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The Actor, Media and Hybridity.

The Example of Robert Lepage's *The Andersen Project*

The integration of media into theater brings about a complex transformation from the standpoint of the actor and his craft. As a result, technological objects become integral to the composition of the actor's role as first conceived on the dramatic stage (his presence, his manner of expressing and reading emotions, his connection to his role, the role of the actor and the character in the staging as a whole). A type of media enters into interaction with these traditional components, leading to a redefinition of the composition of role through a postdramatic perspective. Here, the actor appears as *operator* of the stage who ensures the aesthetic transitions between the theatrical and technological media, both digital and analog.

I propose to develop this idea through an analysis of the theatrical work of Robert Lepage, his performance *The Andersen Project* in particular. This Canadian director, a pioneer in the exploration of the use of high technology within live performance, presents himself as an artist of multiple experiences, both in the realms of theater and of film. He explores these multiple experiences in particular in his solo performances, of which *The Andersen Project* can be seen as part of an aesthetic continuity. Let us note that Lepage is one of the rare directors exploring the question of acting within performances using technological components. He avoids the notion of method and instead follows an intuitive approach, which is nonetheless marked by consistent and progressive characteristics.

In our analysis, we would like to pay particular attention to the phenomenon resulting from the incorporation of the actor with a particular media, both from the point of view of the technological device and of the image. This is the instant when the body is transformed and becomes host to a role through the configuration of multiple elements of the spectacle, a role other than that of the character. This role is born of the coexistence of different media, both technological and theatrical. In this process, various techniques of acting are reconsidered, and the question of hybridity, or *métissage* with medial elements, explored, bringing about new forms of expression.

Biographical notice

Dr Izabella Pluta is an associated lecturer at the Haute école de théâtre de Suisse romande - la Manufacture in Lausanne where she managed recently a project with Krystian Lupa (workshop, conference, courses); she is the author of a PhD thesis about the relation between the actor and the new media on stage of which a practical part was done in Robert Lepage's Caserne Dalhousie in 2003; she has been teaching in Poland (Universytet Opolski) and in France (Université de Tours) and published many articles in theatrical journals and in collective editions (recently Antoinette Fouque, Béatrice Didier, Mireille Calle-Gruber (dir.), « Dictionnaire des créatrices », George Brown, Gerhard Hauck, Jean-Marc Larrue (dir.), « Intermédialité, théâtralité, (re)-présentation et nouveaux médias », both to be published in 2009). She is also a member of the working group « Intermediality in Theatre and Performance » of the IFTR, and a translator.