

**The modified encounter –  
On the relationship between intermediality and  
memory in performance.**



Two-layers image taken from a rehearsal of *I am. I am. I am.* photographed by Ruthie Osterman.

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MA Performance Practices and Research

September, 2013

## Abstract

This practice as research project explores the relationship between intermediality and memory in live performance. This exploration is based on the definition of intermediality as a 'space in between the different realities that the performance creates' (Chapple & Kattenbelt 2006:12) and on Henri Bergson's concept of memory as 'independent recollection' (Bergson 2011:40) where the virtual past co-exists with the actual present. The purpose of this research is to explore the correspondences between the co-existing realities within intermediality and those that co-exist in memory and the implications these correspondences have on live performance. I apply Jacques Derrida's notion of *différance* (Derrida 1991:62) a 'differentiation that produces the effect of identity and difference between those identities' (Deutscher 2005:29) as a lens through which I read the differentiation and relations the intermedial encounter creates.

The relationship between intermediality and memory is explored through the development of the intermedial performance practice *I am. I am. I am.* which focuses on the intermedial encounter between body, image and object and the subject matter of memory. It was through the development and the analysis of *I am. I am. I am.* that substantial new insights emerged regarding the phenomenon that takes place in the intermedial encounter in relation to memory. The outcomes of this practice as research project show that the relationship between the intermedial encounter and memory is one of correspondence, intensification and modification. The practice shows that the intermedial encounter enacts memory as a creative process in the present moment rather than presenting it as content in the past. The conclusion is that the encounter between intermediality and memory activates and heightens *différance* and therefore modifies all the elements that participate in the encounter, including memory itself.

## **Declaration on Plagiarism**

**'I understand the School definition of plagiarism and declare that all sources drawn on have been formally acknowledged.'**

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*To my Father,*

*The driving force of the intelligence in my life.*

*'To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is  
to go on creating oneself endlessly.'*

(Henri Bergson 1998:7)

*'You must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on'*

(Samuel Beckett 1979:382)

**Acknowledgments:**

To three smart and beautiful women, who accompanied me through my practice as research project and who had a significant influence on this thesis:

To Dr. Experience Bryon, for seeing and believing in me.

To Jo Scott, my beloved tutor, for your wisdom, sensitivity and presence.

To Jessica Hartley, for the freedom.

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## Introduction

This thesis presents the practice of the intermedial encounter as it relates to the subject matter of memory in live-performance.

Intermediality in theatre and performance is the subject of a large debate in contemporary performance studies and a significant feature of contemporary theatre since the middle of the twentieth century. Freda Chappel & Chiel Kattenbelt locate intermediality 'as a meeting point in –between the performers, the observers and the confluence of media involved in performance at a particular moment in time.' (Chappel & Kattenbelt 2006:12)

Based on this definition of intermediality as a 'meeting point' and as 'space in-between different realities' (ibid) I identified the phenomena within intermediality as an 'intermedial- encounter'. I used the word encounter in order to emphasize the relation between the elements within intermediality and the possibilities they offer to each other. Even though the observers constitute an important part of the intermedial encounter, I chose to focus my exploration on the intermedial encounter between body, image and object.

In this thesis, I elaborate the significance of seeing the intermedial encounter as a space 'in-between' and the importance of the gap which it creates between the elements in the encounter. I argue that intermediality exists not only as a space 'in-between', but it keeps a dynamic gap which wants to be closed and to remain open at the same time. It is an empty gap full of possibilities. The gap of the 'in-between' was a fundamental concept in my investigation of the relation between the intermedial encounter and the subject matter of memory and led me to my argument about what the intermedial-encounter can generate.



Within this thesis memory is read and relates to the theory of the philosopher Henri Bergson about memory as 'independent recollection' (Bergson 2011:40) where the past co-exists with the present in its virtual form, as distinct from the survival of the past 'as a bodily habit' (ibid) which is a psychological actualization of memory taking place in the human body.

The Bergsonian notion of the co-existence of the virtual-past and the actual-present is crucial to the way I relate memory to the intermedial encounter. I use the correspondence between the actual and the virtual elements that exist in the intermedial encounter and those that exist in memory. Within this thesis, wherever I am referring to 'memory', I consider it to be the primary subject matter and read it as it relates to the theory of the philosopher Henri Bergson.

For me, to put memory into work in the intermedial encounter is to appreciate the gap, the infinite gap, and its creative potential. The in-between of the intermedial encounter constitutes a fertile ground for that. Within my thesis, I will argue that one of the creative potentials of the encounter between intermediality and memory is creating a modification in each of the elements that take part in the encounter.

In order to establish my argument, I apply the philosopher Jacques Derrida's notion of *différance* (Derrida 1991:62) as a lens through which I identify the modification that the encounter between intermediality and memory might produce.

An interval must separate the present from what it is not in order for the present to be itself, but this interval that constitutes it as present must, by the same token, divide the present in and of itself, thereby also dividing, along with the present, everything that is thought on the basis of the present. (Derrida 1991:66)

Derrida argues that within *différance* there is an active gap which creates infinite differentiation and divides the present moment 'in and of itself' (ibid) and in that way produces modification of identities. Through this lens of the *différance* which Derrida defined also as a 'modified present' (ibid) I recognized the action happening

within the intermedial encounter and memory at the moment of the live-performance, as a modification.

This study of the intermedial encounter and its relation to memory was developed through my practice as research project at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama. Robin Nelson defines practice as research as a 'research project in which practice is a key method of inquiry and where, in respect of the arts, a practice... is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry.' (Nelson 2013:8) Practice as research is the primary methodology informing this thesis. It is a research located in the doing and triangulated with reflection and critical reading to generate findings through praxis.

In this thesis, I will present the way I practiced the intermedial encounter and its relation to memory through the process of creating the performance practice *I am. I am*. *I am* presented at the Brink Festival on June 2013. It was through the process of creating this performance practice that new insight emerged regarding the possibility of modification that the intermedial encounter offers. Based on the outcomes of my praxis, I will argue that the relationship between intermediality and memory is one of correspondence, intensification and modification. Within the intermedial encounter, memory functions as a creative-generator of modification of each element that takes part in the encounter, including memory itself.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I will present the conceptual framework of my practice as research which constitutes the basis of my argument. In the second chapter, I will locate my practice in relation to other practitioners and will delineate the sources, content and forms, from which I have drawn my practice. In the third chapter I will analyze three moments from the performance practice *I am. I am. I am*. through the lens of the critical concepts presented in the first chapter.

This thesis is followed by images and video extracts from the performance practice *I am. I am. I am.* These documentations are a crucial part of the presentation of my argument and constitute evidence to the emerging conclusions regarding the phenomenon of modification produced in the encounter between intermediality and memory.

At the heart of this thesis is my basic understanding of art as an encounter. And from this pure encounter, the modified-encounter has emerged. Within this thesis I tried to share the significant encounters I have experienced through my practice as research project; encounters with philosophical theories, with a new practice of intermediality, with memory and especially with myself as a human-being and an artist. As always, the beauty of an encounter lies in its ability to create change and open new possibilities for the participants within it. For me, this thesis is also an encounter: between you the reader, me and the insights presented within it. Therefore, by delivering this thesis, I wish a modification will emerge.

## 1. Conceptual Framework

In this chapter I will present the main critical concepts and the key terms on which I based my exploration of the intermedial encounter and its relation to memory. I will start from the definition of intermediality as an 'in-between' space (Chapple & Kattenbelt 2006:12) in order to locate myself within the field of intermediality and to elaborate the fundamental difference between life and death, which I see as a crucial feature of the intermedial encounter. As a next step, I will present the philosophical perception standing in the heart of my practice; the Bergsonian concept of memory as 'independent recollection' and the co-existence of the virtual-past and the actual-present as he presents in his book *Matter and Memory* (Bergson 2010:40). The Bergsonian theory is crucial to understanding the way I put memory into work in my practice and the reason I chose the form of intermediality. The last key concept which I will use in this thesis is Derrida's neologism *différance* (Derrida 1991:62) which I apply as a lens through which I identify the modification that is produced in the intermedial encounter. All the three theories, in the above order, constitute the basis of my argument about the potential for modification which exists in the encounter between intermediality and memory.

## 1.1 The 'in-between' life and death.

*'It is in the blurring of the border between the living and the dead, between live performance and the mediatized event that intermediality is located.'*

(Wagner in Chapple & Kattenbelt 2006: 127)

F.Chapple & C.Kattenbelt in their book *Intermediality in theatre and performance* locate intermediality:

At the meeting point in-between the performers, the observers, and the confluence of media involved in a performance at a particular moment in time. The intermedial inhabits a space in-between the different realities that the performance creates. (Chapple & Kattenbelt 2006:12)

They define intermediality as 'a space in-between'. I would like to borrow this definition, which I feel fits my understanding of intermediality as an encounter between live and mediatized forms which holds possibilities of creation and change; a place which holds and creates differences. Through this thesis, I argue that the intermedial encounter creates a specific type of differentiation which takes place in the 'in-between' space mentioned above and within the elements themselves that take part in the intermedial encounter. This creative encounter is based on the fundamental differentiation between the elements (live-mediatized, life-death) which exist in the intermedial encounter.

This definition of intermediality as 'in-between' will accompany us through this thesis when we speak not only about death and life but also about the virtual and the actual, matter and memory. Intermediaity opens a space where different realities and different dimensions can meet. It should be emphasized that my understanding of 'in-between' is not simply as an empty gap between two oppositions (such as live body and projected image) but rather as a space which holds the differences and allows something new to happens between them. Robin Nelson defines intermediality as 'both and' (Nelson 2010:17) I decided not to use his definition in order to keep the tension and the awareness of the existing gap

which according to Derrida 'must remain open' (Derrida in Gaston 2006:12). An empty gap full of possibilities.

The 'in-between' space where something new might happen was a crucial concept in my practice as research project. While I worked with the intermedial encounter, I was looking for what would emerge from this 'in between' and for the influences on all the participants in the encounter, including the subject matter itself.

Fischer Lichte calls this space of the in-between a 'liminal space' (2008:120) and argues for the transformation it has the ability to create:

The space between opposites opens-up; the in between thus becomes a preferred category... the aesthetic experience enabled by performances can primarily be described as a liminal experience, capable of transforming the experiencing subject. (Fischer Lichte 2008:174)

Even though Fischer Lichte speaks about the abilities of general performance as an event and not particularly about intermedial performance, I think she strengthens the need of two crucial elements in the in-between of intermedial encounter, which are the 'space between opposites' and the 'capab[ility] of transforming'(ibid). Which I will suggest reading as differentiation (between opposition) that allows differentiation (in the subject matter) and will elaborate through this thesis.

For me, the fundamental difference in the basis of intermediality is the difference between mortal and immortal. When I say mortal I mean that you are certain that this element is going to die, that its existence is disposable, such as a live body or the performance itself. By immortality I mean there is no certain death to the element, such as an image or object. One might argue that the image is mortal, because when I turn of the projector it will die or that the object is also mortal according to the laws of nature (it might be consumed). To these claims I answer that the object might be consumed and yet it might also not; there is a possibility of it being preserved. This is not to say that it is an eternal; I don't, however, identify it as mortal (opposite to the live-body which I identify as mortal). The image can

return and be the same as it was before; we can duplicate it etc. Therefore it is not mortal.<sup>1</sup>

We cannot avoid the influence of the juxtaposition within intermediality, which I see as crucial; the live- mortal body and the mediatized-immortal image/object, the performance which is a mortal art form and the video which is an immortal art form and by these juxtapositions we evoke the issues of life and death, an issue which is inherent to intermediality.

In order to clarify my argument, I would like to locate myself within a very popular debate related to 'liveness' in intermediality, which Philip Auslander presents in his book *Liveness* (2008), between himself and Peggy Phelan in her book *Unmarked* (1996).

I agree with Phelan that performance 'becomes itself through disappearance' (Phelan 1996:146) meaning that the fact of the disposability, disappearance and death of the performance is an essential feature of performance itself, (therefore, I identify performance as mortal). But I disagree with her that media and documentation are contrasting to that. Even when I document a performance or use media such as film and video within the performance, the essence of the disappearing and the disposability of the performance still exist and in my opinion they are even more powerful. For me, the tension between the different forms and the different possibilities which they evoke raises the issues of life and death, mortality and immortality. I see, in a similar way to Auslander, liveness also in the media.

However, my interest is not in the question of liveness. When I say that the image is immortal it doesn't mean that it has no liveness within it. I think that it has a lot of liveness within it, but it is not my concern. I explore the encounter, the tension and the influence of the different elements one on the other and the creation they

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<sup>1</sup> A very simple example might help us clarify this point; if you visit tomorrow the theatre "Cricot 2" in Kraków-Poland, you will meet the mannequins from Tadeusz Kantor performance *The dead class* but you will not be able to meet the performers of that performance because they are already dead. It is very simple, the performers are mortal and the mannequins are not. (And in my opinion this fact had great signification in the performance, as I will elaborate later in this thesis).

generate in the 'in-between'. In the next chapter, where I present the Bergsonian concept of the virtual and the actual, we will see the confusion between being and being present. When we say that something is already dead, that it is past, it doesn't mean that it has no being. The basis of my thesis arises from the fact that when I see a live body or media I see *death* or asking a question about *the death of the element*. Unlike me, the scholars who deal with liveness, when they see an element, ask about the *life* of the element, which might be interesting as different points of departure. Either way, I see vitality in both live and mediatized elements and especially in-between them.

Through this thesis, I argue that the relationship between intermediality and memory is one of correspondence, Intensification and modification. I will elaborate it in the third chapter after analyzing my performance practice *I am. I am. I am* from which I came to this understanding. In order to reach this conclusion I will identify:

- A. The fundamental differentiation within the two elements of the intermedial encounter (live-mediatized) which I see as the opposition between **mortality and immortality**, presented above.
- B. The **intermedial encounter** as an **in-between** space and an open gap full of possibilities, where modification might happen.
- C. **Memory**- its definition and understanding, based on the Bergsonian concept of memory, and as it functions in the intermedial encounter. The reading of memory not just as a psychological act of recollection but rather as a co-existence of virtual past and actual present.
- D. Which **modification I am looking for**- In order to affirm the kind of modification which I claim to at the end of this thesis, we need to invite different kinds of understanding of differentiation. To do so, I will apply Derrida's concept of *différance* as a lens through which I see the ontology of difference.



## 1.2 The co-existence of the actual and the virtual.

*'Memory itself is the past that we carry with us as a living present: memory as virtual coexistence.'*

(Deleuze in Sutton & Martin-Jones 2008: 118)

In my practice as research project, I explored the relationship between the intermedial encounter and memory based on the Bergsonian understanding of memory and the co-existence of the virtual past and the actual present, which I will present in this section.

### **Virtual past – Actual present**

Bergson explains that the present moment is experienced by us in the actual day to day life with the things we do, while the past is an image of these actions, which is stored in its virtual form. So that in every moment in time there are virtual and actual forms which co-exist. According to the Bergsonian understanding of the virtual-past and the actual-present, we are offered a way of looking at memory in a way that 'recollection is preserve in itself' (Bergson in Deleuze 1988:54) memory which is preserved in a virtual past and not in the human brain.

Deleuze clarified the main confusion of the human being perception in seeing the past as something which doesn't exist anymore, but according to Bergson, the past does exist as a being in a virtual form; it 'has ceased to act but not ceased to be.' (Deleuze 1988:55) while the present is a 'pure- becoming' (ibid) that acts:

We have great difficulty in understanding a survival of the past in itself because we believe that the past is no longer, that it has ceased to be... We have thus confused being with being-present. Nevertheless, the present *is not*; rather, it is pure becoming, always outside itself. It *is not*, but it acts. (Deleuze 1988: 55)

The past, according to Bergson is 'independent recollection' (Bergson, 2010:40) which has no psychological existence. 'This is why it is called *virtual*, inactive and unconscious.' (Deleuze 1988:55) 'Unconscious' as a non-psychological reality, opposite to Freudian unconscious. According to Bergson, only the present is psychological.

### **The genuine leap**

With this understanding of the co-existence of past and present, what does happen in the act of recollection?

According to Bergson, there is a 'genuine leap' (Deleuze 2008:57) that we do in the act of recollection: we jump into a general past (which is an ontological element and not psychological) into the being in itself of the past and only then, from this virtual place, the recollection will take a psychological existence. 'From the virtual it passes into the actual state' (Bergson in Deleuze 1988: 57). We first need to leap into the past, into the being of the past as a virtual form and then we 'recall of the image' (Bergson in Deleuze 1988: 63) and actualize or embody the past in a psychological way. We are not moving from the present to the past but rather from the past to the present.

Bergson argues that time is an 'open and ever expanding whole that he calls 'duration.' (Sutton & Martin-Jones 2008:86) There is a constant change happening as duration between times, nothing is solid and still: 'What we perceive as actual reality is really a snap-shot of freeze-frame of the perpetual process of virtual becoming' (Sutton & Martin-Jones 2008:89) that is 'duration'.

### **The co-existence in intermedial performance**

I would like to follow the Bergsonian understanding of the co-existence of worlds, the actual and the virtual, and to adopt it to the co-existence in intermedial performance. I would argue that by using the Bergsonian non-linear understanding of time and the relationship between the virtual-past and the actual-present, we can analyze and understand in a deeper way what is happening in the intermedial encounter and the influences of the forms on each other.

The term 'virtuality' is a key term in the intermedial debate: 'virtuality thus occupies a crucial space between what is imagined and actualised, between potential and realisation. It is in many ways the essence of intermediality.' (Bay-Cheng 2010:142)

The intermedial performance creates 'a lived paradox where what normally opposites coexist, coalescence, and connect.' (Massumi 2002:31) Within intermediality, an explicit co-existent world is built from actual and virtual elements which work simultaneously. Lavender argues that in the 'theatre of simultaneities, the actual and the virtual are simultaneously in play, simultaneously emphasizing each other' (Lavender in Chappple & Kattenbelt 2006: 64)

With that we can see a correspondence between the Bergsonian co-existing worlds and the co-existing world that we create in intermedial performance. The virtual is not only a representation of the present in a form of image but it is a being in itself which influences the active present; there is a creative process within memory. I would argue that in the intermedial encounter, the relationship between the actual and the virtual forms, which co-exist simultaneously on stage and influence each other, creates an in between space full of possibilities and differentiation which can create modification in the performer, the observers and all other elements on stage.

Memory plays crucial part in this intermedial encounter, not only as a subject-matter (in the basic understanding of a subject-matter as content) but also as a form of creativity. Memory, as Bergson argues is a creative process.

Sigrid Merx in her analysis of the intermedial performance *Proust* by the Belgian director Guy Cassiers explains 'how the representation of memory and the process of remembering call for an intermedial approach' (Merx in Chappple & Kattenbelt 2006:67). She argues that all the different elements on stage 'offer different perspectives of the complexity and layering of memory'. (2006:69) Merx believes that the intermedial relationship between video and theatre can open up new dimensions of time.

I agree with her and think, in accordance with Bergson, that the complexity of the intermedial encounter gives place to paradoxes and allows us to create different perspectives and layering of memory on stage. However, in my opinion, it is not only the representation of memory through the different forms but also a form of creation which does not bend to limited or linear thinking and allows differentiation. (Such as simultaneity, co-existence, temporal dissolves etc.)

The differentiations in the intermedial encounter take place not only in the virtual or the actual form but in both and in-between them. In my practice as research project influenced by the Bergsonian notions mentioned above, I created an intermedial encounter which evoked differentiations and used memory to empower a present moment of becoming and differentiation on stage.

In the next part of this chapter, I will elaborate which kind of differentiation I discovered in the intermedial performance.

### 1.3 To invite *différance* - the intermedial encounter.

*‘A self difference, a difference to itself’*

(Derrida in Glendining 2011:62)

We started this chapter with the fundamental differentiation between life and death, mortal and immortal and from there we moved to the relationship between the actual and the virtual, two forms of temporal differentiation (past and present). Now we are coming to the final differentiation presented in this thesis, which is both a spatial and temporal differentiation. In order to understand the kind of modification taking place in the intermedial encounter I decided to borrow Derrida’s *différance* and to use it as a lens through which I can see and analyze a crucial aspect of my work.

The word *différance* is a neologism invented by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida in 1963 taken from the French verb *différer* and holds two meanings: to differ and to defer. To differ – to distinguish one from another; it is differentiation of space and to defer – to postpone, suspending; it is differentiation of time. The *différance* holds the two dimensions of time and space and relates to the opposition between presence and absence. Deutscher defines:

*différance* is neither present, nor absent. Instead, it is a kind of absence that generates the effect of presence. It is neither identity, nor difference. Instead it is a kind of differentiation that produces the effect of identity and difference between those identities. (Deutscher 2005:29)

According to Derrida’s *différance*, I would argue that the intermedial encounter activates *différance* in a sense of producing or generating ‘the effect of identity and the difference between those identities’ (ibid). The differentiation within *différance* is much more than a distinction between x and y. The difference is ‘a passage of infinite, endless differentiation giving rise to apparent identities’ (Deutscher, 2005:31).

In his essay *La différance* (1972) Derrida speaks about signification and writing. However, it is obvious that *différance* as a philosophical term can be applied to other contexts; even Derrida himself speaks about the *différance* in Nietzsche and Freud (Derrida 1991:70). However, I decided to borrow the term *différance* because of what it produces. I think that the answer to the important question which is waiting patiently to be answered during this thesis, what does the intermedial encounter do to memory? might arise from the notion of the *différance*.

It is because of *différance* that the movement of signification is possible only if each so called present element, each element appearing on the scene of presence, is related to something other than itself, thereby keeping within itself the mark of the past element, and already letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element, this trace being related no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past, and constituting what is called the present by means of this very relation to what it is not: what it absolutely is not, not even a past or a future as a modified present. (Derrida 1991: 65)

When we speak about the in-between in the intermedial encounter, we identify an open gap/space created between the different forms, which influences and generates differentiation upon them. If we use Derrida's *différance*, we might define the thing which is created on stage as a 'modified present' (ibid). We can read the intermedial encounter in the Derridian words quoted above, test the appearance of the elements on stage and ask: does any element (actual or virtual for example) relate to something other than itself? Is it keeping within itself the mark of the past? Letting itself be vitiated by the mark of the future? And I think that the answer might be 'Yes'.

If we try to combine the Bergsonian understanding of the present as 'pure-becoming' (Deleuze 1988: 55) that acts and the Derridian *différance* as a 'modified present' (Derrida 1991: 65), we can see that both concepts are based on the differentiation between two elements of being (actual and virtual, presence and absence) which relate both to the temporal differentiation between present and past, present and future. Both speak about the change which takes place between the elements and within the element itself, a creative process of change. Derrida speaks about *différance* and Bergson about 'memory'. This is not to argue that they

are synonyms, but I think that the result of both concepts is a creation of a 'new-old' self, which relates equally to the past, present and future. Bergson in *Creative Evolution* claims that 'the truth is that we change without ceasing.' (Bergson 1998:2) Is there a better way than through Bergson to accept Derrida's *différance*?

In the next chapters, I will illustrate how on the basis of these philosophical concepts, I tried to create an intermedial encounter which offers a modification in the present moment on stage, which might be called *différance*, by using memory as a subject matter and as a form of co-existence worlds; virtual and actual. I used the triple composition of body, image and object and went on a journey in search of the lost self in the intermedial world.

## 2. Creating the intermedial encounter.

In this chapter I will delineate my practice and present the sources, forms and methods I used in creating the intermedial encounter in the performance practice *I am. I am. I am.* I will outline how the principles presented in the first chapter were applied to my practice and offer the reader an understanding of the way I established the intermedial encounters which I will analyze in the third chapter. I will start by locating my work as it relates to two other practitioners who have inspired and influenced my work: the Polish director Tadeuzs Kantor and the British director Katie Mitchell.

### 2.1 Inspirations

*'It is possible to express life in art only through  
the absence of life, through an appeal to death...'*

(Kantor in Kobialka 1993:112)

#### Tadeuzs Kantur

The Polish director Tadeusz Kantor (1915-1990) was a key figure in the European avant-garde theatre. He was a theoretician, director, innovator and painter. Kantor was known for his *Theatre of death* (1975) and the unique combination of mannequins and objects with living actors. Even though Kantor was not an intermedial practitioner and his work had no technological media within it, he has great influence on my intermedial practice.

Within this thesis I will not be able to present all the aspects of Kantor's significant work, which I admire; however, I will present a main concept in his work, which had great impact on the development of my practice:



## **The live actor and the mannequin/object**

Objects played a major role in Kantor's theatre. He claimed that a 'poor object', which can be found in the garbage can become an eternal element on stage. For him 'the object lies between eternity and the garbage' (Kantor in Bablet, 2010)

Kantor in his manifesto '*The theatre of death*' (1975) refer to Gordon Craig's essay *The Actor and the Uber-Marionette* (1908):

I do not share the belief that the MANNEQUIN (or WAX FIGURE) could replace the LIVE ACTOR... The MANNEQUIN in my theatre must become a MODEL through which pass a strong sense of DEATH and the conditions of the DEAD. A model for the live ACTOR. (Kobialka 1993:112)

I link Kantor's view of the mannequin as such 'through which pass[es] a strong sense of DEATH'(ibid) to my definition of the object/image as 'immortal'. The transference is very interesting and I would argue that the same relation exists in the intermedial encounter. I think that the encounter between the live body and the mediatized element evokes and empowers the tension between life and death. In the case of the mannequins in *The dead class*, the fact that they were a form of the actors themselves as children even reinforces this tension.

Within my practice, I used plaster-casts of my body as objects; it resonates with Kantor's use of objects and mannequins as 'memory machine' and objects which 'grow into the body' (Witts 2010:38). For example, when I placed a plaster cast of my leg on my own live-leg and projected this encounter as an image on the screen, I evoked the tension 'in-between' three elements which related to the same self (I am. I am. I am.) The elements worked together and influenced each other as equal performers, similarly to the relationship between the mannequin and the live actor in Kantor's performance.

## **Katie Mitchell**

Katie Mitchell is a European contemporary theatre director, based in England and known for her unique style of using live-video camera on stage and creating a performance consisting of elements taken from theatre and film.

Within my practice, I was inspired by Mitchell's way of building frames and composing them on stage and it constituted the basis on which I developed my process of composing the intermedial encounter. In this section, I will elaborate the elements from Mitchell's practice which I applied to my work and the ways in which my work is distinct.

### **Elements from Mitchell's work applied to my practice:**

**Creating and composing live frames** – In rehearsals, Mitchell creates series of frames from which she later composes the intermedial performance. In her directing books, there are compositions of images which comprise the 'text' of the piece, along with the literary text itself.

In my Practice, I applied and developed Mitchell's method and built my performance from chosen frames that I created in the studio through the process of documenting my improvisations, cutting frames and composing them with other materials. (See chapter 2.3)

**Offering multi-gazes** - Mitchell offers her audience a multi- gaze of the live-creation taking place on stage; the actors build the frames, operating the cameras and acting their roles, while the images from the live-feed are projected on a screen. The intermedial stage which Mitchell creates offers the audience different perspectives and challenges their perception of what is happening on stage.

In my practice, I used a main screen on which I projected images next to my live-actions on stage. I think that the co-existence of the screen (as gaze, frame, set) and the stage (as another gaze, frame, out-set) calls for a sophisticated observation from the audience and opens a range of possibilities. It opens an 'in-between' space in front of the audience's gaze.

### **The distinction between Mitchell's work and my practice:**

**Working with pre-recorded materials** - unlike Mitchell who uses only live-images, I combine live-images with pre-recorded materials and create different layers of images. The work with pre-recorded materials is a crucial element in my work and is related to the way I deal with past and memory. By combining images, I open possibilities for the merging of temporal and spatial dimensions and creating a co-existence of realities on stage.

**My role as an artist** – Mitchell works as a theatre director with a group of actors and creators, while I worked alone taking all the roles that exist within my practice, such as director, performer, editor, video-operator etc. <sup>2</sup> This decision was influenced by the subject matter I worked with and from my will to experience and to explore the intermedial encounter as being part of it.

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<sup>2</sup> The only role I didn't take was the technical operating of the software and the lights in the performance itself.

## 2.2 Sources

### Content (Memory, Tradition and Nature)

I have drawn my practice from the contents of my memories, traditional and historical heritage and nature and chose particular forms of objects, images and my body to represent these in performance.

In my practice, my memory constitutes the main source with which I had entered the studio. The virtual pasts were actualized in my practice and co-existed with the present action. Examples of such memories are my fear from the Nazis' steps I used to imagine I heard as a child and the bread my grandmother used to feed me.

An additional kind of content was symbols and rituals from my Jewish religious tradition<sup>3</sup>, such as *Netilat Yadaym* – the act of washing the hands before eating bread, salting the bread during the *Kiddush* ceremony on *Shabbat* and the *Caparot ritual* – a ritual for cleansing your guilt by spinning a chicken over your head and praying that your blame be transferred to the animal.

The third content was elements from nature. While the first two kinds of contents came directly from my inner world, the third one came from the external world. I mainly used materials from nature such as water, fire, salt and feather.

I think that there is a correlation between my contents and the 'in-between' presented in the first chapter. There is an 'in-between' tension of the inner world (of memory and tradition) and the external world of nature; there is also a tension within nature –matters themselves such as water and fire, water and salt. The chosen rituals relate to change in their traditional value and take place in order to move from one state to another. I took them out of their context and placed them in relation to other elements in order to create an 'in-between' tension. I chose to use very simple and old elements beside the modern and complex media equipment; in this way I composed an intermedial encounter from variety of 'in-betweens'.

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<sup>3</sup> Which can be identified as part of my memory and been separated here only in favour of clarification.

## Forms (object, image and body)

### Object

The objects which I used 'came to me'; they emerged from memories or were found by chance. In a way, Kantor's definition of the 'poor objects' might fit the kind of objects I used. Similar to Kantor's benches or books from *The dead class* which he thought are able to activate memory and function as a memory machine, I used objects which I found and had a similar influence on me.

An example of such an object is the bowl I used in my performance. On May 2013 I visited the props-warehouse in Central school of speech and Drama, which is a small room full of junk, and by chance I found two old metal bowls that attracted me. Only when I got to the studio I realized that one of the metal bowls had an engraving of the Star of David at its bottom. (See Figure 1) It was very surprising and even shocking; how did this bowl get here?

My initial purpose for using a bowl came from my childhood memory in a bath; but the object I found evoked something else. I suddenly realized why it seemed familiar. I saw these kinds of bowls in Atlit detainee camp in Israel.<sup>4</sup> The object connected my private memory to the historical/collective memory of my nation and a new encounter emerged.

Beyond the function of an object in activating memory, it has a significant role in creating the 'in-between' of the intermedial encounter. The object functioned as an actual form beside its virtual image (For example, the bread on the table and its close-up on the screen) and as an actual form beside the actual body (the torso-cast of my body and my live body). In this way I wished to produce 'the effect of identity and difference between those identities' (Deutscher, 2005:29) defined above as *différance*.

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<sup>4</sup> Atlit detainee camp was a detention camp established by the authorities of the British Mandate for Palestine at the end of the 1930s. The camp was established to prevent Jewish refugees from entering Palestine, most of them were Holocaust survivors. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia.)

The unique objects of my body-casts (see Figure 2) aimed to empower the encounter between the three forms which allegedly represent the same identity and fragmentation of identity.

**Figure 1**



Image of the bowl I found with the engraving of the Star of David.

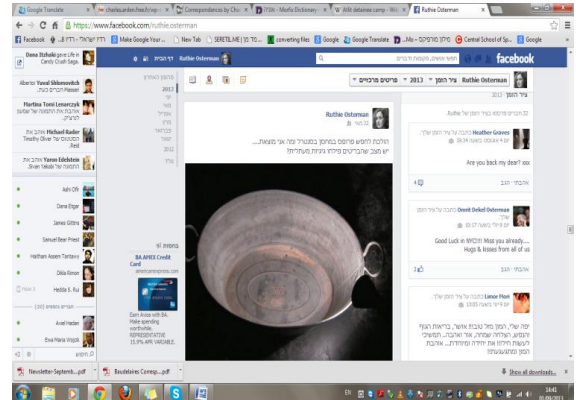
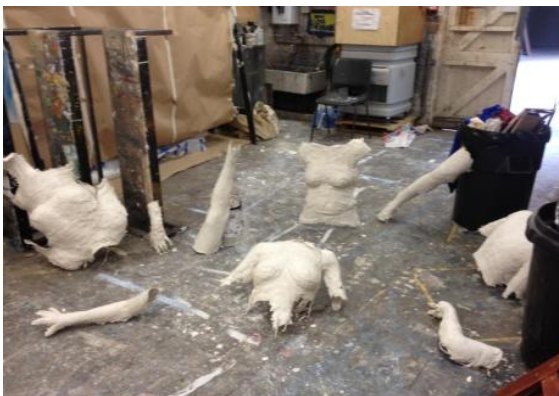


Image of the bowl I found as I published on Facebook at 22.5.13 , titled in Hebrew: 'Is there any chance the British had stolen bowls from Atlit??! '

**Figure 2**



Images from the process of creating the plaster-casts of my body, 29 May 2013, photographed by Hedda S.Rui.

## Image

There are three main kinds of images which I created and explored in my practice:

### 1. Pre- recorded image

I used pre-recorded images which emerged from my memory and represented different dimensions and times than those that existed on stage. What guided me in choosing these pre-recorded images was the notion of correspondence. The pre-recorded images co-responded to something which existed in the present moment on stage and created the tension of the 'in-between'. My exploration of the co-existence of a virtual image of the past and an actual action in the present on stage is based on the Bergsonian concept of the co-existence of past and present.

2. **Live image** – I created live images from the actions happening on stage. The actions and the frames had been chosen carefully from the materials which emerged in the rehearsal and which had been composed for stage. I aimed to strengthen the tension and the differentiation between the actual action and its virtual form by playing with proximity and distance, exposure and hiding. By using live images and not only pre-recorded materials I revealed the differentiation within the live moment. It is not only a tension between different temporalities (like past and present) but also within the present moment itself.

### 3. Two-layers image – a combination of a pre-recorded image and the live image

The combination of two images together and the dissolving between different times and spaces within one image. Following Derrida's *différance*, I tried to see to it that each element will keep 'within itself the mark of the past element' and 'letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element' (Derrida 1991:65). Therefore I created complex images which had been marked by different times.

## **Body**

The third part of the intermedial encounter is my body. I used my body in different ways, mainly by improvisation of movement and actions related to the subject matter, objects and images.

In the process of creating the practice, I usually worked alone in the studio; but in the performance itself, I decided to add another body - a hand of a male actor, which appeared beyond the door and operated my own hand. I decided to add another body in order to enlarge the encounter and to add another tension of 'in-between' body to body.

During the performance my body shifted its status according to the specific encounter with the objects, images and the other body. Sometimes it was the body that acted upon object or image, operated and generated the encounter and sometimes it was the object or the image that acted upon the body. Each element of the three forms has equal significance in the process of generating a change.



## 2.3 Compositions – the emerging practice.

*‘Like prolonged echoes mingling in the distance  
In a deep and tenebrous unity,  
Vast as the dark of night and as the light of day,  
Perfumes, sounds, and colours correspond.’*

(Baudelaire 1989:241)

### **Observation- selection- supplement- composition**

In the previous section, I elaborated the sources with which I improvised and explored in the studio. Every session in the studio was documented by two cameras, one which filmed all the action in the studio and the second which filmed specific actions and different frames and was manipulated by me during the sessions. In that way, I was able to get two gazes: the ‘all stage’ and closed frames that I created within the action.

After each session, I observed the video materials and chose moments and frames through the act of taking a ‘Snap shot’<sup>5</sup>. I observed the materials usually two or three times, freezing moments which I felt held some interesting tension within them while I used my intuition as the main method.<sup>6</sup> This act of selecting frames from the video-materials became the most enjoyable and significant act in my practice, through which I constructed the images of the intermedial encounter. It was crucial that I observe the images of movement in the video and only then ‘catch the moments’ by taking the snapshot. I think this action corresponds to the action of remembering and choosing a significant moment (in this case, a frame) to ‘save’, to remember, to recollect the moment.

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<sup>5</sup>‘In computer systems, a snapshot is the state of a system at a particular point in time. The term was coined as an analogy to that in photography.’ (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia)

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, due to the word-limit of this thesis I am unable to elaborate the Bergsonian concept of “intuition as a method” as it is presented in his book *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (1903).

The second step was supplement and composition. I put the chosen frames on an empty page and started to play with positions, composition, associations and added more layers of images, text, handwriting, drawings etc. By doing this, I was looking for encounters that might open possibilities of differentiation and which corresponded to each other. Sometimes, it was allegedly an aesthetic decision, but I knew that something else is hiding beyond the aesthetic. It was my desire to connect different elements which corresponded to each other in order to open a gap of possibility for a differentiation to emerge. I composed oppositions in order to create the 'in-between' space of the intermedial encounter.

## Composing correspondence

In this section, I will present two examples of compositions I created for my performance- practice *I am. I am. I am.* in the Brink Festival and which presenting the principles on which the encounter was constructed.

### a) Footsteps

*'Footfalls echo in the memory  
Down the passage which we did not take  
Toward the door we never opened...'*

(T.S.Eliot, *Four Quartets*<sup>7</sup>)

From one of my studio- sessions I chose frames of my footsteps and started to compose them together. They evoked a memory of my fear of the Nazis' steps I used to hear as a child before going to sleep. Therefore, I looked for documentary films of the Nazis' marches and added frames from them to the composition. It also reminded me a sentence which I loved from *Four Quartets* by T.S.Eliot and I added it too. I came back to the studio and improvised with the new elements, each improvisation giving birth to more frames that were added to the composition. (See Figure 3)

The principal which led me was creating varied gaps of 'in-between' elements which correspond to each other and keep the co-existence of different realities.

The chosen encounter was established from a live-feed of my bare foot stepping on a white dress and a pre-recorded image of the Nazis' hell march.(Figure 4-5) The encounter holds reverberation of movements from different times and space, a present moment which holds past and future within it.

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<sup>7</sup> (no date:1)

**Figure 3-** scan of the footsteps composition, taken from my directing book.



1. Images of my footstep.
2. Images from documentary films of the First and Second World War. (Taken from YouTube)
3. Quote from *Four Quartets* by T.S.Eliot .
4. Images of my steps on the dress and the feather from the dress-rehearsal.
5. My drawing relate to the composition.

**Figure 4-5:** The images show the stepping moment as it was performed on stage in the performance-practice *I am. I am. I am* at the Brink Festival.

**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**



(Images taken from the recording of *I am. I am. I am*. performed at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama, 26 June 2013)



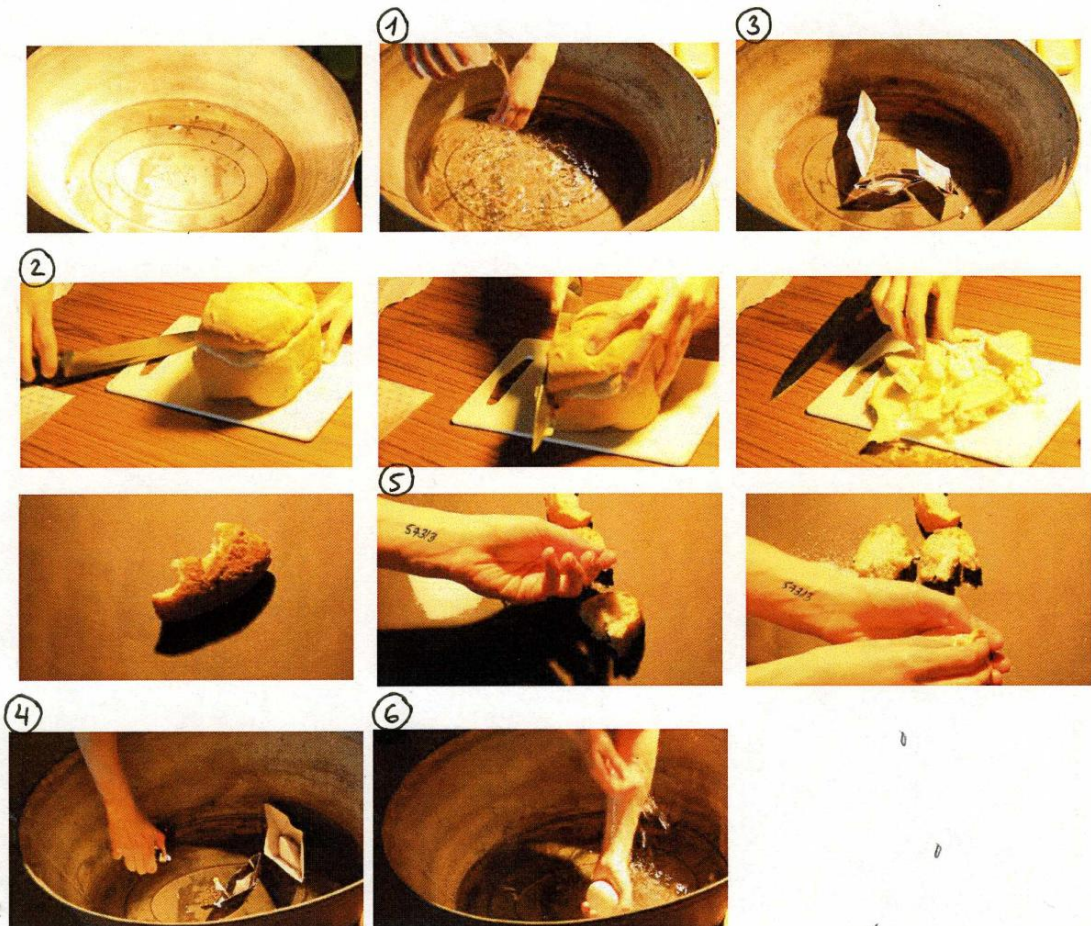
## **b) The bowl**

The bowl I found evoked different memories and actions; however, the hidden engraving of the Star of David at its bottom led me to posit the camera directly above the bowl and to take close-up frames of what happened within it. After choosing and collecting different kind of frames of actions within the bowl, I started to connect them to more action which took place on stage (such as cutting the bread and lighting the candle) and created a tension in-between the inside and the outside of the bowl, when the live-camera revealed the action within the bowl. (Figure 6) I composed a differentiation between spaces; the bowl as space, the stage as space and the screen as space. Each space allowed different action and responded to the other space. The composition of the bowl was structured like a journey between 'land and sea', while an actual action could start on stage, continue inside the bowl and be finished as a virtual image on screen.

In advanced stages, I used the materials within the bowl such as water and fire to melt dimensions and to empower the co-existence of realities, such as pre-recorded image of my face with live-feed of water (Figure 7) and fire (Figure 8).

**Figure 6-** scan of the first version of the bowl- composition, taken from my directing book.

### Bowl Composition



- Image 1- The act of washing the hands, which led to:  
 Image 2- Cutting and salting the bread.  
 Image 3- playing with paper-ships, which led to:  
 Image 4- burning the paper-ships.  
 Image 5- The hand with the Auschwitz number, which led to:  
 Image 6- deleting the Auschwitz number with soap.



**Figure 7** –Two-layers image built from pre-recorded image of the performer sleeping and live-image of the performer washes her hands in the water.



**Figure 8-** The images show a wide-angle of the stage in the performance *I am. I am. I am.* while a two-layers image was projected on the screen (pre recorded image of the performer's face with live-image of the burning paper-ships), the performer is leaving the burning ships, while smoke transducer from the bowl.



(Images taken from the recording of *I am. I am. I am.* performed at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama, 26 June 2013 recorded by Haitham Assem Tantawy and Joao Telmo)



### 3. The Performance-Practice *I am. I am. I am.*

In this chapter, I will analyze three moments from the performance-practice *I am. I am. I am.* Through the analysis of these three moments, I will present my argument about the relationship between the intermedial encounter and memory as one of correspondence, intensification and modification. The argument I will present is that the intermedial encounter enacts memory as a creative process at the present moment rather than presenting it as content in the past. I will also argue that this intermedial encounter activates and heightens *différance* and therefore modifies all the elements that participate in the encounter, including memory itself.

In this section of the thesis, the reader will be asked to view the analyzed-moments from the performance in the DVD attached. (Appendix 1) The chosen moments are:

- **Footfalls echo in the memory** –presents a multiple-layer image of a pre-recorded historical -image and a live-image within the live action on stage.
- **The burning ships** –presents a live action with an object beside its live image.
- **Another hand** –presents a live action between two bodies beside its live-image.

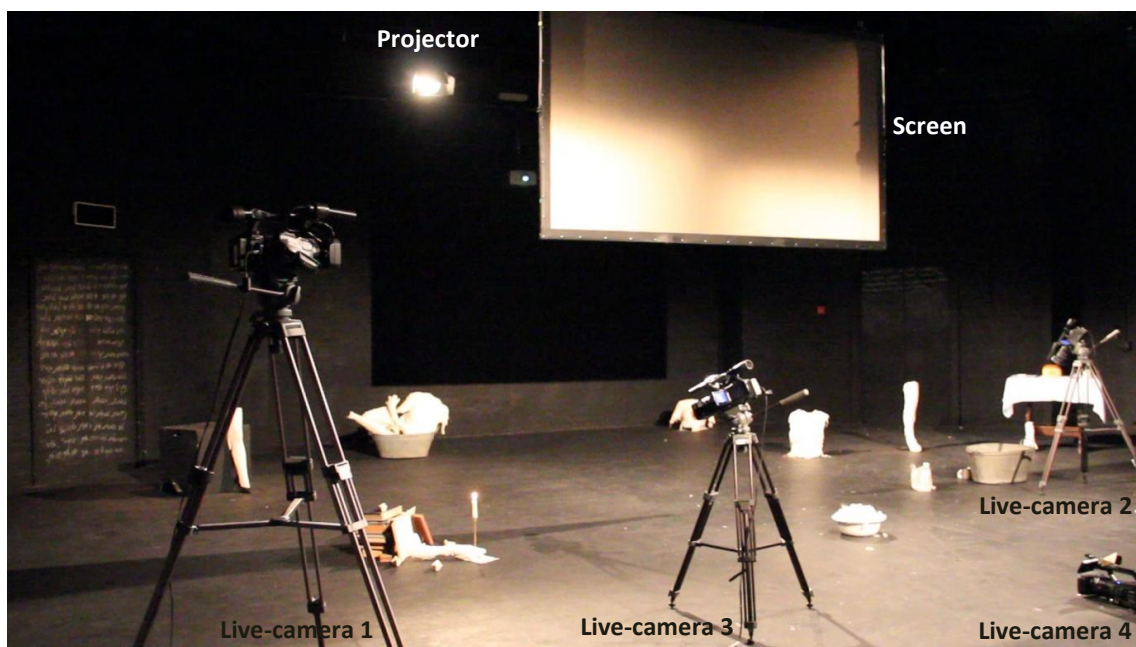
The chosen moments present intermedial encounters between body, image and object, where each one of the moments emphasizes a different relation between these elements. Likewise, these moments present the way the critical concepts presented in the first chapter were manifested in and applied to my work. In the DVD attached, I chose to present the three moments filmed in a wide-angle in order to give the reader a view which is similar as possible to the ‘audience gaze’ without creating any manipulation upon them.

Each analysis will be accompanied by still-images, which present the live action of the performer on stage, the image on the screen and the audience-gaze of the full stage.

### ***I am. I am. I am* – background**

This intermedial performance-practice was created as part of my practice as research project, presented three times in the Webber Douglas studio at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama as part of the Brink Festival in June 2013. The performance's duration was thirty minutes while I performed on stage with different objects, four live cameras, a projector and a big screen hanging from the ceiling. (See Figure 1) The performance's theme was memory and identity and it was composed from different elements related to my identity. The audience was located in front of the stage. I used the software Modul8, a vision mixer connected to a computer and the projector in order to project the live and the pre-recorded images on the screen and create the combination between them. The software was operated live during the performance by a technical operator.

**Figure 1** – Image of the stage pre-set of the performance *I am. I am. I am*.



### Intermedial encounters

Before starting the analysis, I would like to remind the reader the three key concepts presented in the first chapter of this thesis, which I see as crucial elements in the intermedial encounter and according to which I will analyze the three moments. The concepts are:

**'In- between'** – the intermedial encounter as a space 'in-between' different realities and oppositions, which creates an open gap full of possibilities.

**'Co-existence of the actual and the virtual'** – based on the Bergsonian understanding of the co-existence of the virtual past and the actual present. The notion of memory as a creative process, a leaping to a pure virtual past from which we actualize memory.

**'différance'** – Derrida's neologism which expresses a differentiation that produces the effect of identity and the difference between identities at the same time; a modified present which always relates to something other than itself in space and time.

### 3.1 Footfalls echo in the memory

Please see Appendix 1, clip 1.

This moment took place at the beginning of the performance after me doing the *Caparot Ritual*<sup>8</sup> and taking off my dress. This moment was built on various tensions between oppositions and compressed an in-between encounter within a small and simple action: steps. We can see opposite elements such as the live-action of the performer's steps on stage and the virtual image of these steps on the live-image on screen (taken from a camera posited on the floor) and another layer of a pre-recorded image of different steps in space and time: the Nazis soldiers' steps on the parade ground in the Second world war (See Figure 2). The two kinds of steps hold several differentiations within them such as barefoot vs. boots, woman vs. man, underwear vs. uniform, insecurity vs. security etc.

The 'in-between' of this encounter is not only the tension between the oppositions above but mostly the space they create between them, the different layers within one image of the performer's feet seen between the soldiers on the parade ground. The encounter raises question of presence such as is the performer in the past right now or rather are the soldiers in the present? Where does the action take place, in the virtual or actual world, and how do they influence each other?

The moment evokes the Bergsonian notion of the virtual-past which co-exists with the actual-present. The Nazis' steps are not only a psychological memory of the performer; in a way she is unaware of the becoming steps (the pre-recorded image is behind her). She is concentrating on her hesitated steps and the past in its virtual form (actualized on stage by the projected image) pushes her to the next step. The observers don't get any 'answer' for the meaning of the past-image or for its function; rather they witness the co-existence of the corresponding images and actions, different in time and space. A questioning space is opened and allows a modification of meanings and creation of new identities.

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<sup>8</sup> Cleaning the guilt.

I would claim that this intermedial encounter activated and heightened *différance*. The kind of differentiation that took place in this encounter related each element 'to something other than itself' (Derrida 1991: 65) and by doing so opened a possibility of change within the element itself. The present steps on stage kept the mark of the past (Nazi's steps) but by the explicit division of the virtual live-image of the foot and the actual action of the body, the element (in this case the foot) gave itself the option to be marked by the future and to keep going on stage while its image still existed on the screen. These gaps in-between times and spaces activated the notion of *différance*. The intermedial encounter heightens the difference which always operates in the present moment; a constant division and modification of the present moment in and out itself.

In this case the change took place clearly in the subject matter of memory. The memory (an individual memory of my childhood fear from the Nazi's steps and the collective memory of the Holocaust) functions not as content or as a preservation of the past but rather as a production of change, a modification- generator. The encounter didn't give any answer or clear meaning to the act, but rather opened a gap of possibilities. The step as an act toward multiple directions: past, future, present. This moment activated Bergson's theory that 'at each moment in time there was a division of time' (Sutton & Martin-Jones 2008: 87)

I would argue that the intermedial encounter offers a similarity and correspondence between the elements in a way that the Nazis foot can be very close to the performer's barefoot. Two human's feet different in time and space exist together at the present moment of the performance. At that moment of the encounter with the live action/image, the past was pushed closer to us and made present. This 'gnawing' of times, relates to Bergson's claim that 'each image that is added to the past, building up the momentum that enables time to 'gnaw' into future' (Sutton & Martin-Jones 2008: 89)

In summary, I would argue that this analyzed-moment from *I am. I am. I am.* constitutes evidence for the following arguments:

- The 'in-between' of the intermedial-encounter opens a question-space through the co-existence of corresponding images and actions.
- The intermedial encounter activates *différance* and heightens the modification of the present moment.
- Within the intermedia-encounter, memory functions as a modification-generator rather than a preserved- content of the past.
- The intermedial encounter in relation to memory insistently pushes the past into the present and applies to the present the Bergsonian notion of the co-existing worlds.

**Figure 2** – Three images from the first analyzed moment:

**a.**



First layer:

**Live-image of the live-action on stage** (was taken from the live-camera on the floor)

**b.**



Second layer:

**Pre-recorded image of the Nazis' hell march in the Second World War** (was taken from YouTube and projected through the software Modul8)

**c.**



Stage gaze:

**The combination of both images on the screen plus the live action on stage.** (Was taken from a video camera behind the audience which documented the performance)

(Images taken from the recording of *I am. I am. I am.* performed at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama, 24-26 June 2013 recorded by Haitham Assem Tantawy and Joao Telmo)

### 3.2 The burning ships

Please see Appendix 1, clip 2.

The work with the paper ships was divided into three separate acts during the performance. The first act was me putting the paper ships into the bowl full of water; the second act was me burning the ships with a candle inside the bowl and the third act was me picking up the paper- remnants of the burned ships with my hands.

My analysis will focus mainly on the moment of the second act upon the paper-ships (burning) but I would ask the reader to bear in mind that the other two actions relate to it because the meaning of the action is not only in the specific moment but rather relates to something that also happened before (past) and after (future).

The moment started with a projection of a pre-recorded image of an open- book with a sketch of human heart, with the same open book placed on stage<sup>9</sup>, and an illusion of paper-ships emerging out of the book. (The paper-ships were indeed created from the book's sheets). Later, the image dissolved into a live-image of the paper- ships inside the bowl and me dropping wax on them (see Figure 3). The screen presented an illusory journey from one step on stage (book) to another (bowl), while the elements stayed still on stage and didn't move. A tension had been created between two dimensions: imagination and reality. The body, by the act of dripping the wax, created a combination between these two dimensions and dissolved one into the other. The gap of the 'in-between' the two dimensions was opened by the live-action of dripping the wax.

The ships as objects hold, on purpose, different kinds of interpretations and relate to different things on stage; ships which escaped from an open heart in the book, paper- ships from a childhood memory or ships presenting an historical event by being floated on the mark of the Star of David at the bottom of the bowl. In that

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<sup>9</sup> A found- object, Interestingly, I found this book named *Intermediate Biology* by W.F.Wheeler, from 1947. I was attracted by the name of the book, the quality of its old papers and the beautiful sketches of the human's organs.



way, the effect of the object opens to interpretation and is dispersed across virtual and actual spaces. By putting these objects in the intermedial encounter I aimed to generate differentiation in meaning and to activate *différance*.

In the moment of burning the ships, the 'in-between' which I created on stage was established from a tension between the live action on stage, which was hidden from the audience's gaze (because it took place inside the bowl) and the screen which revealed the act of burning the ships by a close-up of a live image (see Figure 4). Both dimensions, the actual and the virtual, played 'give and take' with presence and activated different senses; while you could *see* the burned ships and the fire only on the screen, you could *smell* and feel the smoke only on stage. While the presence of the object (ships) was exposed on the screen, the presence of the body who burned the ships was exposed on stage. We could experience a co-existence of virtual and actual forms which created differentiation but corresponded to each other at the same time, which revealed and concealed each other.

If in the previous analyzed moment of the steps, we saw how the live-action pushed the past into the present, here we can see how the live-action of burning the ships pushes the present into the past. We observe the becoming-past of the present. The object on stage changes its presence (from paper-ships to ashes) by the live-action of the body, but this change/transformation is fully exposed to us only through the image on the screen and within it creates another transformation between spaces (stage and screen) and forms (actual and virtual). The intermedial encounter with all its components (body, image, and object) and forms (actual and virtual) is rendered complex and is dispersed across spaces, times and senses, activating *différance* in its reading.

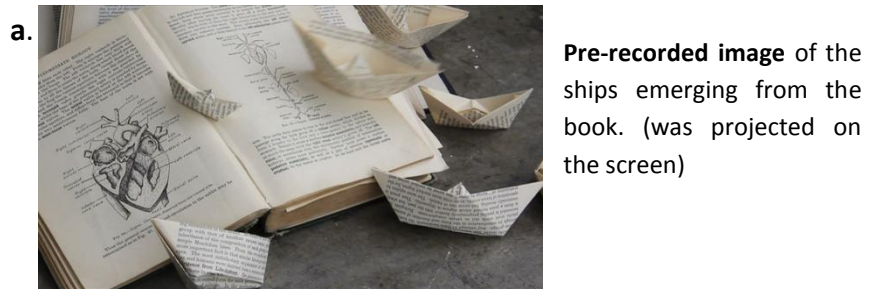
In this example we can see how the key concepts of the 'in-between' and the 'co-existence of the actual and the virtual' work together within the intermedial encounter in order to activate *différance*. They intensify differentiations and open up questions about meaning and significance and by doing so deliberately make the present moment complex and infused with other times. The intermedial encounter stimulates and encourages the experience of *différance*.

Within this intermedial encounter, memory functions as a modification-generator first of all upon itself; by being embodied in the form of an object (paper-ships), memory has been modified and transformed between forms and spaces. The actual act of burning is an act of destruction and therefore activates the becoming of memory – when something in the actual present becomes a virtual past. This process together with the explicit correspondence of the virtual and actual forms of the intermedial encounter on stage creates a modification of memory.

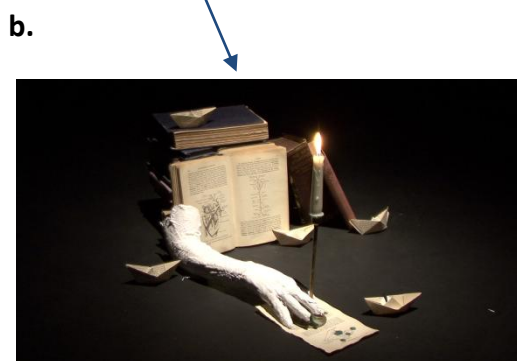
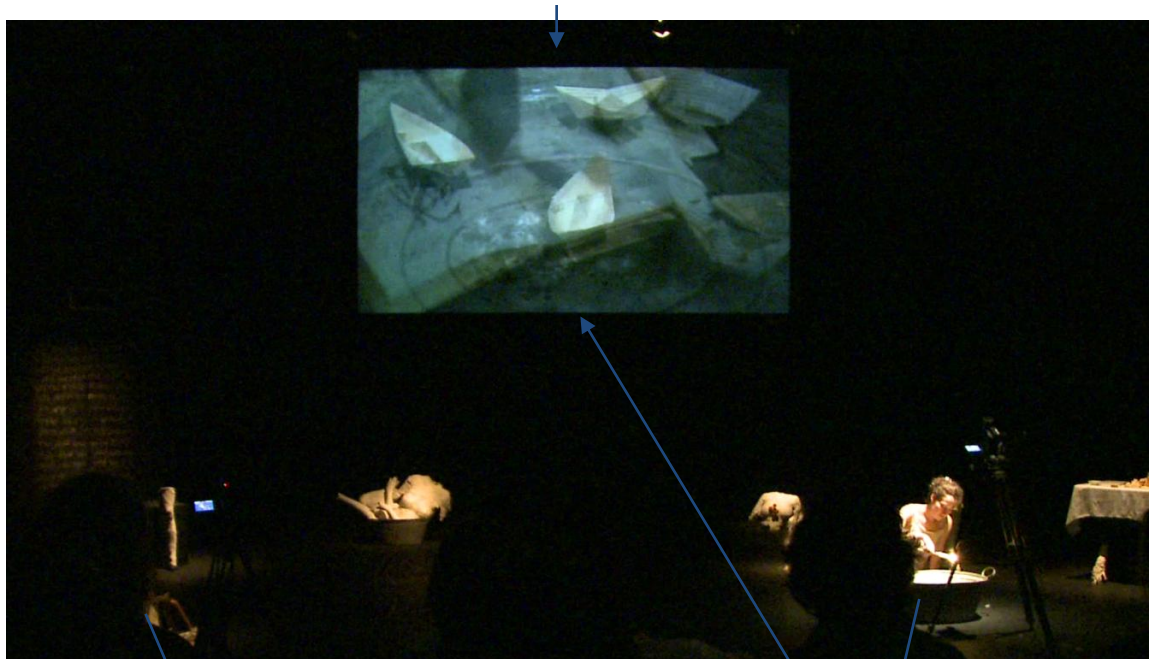
In summary, I would argue that this analyzed-moment from *I am. I am. I am.* constitutes evidence for the following arguments:

- The live action on stage is what opens up the gaps of the in-between in the intermedial- performance.
- The intermedial encounter is rendered complex and dispersed across spaces, times and senses, activating *différance* in the reading of it.
- The intermedial encounter stimulates and encourages the experience of *différance*.
- The intermedial encounter, through the co-existence of virtual and actual forms, could explicitly push the actual-present into the form of the virtual-past and by doing so make present the Bergsonian notion of the co-existing worlds.
- Within the intermedial-encounter, memory functions as a modification-generator and is also modified within this process.

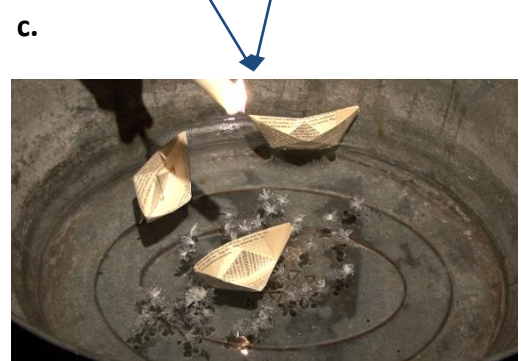
**Figure 3** – Images from intermedial encounter created on stage between object, pre-recorded image and live action/image in the performance *I am. I am. I am.*



d. Image of the full stage (audience-gaze) with the multiple-layers image on the screen; a combination of pre-recorded image (a) and live-image (c).



**Image of the objects** (book and ships) on the right stage.



**Image of the live-action** of dripping the wax which took place inside the bowl and was projected live on the screen.

**Figure 4-** Three images of the live-act of burning the paper-ships in the performance *I am .I am. I am.* taken from different perspectives.



**Image of the live-action on stage –** the performer is burning the paper-ships in the bowl.



**Live-image projected on the screen** (the image was taken from a live-camera posited above the bowl and connected to the projector)



**Stage-gaze: both live action and the image on the screen.** (Was taken from a video camera behind the audience which documented the performance)

(Images taken from the recording of *I am. I am. I am.*, performed at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama, 24-26 June 2013 recorded by Haitham Assem Tantawy and Joao Telmo)

### 3.3 Another hand

Please see Appendix 1, clip 3.

Unlike the two previous moments, this intermedial encounter includes not body, image and object but rather an encounter between body and body. It was my experience to enlarge the intermedial encounter and to open it to another possibility. This moment, compared to the two previous examples, operates a different kind of modification which doesn't relate to memory and to the activating of *différance* (therefore might be read as a failure within the context of this thesis) but rather a modification in the element's function.

The in-between space was created from a live-action that took place upstage close to a door, between the body of the performer and a male's hand which appeared from behind the door and a live-close-up image of the action projected on the screen. In this moment, the differentiation between the locations on the stage was crucial, when the live action was upstage, far from the audience and the live image was projected on the screen down stage center (see Figure 5).

This encounter opened a possibility for something to arrive from the outside of the closed world created on stage and offered a different kind of encounter; a human encounter between two bodies. If in the first chapter I identified the encounter between the body, image and object as an encounter between the mortal and the immortal, here we have an encounter between two mortal bodies. However, what revealed itself in this encounter is the fact that the other hands actually related to the live body of the performer as an object; it operated the hands of the performer to write on the door and repeated the written sentences. It beat on the chest of the performer as if it were a door, so realistically that it was an encounter between body and body-object.

Within this encounter, the function of the media was projecting a live close-up image of the live-action and bringing the body-body encounter closer to the audience's gaze. In analyzing this moment, I realized that the live-image did not create a differentiation upon the other elements and had not opened the present to something other than itself. If the media had resonated other encounters between hands or had created a virtual dimension of past or future which corresponded to this encounter, the result might have been different. Through the lens of the critical concepts of this thesis, the 'in-between' and the 'co-existence' within this encounter hadn't succeeded to function as activators of *différance*.

In the two previous analyzed moments we saw how the present moment on stage was opened to different time and space, like the temporal-modification between past and present in the steps-moment and the spatial-modification between stage, screen and the bowl within the act of burning the ships, while here the intermedial encounter had not corresponded to or intensified a spatial or temporal modification.

Where in the previous analyzed moments memory functioned as a modification-generator, within this moment, memory was represented by the 'other hand' as a force which operates, influences and even controls the present moment. In this way, memory has the potential to modify the present but also to block it.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the above analysis, I would like to refer to two interesting intermedial aspects within this encounter. The first one is the multiplication of hands created on stage, which put into question the finality of identity. The hands of the performer writing a personal text revealed painful emotions such as 'I am afraid I am not solid but hollow' (Plath 2000:154) but had been written by another absent hand: the hand of Sylvia Plath in her journals, the man's hand behind the door, the plaster-cast hand presented on the floor of the stage and all the other modifications of the hands and by the hands during the performance (Washing, cutting, operating, writing etc.). The encounter evoked the question of identity; whose hands are these?

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<sup>10</sup> Probably represent my complex relationship with memory as they appear between the two sides of the door; on and off the stage.

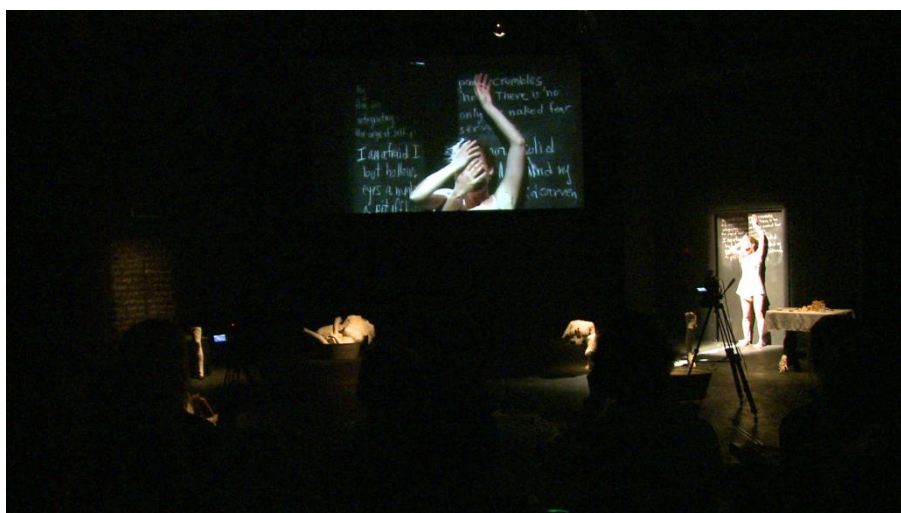


The other aspect within this encounter is the text as an image. I think that by projecting the text through the live-camera on the screen, the text functioned as an image and also responded to the other text-image that was written in Hebrew on the other door. The texts became a background to the scene. In a way, during this encounter the elements changed their functions; the body became object and the text became image.

**Figure 5** – Two images of the body-body encounter from the performance *I am. I am. I am.*



**Image of the live-action on stage**



**Stage-gaze: both live action and the live-image on the screen.** (Was taken from a video camera behind the audience which documented the performance)

(Images taken from the recording of *I am. I am. I am.* performed at the Royal Central School of Speech & Drama, 24-26 June 2013 recorded by Haitham Assem Tantawy and Joao Telmo)

In summary, I would argue that this analyzed-moment from the performance *I am I am I am*:

- Did not activate the notion of *différance*, because the in-between elements did not correspond to other co-existing forms and therefore did not intensify the important gaps which help us experience *différance*.
- Created a modification in the function of the elements within the intermedial encounter such that body became an object and text became an image.
- Memory was not activated or functioned as a modification-generator, but rather was represented in both its potentials: reproduction of the past and modification of the present.
- Evoked questions about the finality of identity by the multiplication of hands created on stage.

Based on the analysis presented in this chapter and the emerging understandings and arguments, I have reached the conclusions regarding the intermedial-encounter and its relation to memory and the modification they create in the present moment of performance. In the next section I will present the final conclusions of this thesis.



## Conclusions

In this thesis I have presented my practice as research project about the intermedial encounter and its relation to the subject matter of memory. When I started my exploration I knew, as a theatre creator, that there is a strong connection between theatre and memory. I knew it from my own experience and from the general debate in the field, as Carlson puts it in his book *The haunted stage*: 'The practice of theatre has been in all periods and cultures particularly obsessed with memory and ghosting' (Carlson 2001:7). It is common to speak about the things which appear again on stage<sup>11</sup> and on memory as an ontological feature of theatre (ibid). I had thought that I was making theatre in order to create a 'resurrection of the dead' from my private and collective past and that longing was my driving force.

During my practice and research project and thanks to the exploration of intermediality (which was a new form of creation for me) a new understanding of memory and of the role of memory in my art emerged: the understanding that memory is a creative process rather than content that I should preserve and that my driving force is to create modification.

The shifting point in my research was a painful point when I realized that I am full of memories, quotes and movements that actually do not belong to me. I felt that even though my practice was established on my private memories and private materials, I did not feel a sense of self within it. As a person who has been educated all her life to 'remember and not to forget'<sup>12</sup> and to 'tell your son on that day',<sup>13</sup> I know that memory plays a crucial part in our life and our existence and I probably misunderstood it.

I was very fortunate to encounter the writings of incredible philosophers such as Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida, who introduced me to new ideas about memory and life. I stopped asking questions about fixed identity and

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<sup>11</sup> 'What, has this thing appeared again, tonight?' (Shakespeare, Hamlet, act 1:scene 1)

<sup>12</sup> The Israeli's national motto of remembering the Holocaust.

<sup>13</sup> The Biblical imperative from the Passover Haggadah.

started looking for the becoming. At this stage of my practice, I was highly influenced by the Bergsonian non-linear perception of time, Bergson's understanding of memory and the way he sees the past and the present as co-existing worlds.

Intermediality as a very complex form built from both actual and virtual elements was a perfect area to wander and experiment with my new understandings; it opened a lot of new possibilities for playing with time and space and allowed me to combined different elements such as body, image and object, which constituted fundamental parts of memory for me. By following F. Chapple's & C. Kattenbelt's definition of intermediality as 'in-between' (2006:12) as I presented it in the first chapter, I started to create intermedial encounters based on the tension of the 'in-between' and through them I came to my final argument in this thesis. Through the emerging in my practice I found that the relationship between intermediality and especially the intermedial encounter between the body, image and object, which I explored, and memory, is one of correspondence, intensification and modification. Within this encounter between intermediality and memory a gap is being opened, which allows and invites modification.

In the intermedial encounter, memory gets its ontological role as a modification-generator and plays a main role in the creative process. Memory does it, first of all, by allowing itself to be changed. It is a memory, which according to Bergson, co-exists within any present moment in its virtual form and always opens to be actualized. Intermediality, at its basis, is constructed on the co-existence of virtual and actual forms; therefore it corresponds perfectly to the Bergsonian co-existence of past and present.

In my opinion, the phenomenon that happens in the intermedial encounter is that different elements and identities (each element has its own identity) are meeting together; they even try to merge and integrate with each other, but by this act, the tension of the differentiation between the identities intensifies and creates a gap of 'in-between'. Into this gap each identity throws itself and by doing so, allows itself to expose the differentiation within itself and refer to other differentiations. I will try to explain what I mean by the example of mixing colours: when you mix colours

you also create a new identity. However, due to the fact that the encounter is between the same forms - colour and colour - you do not get the important gap which exist and preserves itself within the intermedial encounter. And here I return to my first argument. The fact that the encounter is between mortal form (body) and immortal form (image, object) is crucial and this is what keeps the gap open and deep. This gap, created at the present moment of the encounter, evokes a lot of differentiations, which Derrida calls *différance* – a modified present.

Before ending, I would like to clarify that the change taking place upon memory does not depend on the intermedial encounter. We know, according to Bergson, that the actualization of memory and the becoming of the present always take place in the constant movement of 'duration' (Bergson, 1998:1). But what is happening in the intermedial encounter is intensification and correspondence to the changes already happening in reality and a creation of other modifications at the present moment of the performance. It is not only the modification of memory but rather giving memory the place to do its job as generator of modifications. With the unique gap of the 'in-between' and the co-existence of the virtual and the actual we might experience a *différance* in the intermedial performance.

## **Appendix 1 - Performance Extracts from *I am. I am. I am.***

- Appendix 1, Clip 1: The moment of 'Footfalls echo in the memory'.
- Appendix 1, Clip 2: The moment of 'The burning ships'.
- Appendix 1, Clip 3: The moment of 'Another hand'.

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