physical space that the rest of the cast shares with the audience. (*Ronensborough*)

DT

SOME FORMAL POSSIBILITIES

5.- The entire work, performed by one actor, is livestreamed to a scattered live online audience gathered in a digital space. (*Childbirth-19*) **LT**

6.- The cast is physically scattered, the audience is physically scattered, the entire show is livestreamed and we are all in the same digital space. (*Clytemnestra*)
LT

7.- Immersive livestreamed theatre in which the characters interact with one audience member at a time. (*The Chef*) **LT**

8.- Immersive livestreamed theatre in which the characters interact with the whole audience or in groups (*Ghostbusters*) **LT**

THE CONTROVERSY

- *Is this still theatre?*
- *Am I allowed to do this?*
- *Aren't other people in other fields doing the same with more experience than me?*
- *WHAT IS THEATRE?*
- *Do I have a right to do this?*
- *Where does this end?*

Audiences do not believe Live-to-Digital is a substitute for live theatre; they believe it is a significant and distinct experience.

Younger audience survey respondents are more likely than older respondents to stream performances than attend theatre in person or in the cinema: 71% of respondents ages 16-24 have streamed; 55% of respondents ages 25-44 have streamed; and under 30% of those 45 and older have done so.

Those who stream are more diverse: 68% of survey takers identifying as Non-White British have streamed, nearly twice the average (37%) for White British respondents. This informs part of a critical, and much broader discussion about participation, as raised in the Arts and Humanities Research Council's 2016 report on Cultural Value, whose authors argue that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) cultural practice and consumption have been particularly marginalised when discussing participation in cultural activity.

[From Live to Digital. Understanding the Impact of Digital Developments in Theatre on Audiences, Production and Distribution. Arts Council Report](#)

A person stands in the center of a futuristic, glowing digital environment. The scene is dominated by vibrant pink and red light. Two large, glowing rectangular frames are positioned on either side of the person, creating a sense of depth and perspective. The background is a bright, glowing red wall, and the floor is dark, reflecting the light. The overall atmosphere is high-tech and immersive.

DIGITAL

STAGES

PART 2 - EXPERIENCES



STAGING ONSITE THEATRE IN A DIGITAL STAGE



SUITE 207

BY BEATRIZ CABUR & DOUGLAS HOWE

Site-specific show to be
performed in a hotel

Director in Madrid, Spain
Team in New York, USA

Same age group

We know each other in person

SUITE 207 (2012)

Insights:

The directionality of the screen matters more than you would think.

The physical energy and warmth in social settings between director and performers in real time and space can't be fully replaced by technology. As the proxemics redefine in an online medium, the energy of the director gets diffused, and most of their usual tools don't have a medium to flow through.

As we communicate live during rehearsal through different media depending on who are we talking to multitasking gets more productive. The digital rehearsal room is a transmedia universe and, as such it expands across multiple platforms and formats.

Proxemics is the study of how humans use space in social interactions, how close we stand, how we position our bodies, and how physical distance communicates meaning.



CARTHAGE

BY CARIDAD SVICH

Signdance theatre play

Director in Madrid, Spain

Team in Gratz, Austria and
London, UK

Different age group

We know each other in person

CARTHAGE (2014)

Insights:

To fix the issues that the directionality of the screen created and the dispersion of energy that we experienced in "Suite 207", to direct Carthage remotely, I arranged to be projected as big as can be on a massive screen at the back of the stage. It couldn't have worked better.

The screen has to be where you would be in the physical room.

A woman with long dark hair is sitting on a tiled floor, looking distressed and holding her arm. She is wearing a dark blue t-shirt. The background is a plain white wall.

GOODBYE MOTHER

BY BEATRIZ CABUR

Traditional theatre show

Director in London, UK

Actress in NY, USA

Stage manager in NY, USA

Same age group

We know each other in person

GOODBYE MOTHER (2018)

Insights:

Comedy works beautifully in a digital stage, tragedy not so much.

It is literally painful putting your actress in a character that goes through emotional trauma and not being able to support her being in the same room.

A person is sitting on a stage, viewed from behind. The stage is illuminated with vibrant blue and red lights. A bright blue light strip is visible on the floor. The background is a plain wall. The overall atmosphere is futuristic and digital.

STAGING LIVESTREAMED

DIGITAL THEATRE

IN A DIGITAL STAGE



HUMANITY IS UGLY

BY IÑIGO RAMIREZ DE HARO

Digital Theatre

Show to be performed through Vydio
for an audience in a theatre

Director in Milan, Italy

Actresses in Tudela, Spain

Stage manager in Tudela, Spain

Tech in Tudela, Spain

Tech in Milan, Italy

Different age group

We don't know each other in person

HUMANITY IS UGLY (2013)

Insights:

We had a cast of four people with a combined age of almost 300 years so I hired a wonderful woman to design a crash course and put them up to speed on everything they needed to know to feel comfortable with the process. Even if we had people to take care of every technological aspect in the show.

We walked them, gently and kindly, through everything they didn't need to worry about so they wouldn't worry about it.

Things you wouldn't share as a director because we work on a need to know basis you share in this circumstances to put everyone at ease, and it is fine.



RONENSBOURGH

BY BEATRIZ CABUR

Digital Theatre

The show mixes on stage performances with both recorded video and telepresence.

Director in Milan, Italy

One actor in Milan, Italy

Four actors in Barcelona, Spain

Two actors recorded on video

Stage manager in Barcelona, Spain

Same age group

We know each other in person

inter

RONENSBURG (2013)

Insights:

Working on this play is when we fully realised that if the rehearsal room is what will be transposed onto the stage, then the stage is not a physical space but also a virtuality.

The shared reality we are building can only exist altogether and be fully formed in the brain of each one of the audience members.

Is the job of the director to make that a clear, well defined space for the cast, crew and audience to inhabit.

This can take us even further, on a journey that arrives at the marvellous world of transmedia storytelling for theatre.

A woman in silhouette stands in a brightly lit gallery, looking at a large illuminated sign that reads "STAGING LIVESTREAMED THEATRE IN A DIGITAL STAGE". The sign is set within a series of nested arches, with the innermost arch being blue and the outer ones being pink. The gallery walls are white with vertical orange light strips, and the floor is a light-colored tile. The overall atmosphere is modern and artistic.

STAGING
LIVESTREAMED
THEATRE IN A
DIGITAL STAGE

ADELA

LONG DISTANCE AFFAIR: ADELA

BY MARIANA CARREÑO KING

Horror show to be performed
through Skype

Director in Milan, Italy

Actress and team in Tudela, Spain

Audience in México, México

Producers in New York, USA

Different age group

We don't know each other in person

ADELA (2012)

Insights:

The biggest challenge we faced in this digital stage is a situation that almost never happens in an onsite stage. The actress could and would look at her face constantly, relentlessly. This created a huge barrier to jump over before we could move forward and even start building the character.

The trust was gun blasted by the actress self-doubt as she couldn't stop looking at herself and questioning our choices. I decided I had to go to where she was to rehearse 3 days before the premiere and for the shows.

We didn't know each other, she wasn't comfortable with the technology, and we didn't have time to build that up so we had to go to the real world.

This duality of performance between live and mediated, human and digital other, is essential to the performance of Digital Theatre.

The value of this experience lies in its ability to reinterpret current perceptions of the body and its value as both sign and symbol of the human individual.

If we invert the term body image, used to connote the commoditized body represented through media, to image-body, it can be used to indicate that the object of conversation is the digitized or mediated image, the digital other.

Digital Theatre:
The Making and Meaning of Live Mediated Performance

POPOP THEATRIC'S PRESENTS: LONG DISTANCE
(MAKE POSSIBLE AN IMPOSSIBLE TRIP)

TOMA DANILA IS:

THE

DIRECTED BY ANA MARGINEANU

THE CHEF

BY BEATRIZ CABUR

Show to be performed through Skype
for one audience member at a time

Director in New York, USA

Actor in Bucharest, Romania

Director in Milan, Italy

Actor in Zaragoza, Spain

WRITTEN BY BEATRIZ CABUR
Director in Salamanca, Spain

Actor in Salamanca, Spain

Same age group

AT THE GERSWINE
7 EAST 27TH STREET
BETWEEN 5TH AVE
We don't know each other in person

THE CHEF (2013)

Insights:

As this play was specifically written to be performed through Skype for one audience member at a time, that very same text made the creative process organic and easy, as the stage was going to replicate the rehearsal room.

You can only fully rehearse a play online when it is going to be an online play.



THEATRE PLAY

FOR FACEBOOK

LIVE

BY BEATRIZ

CABUR

LIL'BIRD

BY BEATRIZ CABUR

Show to be performed on Facebook
Live

Director in London, UK

Actress in Madrid, Spain

Stage Manager in Madrid, Spain

Same age group

We know each other in person

LIL' BIRD (2017)

Insights:

Lil'Bird had one character performing on Facebook Live and several characters interacting with her through the comments section.

We could never fully rehearse this play as it needed the audience to become what it was supposed to be, so from that point of view it is the most theatrical play of them all. Social Media theatre is street theatre.

Opening a channel for the audience to interact with the performance is a double-edged sword. It has to be carefully and creatively thought through as an element of the show itself, and the audience needs to know what is expected of them and when.

PÍO PÍO

LIL' BIRD 2

BY BEATRIZ CABUR

Show to be performed on Facebook Live

Obra de Teatro para ser representada por Facebook Live

Director in London, UK

Actresses in Madrid, Spain

escrita y dirigida por Beatriz Cabur

Stage Manager in Madrid, Spain

para Carolina Lapa

Different age group

Sara Moros, Sandra Dominique y Laura Aparicio

We don't know each other in person

Ayudante de dirección: Laura Moros

Regiduría: Eugenia Pardo



VIÉRCOLES
19:00

LIL' BIRD 2 (2018)

Insights:

Lil'Bird 2 had five character performing on Facebook Live and several characters interacting with them through the comments section.

We suffered some of the same trust issues we had with "Adela", for the very same reasons: The different levels of technological literacy and the different level of achievement in their careers, being the actresses with the longest most successful careers the most reluctant ones to follow directions and let go of themselves.

Online theatre can get big and needs a bigger budget than regular theatre, on top of the specific technology you still need light design and technicians, stage design and stage managers, and so on and so forth.

STAGING HYBRID THEATRE IN A HYBRID STAGE





signdancecollective is offline.

Learn more about them on their channel!

▶ Visit [signdancecollective](#)

⚙️ 📺 twitch

STREAM CHAT

Welcome to the chat room!

Send a message

⚙️ Chat

signdancecollective2 is offline.

Learn more about them on their channel!

▶ Visit [signdancecollective2](#)

⚙️ 📺 twitch

ORIENTE PLUS/POWER CUT

ORIENTE Playlist

9 TRACKS

- ORIENTE PLUS/POWER CUT - PAJAROS/NATURE ▶ 5
- ORIENTE PLUS/POWER CUT - SKIN I AM IN ▶ 3
- ORIENTE PLUS/POWER CUT - SIEMPRE TE VOY A QUERER ▶ 5

ORIENTE PLUS/POWER CUT - ORIENTE Playlist



Show to be performed onsite and on a specific website at the same time

Director in Graz, Austria
Actors in Graz, Austria
Set Designer in Florida

Different age group

We know each other in person

ORIENTE PLUS

BY PEDRO DE SENNA

ORIENTE PLUS (2022)

Insights:

[Robert Corcoran](#) and I tested and experimented with Twitch, TikTok, OBS, Facebook Live, Instagram, EpocCam, Streamlabs, and many more. We tested the capabilities and effects within those platforms, applications and softwares, with green screens in real life and in-app, aiming to create a unique perspective for the digital audiences, while embedding everything into a unified online stage.

Oriente Plus, a Caribbean story, the digital show, allows us to share the points of view of two different characters at the same time. Those points of view are also reflected in the way they share them with us: The character of the Vulture is a young person extremely comfortable with technology and living fast, playing around with effects and filters in vertical videos that engage his audience.

ORIENTE PLUS (2022)

Insights:

The character of the Serpent reflects a more introspective artistic slow world, in which we can see and hear things the way he does, and reality is still horizontal, and not immediate but post produced, as the way we think as we gather more experience in life, with our thoughts stretching through time.

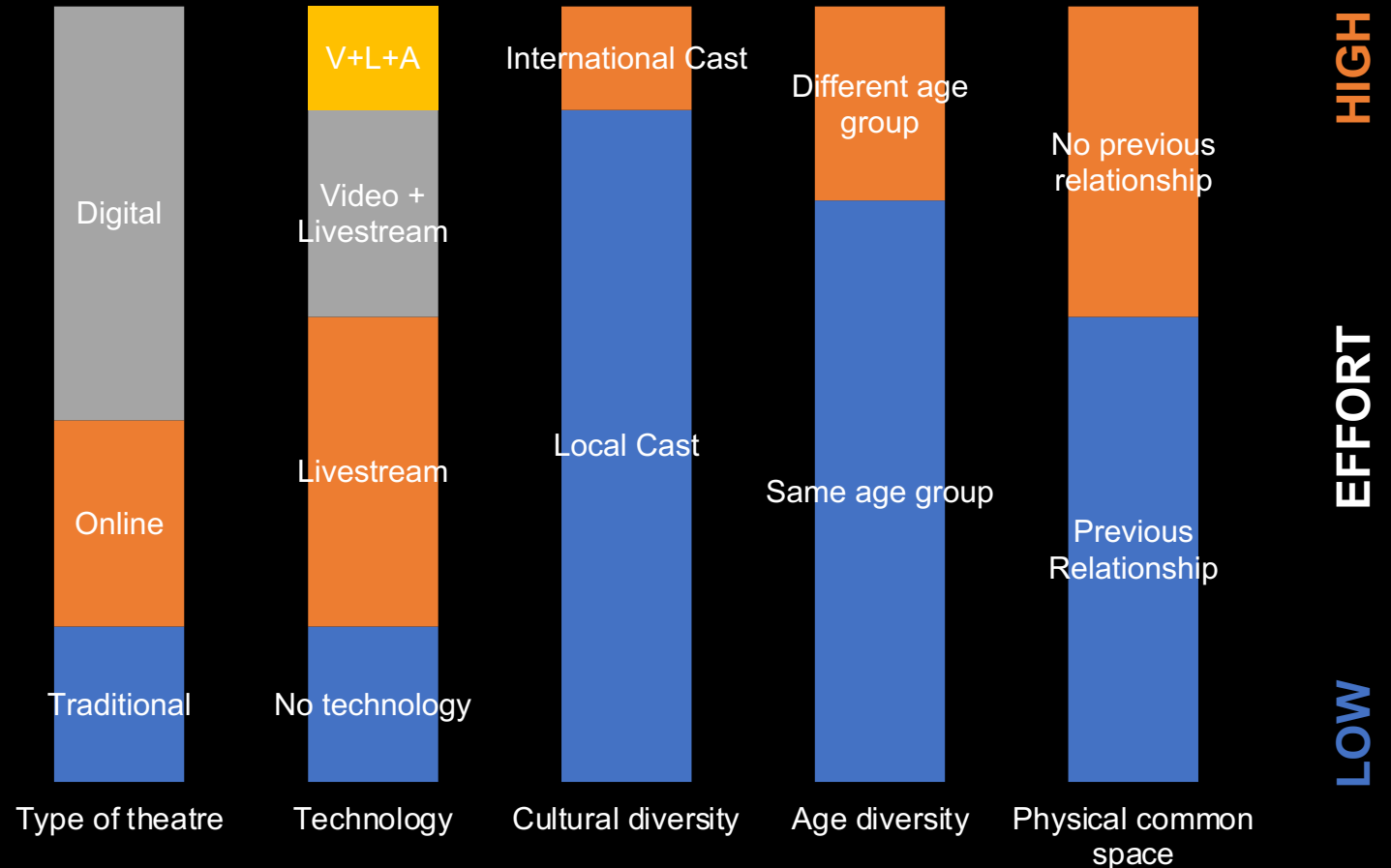
We have rehearsed how to capture it all on cameras, where to put the cameras on the performers, how to use them, and how to integrate them and the green screens with the characters on stage, making it all part of the real life show itself.

It all belongs to the story we are sharing. The form of expression is conditioned by the essence of the message, and that is how the digital show has been developed and integrated with the real life show.

PART 2 - CONCLUSIONS

The amount of work we must put into a digital stage, to make it a relaxed space in which creation is possible, is directly correlated to the number of variables added to it.

The most meaningful variables are the previous existence of a relationship between all the people involved in the rehearsal and a shared level of technological literacy.



A person stands in the center of a futuristic digital stage. The walls are illuminated with vibrant pink and red light. Two large, glowing rectangular frames are positioned on either side of the person, creating a sense of depth and perspective. The overall atmosphere is high-tech and modern.

DIGITAL

STAGES

PART 3 - PRACTICE

HOW FAST EVERYTHING GOES

EXPERIMENT AND KNOW YOUR TOOLS

WHITE ON WHITE (2021) BY NANI DE JULIÁN



CLYTEMNESTRA (2021) BY GARRET J. GROENVELD



TOOLS / FREEWARE

<https://unsplash.com/>

<https://www.canva.com/>

<https://affinity.serif.com/en-gb/>

Livestreaming:

<https://obsproject.com/>

https://www.dacast.com/blog/chroma-key-software-for-live-streaming/#anchor_5

Compositing

<https://natrongithub.github.io/>

Audio:

<https://www.audacityteam.org/>

Video Editing

<https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve/>

3D (modelling, rigging, animation, simulation, rendering, compositing and motion tracking, video editing and game creation)

<https://www.blender.org/features/>

THINKING DIGITAL

- What are my tools?
- What do I know?
- What do I have?
- What can I play with?
- Who do I want to talk to?
- Where are they?
- What do I want to tell them?

THINKING DIGITAL

- How do I talk to them where they are?
- What do I want to achieve?
- How involved do I want my audience to be?
 - One platform VS Multiplatform
 - One day VS Several days
 - Different platforms = Different languages = Different audiences

THINKING DIGITAL

- How do I transcreate?
- How do I adapt a play into digital?
- How much creative freedom do I have?
- What do I want my show to feel like?
- Immediacy VS Hypermediacy
- How do I translate my theatrical knowledge into digital theatre?

IMMEDIACY VS HYPERMEDIACY

The **immediacy** of the spectator is intended to **forget the presence of the medium** and accept the convention according to which he is truly in front of the represented objects.

From the epistemological point of view, immediacy is equivalent to the absence of mediation (or the appearance of absence): a medium can erase itself and disappearing for the viewer, who can contemplate the objects directly.

Hypermediacy: the approach that aims to **remind the user of the explicit use of the medium.**

THINKING DIGITAL

- How do I make my audience forget about the medium?
- (i.e. Look them in the eye)

- How do I make the medium visible?
- (i.e. Have them interact with you)

- How do I create a digital stage?
 -
 - Where do we start compositing?

 - What is our first digital asset?

- **Compositing** live body with mediatized body with video background with text and sound effects, live audio and music is what **creates the stage.**

CHROMA KEYING

Chroma keying, which is also referred to as "chroma key compositing," is a cinematic technique that is used to blend two different media files together by picking up on colour hues.

For example, the producer could use a green screen in the background of the recording setup to seamlessly add a different background of a design or a different location.



LET'S CREATE!

ADAPT & STAGE this play

Considering this

Digital Theatre

Production Key Areas

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- What was your process through this?
- What problems did you encounter?
- What did you find?
- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- What do you think could make your show succeed?
- What do you think could make your show not achieve the desired outcome?

THANK YOU



YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL

Email: hello@beatrizcabur.com

Website: <https://beatrizcabur.com/>