

Agents of Focalization: An Investigation of Robyn Orlin's
Intermedial Production of *Les Bonnes*

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Tyler George | Student Number: 6710441

Supervisor: Dr. Chiel Kattenbelt | Second Reader: Dr. Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink

Abstract

This thesis examines the 2019 production of *Les Bonnes* presented by Robyn Orlin by investigating how its hybridized use of intermedial configurations work together to focalize spectators, and how Orlin's chosen mechanisms function to re-express Jean Genet's source material. I begin by introducing the terms focalization, hybridization, and remediation in order to establish a theoretical framework and an inventory of contemporary research on the topics that will guide the following chapters. This is mainly influenced by Patrice Pavis's definition of focalization as a staging technique and the Hamburg Research Group's analysis of the term in relation to media and narrative. Then, I offer a textual analysis as a way of establishing themes including role-playing and social structures implicit in Genet's script, which will inform the thematic implications of the tactics to be analyzed in Orlin's interpretation. Next, I examine how specific instances from my case study, such as audience positioning and intermingling, function to combine live performance with intermedial tactics to blur the boundaries of reality and reshape audience perspectives. Then, I focus on examples from Orlin's production that involve film and live camera footage, orienting the principles of film narratology and New Media Dramaturgy to the hybrid configurations being analyzed. The final chapter concludes by bridging the dramaturgical analyses of specific tactics with questions about how contemporary productions of pre-established texts function to re-express their source material. Continuing to use Orlin's production as an example, I utilize perspectives from Adaptation Studies to inform this discussion. Positioning the director as a dialectical agent, I outline how contemporary production teams can elicit new experiential perspectives for their spectators by implementing an array of medial configurations and staging techniques that are informed by the cultural, aesthetic and technical elements that resonate with the "here and now" of their current environments.

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Introduction

Jean Genet's *The Maids* is a text that has resurfaced throughout my theatre career. Perhaps most interesting is the dynamically different ways in which it presents itself. The play first appeared on my radar when a professor in my undergraduate theatre program mentioned it as a potential source for students to consider as a project for our class on directing. This led to a classmate's staged version of *The Maids* in a dance rehearsal room; the roles were all given to female-identifying actors who wore exaggerated drag makeup and inhabited a stage surrounded by mirrors with set pieces covered in aluminum foil. A few years later, I conceived a workshop production of *The Maids*. For this iteration, I wanted to make use of French poetry and a structure that integrated live performance with video footage and audio voiceovers. Then in 2019, I came across a production being staged as part of the Festival d'Automne in Paris. The opportunity to see Genet's work in its original French – therefore retaining the original French title, *Les Bonnes* – sparked my interest, but the description of the show cemented my excitement. The festival's website offered the following description: "Reducing the audience-stage divide to dust, this production, a mix of performance, text and video, sees the 'enfant terrible of South African dance' directing a piece of theatre for the first time." Based on this description, I knew to expect another dynamic restaging of this curiously adaptable play. I also expected to see a strong personal stamp, the result of a director with a history of making strong stylistic choices.

The experience of witnessing this production led me to consider a number of questions that had been lingering in my mind throughout the years of considering this play. I realized that it could serve as a case study to explore larger questions regarding contemporary theatre production. Specifically, I wanted to know: **how do contemporary theatre makers use hybridized film/stage productions to remediate existing works?** Orlin's production of *Les*

Bonnes offered substantial potential for exploring this question for a number of reasons. Firstly, the choice to specifically stage Genet's text opened up an opportunity to investigate what exactly made this play so ripe for interpretation and restaging. This invites a literary investigation into the linguistic structure of the play and its presentation of characters and themes, and how these elements work together to inspire directors across disciplines and cultural boundaries.

As evidenced by the terms utilized in my central question, Orlin's production makes use of elements of film and stage. This inevitably leads to questions about how she goes about assembling these elements. Such an investigation requires breaking down these concepts into specific dramaturgical devices, analyzing the effects of those choices on the overall experience of the production, and positioning these choices within the larger conversation surrounding these differing (though overlapping) modes of creation. This includes highlighting specific research insights from the respective fields of film and live performance, but perhaps more importantly requires I center the discussion on the modes in which these fields are combined. The concept of combining forms of production has been defined and studied by a number of academic researchers, resulting in entirely new fields of research. Some of these fields, such as Adaptation Studies, have been around for decades while other fields including Intermediality and New Media Dramaturgy are relatively new, sprouting from terms coined only in recent years.

With this in mind, I have settled on the terminology of my central question. The main terms that will be explored and defined throughout my investigation are *focalization*, *hybridization*, and *remediation*. Hybridization, in the context of this thesis, refers to the specific ways in which Orlin combines the intermedial elements of film/video and live performance. Related to this topic is the concept of remediation. I will investigate the ways in which these overlapping forms of media produce a new iteration of a play that has been seen, read, and heard

since the middle of the twentieth century. My approach to this investigation makes use of new developments in theatrical research but keeps in mind the historical traditions that are relevant, namely adaptation and literary analysis. By positioning Orlin's production as my case study, I can identify specific modes of production and focus my analysis accordingly. The goal of this approach is to exemplify the phenomenon of hybridized film/performance productions in order to better understand how they function to remediate existing works. This includes investigating how the director makes use of tactics such as focalization to control the narrative and experience of the performance. Such understandings will begin to answer my subquestions which include: What are the main themes/structures in *The Maids* and what makes this text ideal for intermedial reinterpretation? How does Orlin's production combine live performance with intermedial elements and what is the experience of those meaning-constitutional strategies? And how do elements of film and live video function narratively and dramaturgically?

Lastly, I will pay specific attention to the role of the director as a dialectical agent. I will investigate the relationship between authorial intent and a director's interpretation in order to address an additional subquestion: What is the relationship between the authorial intention of Jean Genet and the meanings communicated through strategies implemented by Robyn Orlin?

I will include references to Orlin's comments in interviews and my observations of her production including the South African influence on costuming and sound and what this implicates with regard to gender, race, and class dynamics in Genet's work. While different theories will serve as rotating lenses to understand the selected tactics present in my case study, they all work together to answer these questions. Different chapters will focus on different theories and their respective authors, but there will be times when they overlap and it becomes necessary to create a dialogue of sorts between multiple theoretical approaches. My investigation

will result in new insights surrounding my case study and how one director worked to create a hybridized production, resulting in a remediated vision of *The Maids*. This specific example will then invite further discussion about how similar intermedial elements are used in different contexts, how different creative approaches affect the experience of the same play, and how this text and other texts can be remediated using constantly evolving technologies.

My investigation will begin by defining and mapping the terms that are relevant to my case study and research questions. First, I will explore the topic of focalization, relying most strongly on Patrice Pavis's definition and the Hamburg Research Group's *Point of View, Perspective, and Focalization: Modeling Mediation in Narrative*. Then I will introduce the topic of hybridization, referencing Andy Lavender's chapter in *Performance in the Twenty-First Century*. The final term, *remediation*, utilizes Jay David Bolter and Richard David Grusin's essay on the topic to set up a framework for discussions of intermedial adaptation. Another source I will refer to in this section is Irina O. Rajewsky's "Intermediality, Intertextuality, and Remediation: A Literary Perspective on Intermediality," which will help guide my discussion by bringing these concepts together. Her statements outlining how "specific medial configurations, their respective meaning-constitutional strategies, and their overall signification" (64) work together will guide my process of analyzing instances from Orlin's production in chapters 3 and 4. It is important to define these three key terms early on as they will continue to be referenced and applied in each subsequent section. These terms appear with different nuances in various fields of study, which will be made apparent as they are activated in the context of specific instances of medial configurations utilized in Orlin's production.

The next chapter will take a literary approach to analyzing *The Maids*, contextualizing Genet as an author, and establishing a general understanding of Genet's themes and structure. In order to fully understand how the mechanisms implemented in Orlin's production function dramaturgically, they must be predicated on the concepts implicit in the source material. This includes a focus on role-playing and identity, Sartre's descriptions of Genet's whirligigs and theme of artificiality, and Genet's stage as a social space. In addition to Sartre's essay, I will consult Payal Nagpal's source analyzing the role-playing that occurs onstage and what this means for the characters and the spectators in terms of who maintains power and how. I will also reference Carl Lavery's insights into the politics of Genet's work and how it functions spatially to create an embodied realization of social orders and contradictions. This chapter will examine how *The Maids*' emphasis on appearance and layered reality makes it an ideal text for intermedial reinterpretation. Exploring these themes through Genet's textual structuring will inform subsequent chapters by allowing them to comparatively address similar themes through tactics of performance or film/live video.

Following my examination of *The Maids* as a text, I will shift focus to the use of new media in the context of live performance, exploring how spectators are temporally and spatially implicated while physically experiencing Orlin's production. Examples from the case study to be explored include the placement of actors in front of and behind the audience, reaching out/physical contact between actor and spectator, and the placement of a live sound mixer on stage. First, I will consult Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink and Sigrid Merx's essay on presence and perception in intermedial performance in order to discuss how Orlin reshapes audience perspectives and problematizes their experience through the use of digital media. This source will also be used to investigate instances of actor-audience intermingling in my case study. The

last section of this chapter deals with the terms *spatialization* and *presence*, as informed by essays from Birgit Wiens and Russell Fewster. I then introduce Peter Eckersall's text on New Media Dramaturgy to continue the discussion on liveness, presence, and embodiment in relation to Orlin's intermedial arrangements.

Chapter 4 will utilize research from the fields of film and live video to further the conversation around perspective and Orlin's staging tactics. I will outline specific examples from the case study including framing audience expectations, using handheld camera devices, and live audience projection. The first example will relate Orlin's way of focalizing audience perspective to the findings in John P. Hutson et al.'s research on eye movement and comprehension. Then, Robert Stam's *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics* research on how films communicate both visual and linguistic narratives will be used to discuss Orlin's implementation of numerous camera angles, including a handheld camera that functions as a narrative device and focalizer. The final section will address the live projection of the audience, and how this tactic explores themes of doubleness and reflection in ways that echo other artists' mediatized performances.

The final chapter acts as an extended conclusion, applying insights from the previous chapters by positioning the director as the dialectical agent in this case study. I will investigate the relationship between authorial intent and a director's interpretation, drawing specific inspiration from Adaptation Studies. Lars Elleström's "Adaptation and Intermediality" offers a bridge between intermediality and Adaptation Studies, providing insight on how compound media characteristics can lead to experiential transformations like those seen in Orlin's production. I will consider the process behind *Les Bonnes* by referencing Robin Orlin's comments in interviews and my observations of her production. I will use Adam J. Ledger's research on Katie Mitchell's live cinema in order to contextualize how a devised process informs

an intermedial production based on pre-existing text. Lastly, Linda Hutcheon's research on translations and "intersemiotic transpositions" will address how cases like Orlin's production can be classified as remediations, following a new set of conventions and sign systems. Hutcheon adds further insight into how one might classify Orlin's production culturally, helping to define its relationship to Genet's text.

In conclusion, I will recount the main ideas addressed throughout my thesis and draw clear lines between the different theories and concepts presented. I will then initiate ideas for areas relating to intermediality, remediation, and adaptation that I believe would benefit most from further investigation.

Chapter 1: The Terms: Focalization, Hybridization and Remediation

There are many terms that must be defined in order to have a focused discussion on the tactics on display in Robyn Orlin's *Les Bonnes*. Outlining a map or network of terms poses challenges but is a necessary step toward accomplishing a meaningful investigation. Sarah Bay-Cheng makes this case at the beginning of *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, orienting her readers by stating, "To negotiate any field... requires a few landmarks often with some arbitrary lines drawn among them... The selection of terms... reflect[s] the diversity of perspectives and disciplines that inform the terms, portals and instances. We hope that this discursive map will not eclipse the performances or activities that lay behind them, but will instead open up new conceptual territories and domains for exploration and the unexplored spaces between fixed points" (25). In the same way, my goal is to introduce a number of "fixed points" in the form of terms positioned within a focused theoretical framework in order to explore the "new conceptual territories" embedded in my case study, *Les Bonnes*.

1.1 Focalization

The first term to be discussed is *focalization*. Patrice Pavis defines this term as, "Stress placed by the author on an action according to a particular point of view, in order to underscore its relevance" (151). This definition raises two points that must be further clarified; who is the "author"? And what is meant by the term "point of view"? It helps to continue reading Pavis's definition, which goes on to position focalization in the context of theatre performance while also maintaining an awareness of the connection to film. He refers to focalization as an essentially epic device, stating that, "the playwright, theoretically absent from the dramatic universe, actually intervenes in the development of the conflicts and individualization of the

main characters, subordinating the rest to focalized elements. Focalization influences the characters' points of view and thus, indirectly, those of the playwright and spectators" (151). This posits focalization as a literary device, witnessed through understanding the internal dynamics of a character. Pavis then translates this concept into concrete staging terms, stating:

On stage, focalization is often achieved by directing a spot-light on a character or place to draw attention to them 'in close-up.' The close-up, a technique borrowed from film, is not necessarily done with lighting. It may be produced through the way the actors look at another actor or an element of the stage, or through a foregrounding effect. The enunciation of the staging is what brings out (or "frames") a particular moment or space in the performance.

(151)

Pavis's definition addresses a few different aspects of the term, recognizing that it has been applied differently in different contexts. Ultimately it defines focalization as a staging technique, but it acknowledges entry points for the nuanced ways in which other theorists classify focalization.

Within the context of *Les Bonnes*, focalization is present in the way characters or conflicts are presented via textual storytelling, but there are also concrete performative and filmic strategies that focalize an audience's attention on various elements of the production. Once they are identified and defined, the source of focalization (author, director, or some other combination) can be investigated. What may need to be expanded in Pavis's definition are the possibilities for creating the "close-up" effect to which he refers. While traditionally these techniques have been borrowed from film and recreated through the categorically different elements available in stage production, developments in film and stage technology open up the possibilities for what can be borrowed and how. Then it becomes necessary to ask questions such

as: when a technique from film is implemented using the same means onstage, does this implicate the spectator in the same way as it implicates a film viewer? Does the spatial reality of a live production disrupt the ability of a film technique to be effective or does it open up the possibility of new modes of experience? And must the source of the focalization be defined in order to attribute its intent?

Beyond Pavis's introductory definition, the conversation surrounding how focalization is defined has resulted in its own discourse altogether. One of the most prominent examples comes from the Hamburg Research Group "Narratology" and their 2006 conference, *Point of View, Perspective, Focalization: Modeling Mediacy*, which resulted in a collection of essays of the same name. This title positions focalization amongst the related terms *perspective* and *point of view*. It organizes this discussion around investigating "the problem of mediation in narrative" (Hühn 1). Tomáš Kubíček's essay in this series, "Focalization, the Subject and the Act of Shaping Perspective" helps to define the term as it applies to the agent responsible for shaping the perspective. This essay does so by investigating two prominent scholars, Mieke Bal and Gérard Genette, and the "two distinct structural levels" (183) upon which the notion of focalization is considered. To summarize these differing structural levels, Bal defines focalization in terms of how the characters in a narrative focalize the story of the world around them while Genette conceptualizes at a narrative level, emphasizing the selection of narrative information by means of a narrator. So, Bal might discuss *Les Bonnes* by mentioning how Madame focalizes Solange and Claire, both through her words and through technical means such as a first-person camera shot. Genette, however, might look at the overall story line and assert that the inclusion or exclusion of details about certain characters or events serves as a way of focalizing the story so spectators only pay attention to what is presented. In lieu of a literal

narrator, one could then make a case for the director or playwright as a narrative figure, and thus a focalizer. By investigating the tactics on display in Orlin's production, I will be able to investigate which elements of these competing definitions are present and how they manifest.

Kubiček goes on to investigate the extent to which a spectator is involved in perceiving what he terms the "subject," or the "product of the intention embedded in the work" (187). Though his discussion operates within a literary context, the same principles function as a starting point to discuss performance and film. When attempting to answer the question of how focalization as a strategy constructs a fictional world, he acknowledges that the subject of the work is initially generated by the author's text, but the recognition of this meaning "depends on the activity of concretization, and therefore on the activity of the recipient" (187). The recipient could be considered the spectator, but first it is the director who must receive the meanings communicated in the text. Whoever ultimately perceives the "subject" of the work (in our case the spectator) is able to do so by means of the focalization (in the Genettian sense) enacted by the author of the work (the director, in this scenario). For the sake of clarity, I will maintain the definition of focalization as a concrete strategy, more akin to the definition offered by Pavis. Consequently, I will apply the term *focalizing agent* when referring to the director or author; this allows for a discussion of how they each make use of their role-specific mechanisms in order to enact the process of focalization. Kubiček comes to a similar conclusion about whose intention should be considered and how these competing ideas might be organized; he states, "Mukařovský's concept of the subject has shifted from its original delimitation as the intention generating the work (the authorial intention) in favor of the intention that is fully realized in the work, and an increased focus on the act of concretization that recognizes and generates the

subject” (189). Using this as a springboard, the subsequent chapters will focus on specific acts of concretization and how they manage to generate the subject.

Peter Hühn’s collection explores the topic of focalization through the framework of mediation. He defines mediation as the “verbal, visual or audio-visual sign system” that an author utilizes to initiate the “process of transforming and transmitting the story in the discourse” (1). The essays in this collection then go on to theorize about this problem (the “precise relative status and constellation of the mediating agents”) (1). Orlin’s production will serve as a concrete example to explore exactly which mediating agents are present, and how they are arranged in order to transmit the story of Genet’s text.

1.2 Hybridization

A term that appears in various discussions involving intermedial performance and that will be particularly relevant in analyzing *Les Bonnes* is *hybridization*. Originating in the context of biology, the term has developed its own branch of theory within performance studies. Andy Lavender recounts and expands on this history in his chapter, “In the Mix: Intermedial Theatre and Hybridity.” He quotes Isabella Pluta, saying, “the effect of hybridisation mines the characteristics of different systems and places them in new configurations, either fused or remaining in tension’ (Pluta 2010: 187) – and indeed tense relations can be as productive as actual fusions” (59). These tensions will become apparent in the examples from Orlin’s production, often manifested as conflicting signifiers or layered explorations of reality. The nature of how the various medial elements mix to form Orlin’s hybridized production presents a number of opportunities for investigating the ultimate meanings or resultant experiences a spectator may have. Lavender goes on to say, “We see here not only the mixing of media, but a mediality that makes for something that we might call ‘theatre-plus’. The hybrid is a product of

the simultaneous use of different artforms or distinct media. It also expresses a wider kind of mixity between cultural forms, processes, situations and agendas” (61). Following this logic, it makes sense then to explore each different type of media for its meaning-making strategies, while maintaining and working toward an understanding of how they mix together. This then leads to an investigation of which “wider kinds” of mixing are on display, in terms of cultural forms and societal agendas.

This idea of “theatre-plus” has been defined in various ways but offers a general understanding of how researchers are currently approaching hybridization in performance. Rather than considering the hybridized production as a space in-between different artforms, it may be considered as having “phenomenal certainty and distinctness” beyond the boundaries of those pre-existing forms. Lavender expands on this concept of *becoming*, stating:

Hybridization denotes the creation of something new from elements that are unlike. The newly-formed something (a culture, a plant, a theatre production) displays various characteristics of its component parts but as a blended phenomenon exists differently, across a boundary, in a new configuration. In this sense the hybrid is not a freak of nature or circumstance. It is simply beyond that from which it derives. (63)

In more brief terms, he states that, “the phenomenal actuality of conjunction” present in a hybridized performance is, “an *effect of becoming* enabled by blended processes and forms” (64). Using Orlin’s production as a case study will allow for an exploration in concrete terms of how specific processes and forms come together in order to become something new. This exploration will take place alongside considerations of this production as it relates to the source content of Genet’s text.

A common theme amongst these differing theories is the blurring of clear boundaries. Those boundaries may exist as forms of media or claims of authorship, but revealing the nature of how these boundaries interact in one instance will provide valuable insight for how they interact in another. As Lev Manovich describes it, “in hybrid media the languages of previously distinct media come together. They exchange properties, create new structures, and interact on the deepest levels” (189). He goes on to state that this results in a, “new *metalanguage* that combines the techniques of all previously distinct languages” (189). Manovich focuses specifically on the nature of software, but the concept of a *metalanguage* resulting from the hybridization of separate medial “languages” offers a useful model for discussing the nature of how these processes come together to form something new on stage.

The process of investigating boundaries will put the characteristics of diverse media on display, but the concept of hybridity and its *becoming* nature guides the overall discussion to the conclusion that theatre provides a platform for interdisciplinary artists like Orlin, given that it operates as a hypermedium of all artforms. Chiel Kattenbelt makes the argument for defining theatre as “the stage of intermediality,” stating:

Theatre provides film, television and digital video a stage, that is to say a “performative situation” (Umberto Eco 1977), in which the other media are not just recordings on their own, but at the same time and above all theatrical signs. Operative as part of theatre, the other media become “signs of signs” as opposed to “signs of objects” (Pjotr Bogatyrev 1971 [1938]). To put it differently: as components of a live performance, film, television and video recordings are not only screened, but also and at the same time staged (which is not necessarily the same as refashioned). Thus, because theatre is the art of staging *pur sang* it comes pre-eminently a stage of intermediality. (“Theatre as the Art” 37)

As a stage of intermediality, theatre allows space for hybridization to take place. Every instance of staging various media offers potential for understanding how they function specifically to represent time and space, and how these strategies synthesize to convey meaning beyond the capacity of the individual elements.

1.3 Remediation

The final chapter will use the field of Adaptation Studies as a lens for investigating the relationship between source material and directorial interpretation as evidenced by the chosen medial arrangements of this case study. The term *remediation* provides an entry point for introducing outside research that examines the relationship of all these concepts. Kattenbelt references this term in his discussion of theatre as a hypermedium, stating, “At the very most media can *remediate* (Bolter and Grusin 1999) other media, which implies in the end a *refashioning*. ...although theatre cannot record in the same way as other media, just as it can incorporate all the other arts, so it can incorporate all media into its performance space” (“Theatre as the Art” 37). One question I aim to explore is how can the concept of remediation further inform an investigation of Orlin’s production? To use Kattenbelt’s term, the final chapter will focus on how Orlin refashions Genet’s source material through her specific mechanism choices.

As the primary source material on this subject, I will consult Jay David Bolter and Richard David Grusin’s essay, “Remediation.” This text expands on the specific function of media as it relates to an audience’s desire for immediacy. Simply put, remediation is defined by Bolter and Grusin as the representation of one media in another (16). Such an act can manifest in various ways and spark a different response in the spectator accordingly. The two main ways it

can appear as hypermedia and transparent media; the former refers to instances in which the different medial elements are emphasized for their heterogeneity while the latter aims for an immediate experience in which the spectator is unaware of the medial components contributing to the final product they see. As for what these different logical methods seek to accomplish, they arrive at the same ultimate goal. Bolter and Grusin state:

Hypermedia and transparent media are opposite manifestations of the same desire: the desire to get past the limits of representation and to achieve the real. They are not striving for the real in a metaphysical sense. Instead, the real is defined in terms of the viewer's experience: it is that which evokes an immediate (and therefore authentic) emotional response. Transparent digital applications seek to get to the real by bravely denying the fact of mediation. Digital hypermedia seek the real by multiplying mediation so as to create a feeling of fullness, a satiety of experience, which can be taken as reality. Both these moves are strategies of remediation. (18)

Orlin's use of different media plays a large role in dictating her spectators' relationship with reality; these different instances will be investigated alongside their implications for communicating thematic content.

Modern art is often used to exemplify these ideas; sometimes the process is made visual in order to highlight the product's creation, while sometimes a desire for "realness" manifests in removing any trace of that creative process. When considering a stage production or film, the same principles apply. In Orlin's production of *Les Bonnes*, there are instances in which the source of the medial creation is displayed and emphasized, but there are also instances in which spectators are drawn into a world to the point where they forget about the medial elements that have created the space for them to have such an experience. Hearing text being spoken aloud

onstage is arguably a form of remediation, while viewing a staged film sequence of a scene is another. Orlin's production takes this a step further by calling attention to the experience of watching a film and disrupting that with live camera footage and physical bodies in space. She further complicates the categorization of media by positioning the actors in and around the audience and facilitating physical contact between them. This tactic aligns more closely with the experience of virtual reality; audiences cannot see a screen or framing device that separates their field of vision from one that is digital or augmented. Taking this virtual reality concept one step further, audiences cannot distinguish between the "unreal" or digital events they see on screen and the actions that are physically occurring around them. But even in this shared logic of transparent media, there are clues about the nature of reality being presented. In one case it's the physical reminder of the VR device, while in the other case it's the conventions of being in a theatre and the awareness that everything being presented is controlled and scripted (therefore *represented*).

Irina O. Rajewsky offers several points to consider when approaching this idea of remediation within the context of hybridized intermedial production. She describes the relationship between remediation and intermediality by saying:

...“remediation” can indeed be classified as a particular type of intermedial relationship, and consequently as a subcategory of intermediality in the broad sense. ... [Remediation] allows to highlight a fundamental, transhistorically and transmedially relevant, and, according to Bolter and Grusin, in principle invariable, “double logic” of remediation processes, located within “our culture’s contradictory imperatives for immediacy and hypermediacy” (rem, p. 5). Yet, on the other hand, and this is where the other research perspective comes into play, the concept necessarily implies a tendency to level out

significant differences both between the individual phenomena in question and between different media with their respective materiality; differences that come to the fore as soon as detailed analyses of specific medial configurations, their respective meaning-constitutional strategies, and their overall signification are at stake. (64)

As Rajewsky states, the only way to understand what remediation looks like and analyze it in a detailed way is to outline specific medial configurations in terms of how they are revealed and what they signify. It will be important to pay special attention to the ways in which different forms of media result in different outputs; once these differences are identified, then attention can be shifted to investigating which agent or author is responsible for the resulting subject. By narrowing the scope of this investigation to how focalization occurs, and which agents of focalization are responsible within the context of literary, performance, and film/live video analysis, we can better understand the conceptual territories on display in Orlin's production. Before addressing specific instances from this case study, the next chapter takes a literary approach to establishing key details about Genet's text.

Chapter 2: A Textual Analysis

Before Robyn Orlin assembled her production, *The Maids* was long considered a dramatic text with a particularly literary reputation. Therefore, a unique challenge presents itself when deciding whether or not to apply literary theory to a production of this play. The production itself is a result of all its elements, including the text. My goal with a literary investigation is to answer two main questions: What are the main structural and thematic elements of Genet's script that inform Orlin's production? And why does this particular text offer potential to be remediated in a hybridized way?

2.1 Role-playing and Identity

The fact that the play is titled *The Maids* emphasizes what is most important as a subject. Rather than focusing too specifically on what the maids themselves represent, it is the positioning of the maids as a central symbol that is perhaps most important. This choice by Genet informs the reader that his characters will be defined in terms of their role in life, their social positioning. Genet further emphasizes the importance of roles by his structural choices; the very first scene presents the reader with conflicting details about identity until it is revealed that the maids, Solange and Claire, are acting out a fantasy in which Claire takes on the role of the mistress and Solange assumes the role of her sister. With this, Genet has introduced the themes of reality versus fantasy and the reflexivity of one's identity from the play's very first line. In Genet's writing, these themes are presented as stacked layers, but not insofar as they are distinctly separate. Rather, they are in constant conversation with one another, sometimes overlapping and sometimes taking oppositional sides. The concept of social hierarchy and structural norms is

constantly being challenged by the notion that such ideas are perhaps only constructs in as far as they rely on everyone playing their part in order to maintain order.

Genet's own identity continues to be a source of inspiration for creative teams; his work is often interrelated to his assumed status as an outsider and product of extreme hardship. Ian H. Magadera explains that Sartre's biography, *Saint Genet*, had an unprecedented effect on how Genet's work was viewed and aligned with social politics. He states, "...Genet's outsiderdom, in a form conceived of by Sartre, was established at the same time as the author's literary reputation. This is another example of the interrelation between literary criticism and biographical writing which underpins the prevalence of myths about Jean Genet" (260). While some of Sartre's assertions were later disproved, Genet did lead a complex life as a ward of the state until he ran away, joining the army before wandering across Europe and ending up in prison for a long series of petty thefts (Magadera 256). This personal history, combined with the influence of Sartre's biographical contributions, had the effect of emphasizing Genet's themes as they applied to "outsiderdom" or the plight of the oppressed. For example, the final scene of Genet's first novel, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, features a lonely prisoner delving through his memory to create sexual fantasies, echoing the themes of layered reality and fantasy that are at the forefront of *The Maids*. Another example can be seen in his later play, *Deathwatch*, in which the main characters are prisoners grappling with the power dynamics of their environment alongside their own emotional wellbeing.

2.2 Sartre: Whirligigs and Artificiality

In the preface included as an introduction to *The Maids and Deathwatch: Two Plays*, Sartre expounds on the various literary devices Genet uses throughout his writing. The first concept

Sartre describes is Genet's tendency to create thoughts of "increasingly rapid circular movement" that "merge the poles of appearance and reality" (7). He refers to these instances as "whirligigs of being and appearance, of the imaginary and the real" (7). Sartre goes on to say that Genet "turned dramatist because the falsehood of the stage is the most manifest and fascinating of all" (8). Sartre's metaphor of whirligigs can be realized throughout various scenes with specific points of tension: the maids indulging in their fantasies while also keeping them a secret, Madame lamenting her lover's arrest while also expressing her own misfortune, etc. These whirligigs make use of power dynamics and interpersonal relations to retain tension and keep the action spinning forward; they also function to blur the boundaries of truth and reality as the spinning becomes increasingly disorienting as the play progresses.

Another highlight from Sartre's essay is his characterization of Genet's theatrical procedure as "demoniacal" (10). He argues that, "appearance, which is constantly passing itself off as reality, must constantly reveal its profound unreality" (10). Such a layered depiction of reality results in numerous implications for how concepts like role-playing, relationships, and identity play out over the course of the play. As Sartre puts it, "This extraordinary faking, this mad jumble of appearances, this superimposing of whirligigs which keep sending us back and forth from the true to the fake and from the fake to the true, is an infernal machine..." (28). The experience Genet achieves through the elements of literary storytelling can be experienced by the spectator through means of production; examples of this "mad jumble of appearances" will guide much of my investigation into Orlin's production and its mechanisms.

Sartre addresses how Genet chooses to explicitly define each character by their relationship to social structures: rich and poor, master and servant. However, the hierarchy Genet has created in which Solange and Claire are at the bottom, Madame is in the middle, and

Monsieur is at the top, merely functions as a framework Genet can utilize in order to explore themes beyond class struggle. The hierarchy and all of its inherent power structures, just like the actors playing roles, is another example of artificial appearance. As the play unfolds, the characters tease the audience by alternating between extremes, either reinforcing the power structure or attempting to dismantle it. For example, the maids love their Madame almost to the point of obsession at times. But within the same moment, they reveal their profound hatred for her as the plot hinges on their plans for her murder. Similarly, they love and hate each other. The sisters are not bound by the constraints of traditional sisterhood because they are merely sisters in appearance. Genet defines their relationship early on, then complicates it by adding layers of romantic and sexual tension. By transferring thematic concepts normally associated with romantic relationship to the vehicle of sisterhood, he circumvents predisposed notions an audience might have about the dynamics of a sexual partnership. This creates space for spectators to gain a new perspective beyond their normal point of view.

Genet pushes this relationship layering tactic even further; the sisters also represent alternate versions of each other. One maid's relationship with her sister is also her relationship with herself. As Sartre puts it, "each of the two maids has no other function than to be the other, to be—for the other—herself-as-other" (26). When viewed as one cohesive piece, it becomes clear that all the characters exist to illustrate different parts that may exist within any one person. A significant portion of the play consists of the sisters pretending to be one another or Madame, constantly separating themselves from a fixed sense of identity. As the layers of identity are stripped away and reconfigured, spectators are continuously confronted with the awareness that they must sort through a series of appearances and fantasies in order to thoughtfully apply concepts of morality or truth. This design invites spectators to consider the illusory nature of

concepts like good and evil, or the artificiality of oppressive structures that exist in the world around them.

2.3 Genet's Stage as Social Space

Genet's emphasis on layering appearance and reality makes *The Maids* an ideal text for a director to use to explore the mechanics of gaze and perspective. Payal Nagpal asserts that Genet makes social implications relevant to audiences by forcing them to confront the "historical and social nuances" that are "implicit in the representation" of the actors (15). Spectators are forced to confront these ideals, because of what Nagpal terms an "ideological friction" between the different roles: spectator and actor. Role-playing, she states, lays a 'role' open for "questioning the strategies of power control in the existing system" (17). In other words, the spectators are keenly aware that they are seeing presentation of roles that they have already infused with their own presuppositions based on their lived experience. Once that is acknowledged, then they can confront these ideas and follow Genet's lead in considering whether the conventions they accept as true, often unconsciously, may need to be reevaluated.

As a playwright, Genet understood the limits and framework of a stage play and made use of them in order to communicate beyond the power of words alone. Nagpal comments on the reality of the outside world in contrast to the controlled environment in a theater, stating:

The fixity of social structure is a myth perpetuated by the powerful class so that the forces of change are not allowed to infiltrate into it. But society is a dynamic statement always being re-fabricated. In this context stage is a social space where different acts at definitive moments construe meaning. The specific moments are grounded in history where the act is really taking place. (19).

According to this definition of the stage as a “social space,” the audience members are in equal conversation with the actors and characters before them. They are also in conversation with the material elements of the stage; during Genet’s time these were slightly different than they are during the time of Orlin’s production. Some of the principles remain the same in terms of shared space, live presence of actors, and the occasional epicization of theatrical norms. Orlin, however, has the added ability to further the conversation through the implementation of new media including film projection, live video feeds, and hand-held devices.

The layering of social roles and power structures and the way Genet challenges, complicates, and re-informs this structure serve as entry points for discussing the tactics a director, such as Orlin, may use to further that thematic conversation. For example, the way Genet orients his characters toward one another and positions them provides opportunity for a director to translate these same complexities by means of audience positioning. Nagpal expands on the idea of how the notion of a role reveals layers of implications within Genet’s dramatic universe. She states:

The role is no longer an aesthetic category. It is a part that is rooted in society, in history. The change in the ideological position of the audience needs to be marked. They are brought on stage and along with the actors are made to look at the different enactments of the same role. The spectator is made to confront the possibility that there is another way in which the same role can be performed on stage and in social discourse. The different performances become a critical enquiry into the construction and the enactment of role according to convention. (17)

Nagpal’s analysis highlights the fact that Genet’s aesthetic approach to this discussion (i.e. writing a play) does not preclude him from making serious statements about the social conditions

of the “real” world beyond the stage. She mentions that Genet’s text invites an audience member to come up on stage with the actors to look at “enactments of the role.” Genet establishes from the very beginning that his actors should not aim for illusion, but rather aim to use the potential of theatrical conventions in order to communicate meaning. As Kattenbelt states in his essay on intermediality and performativity, “Audiences are aware, even during the most naturalistic of presentations, that they are witnessing a staged ‘reality’, not actuality itself. Self-reference and self-reflexivity are not only characteristics of the performance itself, however, but also of the perceiver who assumes the position of the spectator, of the audience” (32). Genet’s choice to utilize the medium of a play means that he also wants actors to embody their character roles, but any character work must be informed by the layered awareness of the fact that they are indeed playing roles and playing roles within those original roles. The task of the director then becomes finding ways to create moments in which spectators are forced to confront how these roles are being presented and what this double consciousness or self-reflexivity means in terms of social discourse. Much like Brecht’s version of epic theatre, Genet makes specific use of his plays’ construction in order to call attention to the topics being offered for consideration.

The way Genet presents identity and relational experience continues throughout his later works, always generating from a place of keen political and social awareness. Carl Lavery asserts that, “theatre’s hetero-topic dimension, its ability to reorder the spatiality of the world in the most concrete of ways, means that it is always already a political site” (11). He also examines how these ideas are presented on Genet’s stage and how they implicate spectators, stating, “Genet does not believe that identity is an essence or substance. No one, for instance, can possess or attain it. On the contrary, we discover the universal, Genet claims, when we become the Other in a strange and unsettling experience which takes place at the very limits of being, and

which ‘calls into question the plenum of the world’ (5). Achieving this strange and unsettling experience then becomes the task of a creative team who takes on the challenge of finding ways to bring this experience to life.

While Genet’s texts are rich in thematic material to unpack and explore, the creative challenge that is posed extends beyond finding practical solutions for costuming or set decorating. A director must make specific choices regarding their actors and the playing space, realizing that each of those choices carries with it the potential to bring nuanced ideas to the forefront of the story being told. This includes the gender, ethnicity, and sexual preference of the actors, to the extent that these identities are performed and made visible. It also includes the implementation of various forms of media and organizing the spatial possibilities of a performance venue. Lavery provides a helpful entry point for those attempting to build on the framework Genet has laid out, stating, “It is not enough for a politically progressive theatre to represent social contradictions in pre-existing spatial forms; it must seek to activate those contradictions in real time and space. When it does this, theatre has the potential to become a spatial representation, a heterotopia in which new utopic possibilities for collective life can be embodied and lived out” (11). Orlin and her team used a number of tactics to activate the contradictions of time and space Genet has identified; in order to understand the implications of these choices, the next chapter will identify instances in which the bodies of actors and spectators are entangled with spatial forms made possible by an array of new intermedial staging possibilities.

Chapter 3: Spatiality and Live Performance

Having established the importance of appearance and perspective in Genet's text, we can now investigate examples of audience and actor placement as they are staged in Orlin's production. Nagpal outlines how the "role-actor dialectic" implicit in Genet's script works to, "...turn inwards to expose the conception of the role and the gaze on it. In this way the dialectic becomes open so that the role, the actor, and the audience watching it are displaced" (16). Shifting from a literary perspective to one focusing on the live performance, Nagpal states:

This dialectic formation in theatre always has the audience at its midst... This intermingling of the otherwise separate stage-audience space involves and also distances the viewers. The ad-mix of actor-role-spectator can make the audience feel either uneasy as in the plays of Genet or quite comfortable as can be seen in the plays of Bertolt Brecht. When the role enacted on stage targets the gaze of the person watching it a collision ensues. This is a case of constructive interference. The different interpretations of the actor and the other of the spectator comment on the structures in the world outside as constituted by its members watching the play. (16)

Orlin makes use of a number of tactics to intermingle the audience, namely pivoting actors to face toward and away from the audience, facilitating physical contact across barriers of actor-audience separation, and the placement of a visible sound-mixer onstage.

3.1 Reshaping Audience Perception

Other theorists agree with Nagpal's assertion that the presence of a live audience is foundational for discussing the unique ways in which theatre functions. In their essay, "Presence and

Perception: Analysing Intermediality in Performance,” Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink and Sigrid Merx lay out a plan for approaching contemporary performances that infuse live performance with intermedial elements. It is the notion of live, same-space presence that is the key difference between a hybridized performance and a fully mediated product such as a film or video. They state, “perception processes are reshaped most radically in the interaction between, and simultaneous presence of, the live and the virtual. However much the ontology and the experience of the live may be provoked or problematised by digital intermediality, we believe it is exactly the live performance that enables such a provocation” (218). This principle can be fully tested and realized in a production such as Orlin’s, given that it maintains the overall framework of a live performance. The points worth investigating then become: How are the perception processes reshaped? And how is the experience itself provoked or problematized by digital intermediality?

Starting with the first point of inquiry, perception processes are reshaped by a number of tactics utilized in Orlin’s production. The first example is the placement of actors in relation to the audience. Traditional stage convention dictates that actors and their faces should be fully visible to the audience in front of them, except on the rarest of occasions or when they are not the focus. Orlin found a way to disrupt this convention by repeatedly positioning her actors so that they were angled toward the back of the stage, inwardly facing one another with a seeming disregard for their visibility from the point of view of an audience member. The intermedial aspect to this stage picture comes in the form of cameras from upstage that capture a live feed of the actors’ faces and project it onto the screen behind them. The effect of this positioning is that the audience members are left with a few layers of presentation to perceive simultaneously. The actors’ faces are obscured, turned away as if to signify a secret meeting that the audience

members are not invited to witness. Yet they are still able to see everything, perhaps even clearer because the faces are projected on a large screen and framed inside the border of a gilded hand mirror appearing on a still film frame. These realities are further complicated by the notion that the actors are playing characters playing roles; this leaves the audience member conflicted as to the meaning of this visual arrangement. They are meant to feel excluded, but also included. The actors are playing along with this exclusionary fantasy while also fully aware of how the stage elements undermine any sense of privacy. That sense of unrest and conflict informs the validity of the content these characters discuss with one another during their faux private meetings.

Groot Nibbelink and Merx provide further opportunity to analyze how the interplay of digital and corporeal elements complicate a spectator's perception. They state, "The clash between digitally influenced perceptions and embodied presence manifests itself particularly as a disturbance of the senses and results in a blurring of realities. Theatre makers often deploy digital media in the live performance in order to disturb clear-cut perceptual distinctions between fictional and real, physical and virtual, live and pre-recorded and so on" (219). Orlin makes use of all of these binaries throughout her production. And Genet certainly evokes a disturbance between fictional and real, which functions as a starting point for expanding into the realm of physical versus virtual or live versus pre-recorded. These options did not exist during Genet's time, but they follow the same trajectory of thematic content he set up, serving as areas of great potential for directors to explore with the implementation of new media. Because while they are different in modality, they maintain the basic premise of blurring realities and questioning the credibility of the world around us, thus problematizing a spectator's experience. If this questioning begins with the physical elements being seen and experienced, then logically it will lead to a questioning of invisible structures that dictate social and political life.

3.2 Actor-Audience Intermingling

Another example from Orlin's production that exemplifies this blurred sense of reality occurs when the actor playing Claire reaches his hand out into the audience and makes contact with a spectator in order to climb into the seating area. This example presents a number of different moments that each implicate audience members in different ways. Firstly, the moment in which the actor reaches out poses a real opportunity for physical contact that both acknowledges the actors are aware of the people around them and insists that the audience member take part in the action by assisting the actor in moving off the stage. From here, the actor moves into the audience towards the back of the house, which results in a perception that is disrupted differently for each section of the audience as the actor moves behind, toward, or beside them. That moment of contact and assistance is recreated for each audience member who must move out of the way in order to allow the actor to step on their armrest or touch them for balance or support. Lastly, a camera positioned at the back of the house then provides live video of the actor, which is projected on the back of the stage, resulting in similarly interrupted layers of presentation. However, this time the layers are spatially separated and the audience members given different experiences depending on their relation to the actor. A spectator at the front of the house must either face forward and see only the mediated face of the actor(s) being projected as live video or turn completely around in order to see the body of the actor from behind. Another audience member must decide between looking at the side of the actor standing inches away from them or strain to see the live projected video of that actor's face.

This tactic revitalizes the idea of the stage as a shared social space. Given the realities of how bodies are positioned in this space, there is now much less differentiation between "playing

space” and “audience seating.” This falls in line with the fact that the actors cannot be seen strictly as characters living in another fictionalized world, but they are also bodies in the same time and place as the spectators. Again, these performative tactics serve as entry points for audience members to consider the nature of the outside world. Groot Nibbelink and Merx comment that intermedial performances work in this space of excessive “conflicting signifiers and sensations” in order to, “invite the spectator to work through these unstable sensual experiences to become aware of precisely this instability of the reality we live in and to deal with the fact that we don’t know” (220). The confusion or lack of straightforward clarity therefore is entirely the point. And audience members are provoked to take on an active role in working through the layers presented to them, determining their own place within the experience occurring all around them.

3.3 Intermedial Spatialization and Presence

The spatiality of a theatre and the arrangement of the bodies in it has taken on a new dynamic with each technological innovation of the twentieth and twenty-first century. During Genet’s time, this conversation had already begun as stages were being reimaged in an era of increasing possibility thanks to new innovations in electricity and film and new conceptualizations of time and space dictated by mathematicians like Einstein and Freud. It becomes interesting then to place *The Maids* and Orlin’s production within the context of their respective conceptions. As Birgit Wiens states in her essay on spatiality, “Spatialisation in the postmodern debate became a model of philosophical thinking, and the rejection of diachronic in favour of synchronic concepts of space and time became a prominent concern” (93). This was the context in which Genet found himself writing the text for *The Maids*. Fast-forwarding to Orlin’s production, Wiens provides

additional context for how this concept of spatialization occurs alongside the advent of digital media. She states, “The question of the media was always implicit in this debate, and at the turn of the 21st century it gained attention again with the emergence of the so-called second media transition that marked the change from analogue to digital media and its plurimedial, interconnected and newly defined virtual spaces” (93). This brief analysis of spatialization in Genet and Orlin’s times points to a parallel concern for being fully aware of the expanding limits of theatre within a corporeal here-and-now, given the possibilities of medial elements to complicate and redefine the nature of “here” and “now.” And while the concrete elements differ in terms of technological capabilities, the implication of redefining reality remains essentially the same for both theatre makers.

Another way to consider the notion of the here-and-now is to make use of the term *presence*. Russell Fewster provides a summary of the historical definition of the word presence, stating, “presence within live performance describes the temporal and spatial proximity between performer and audience, a condition also defined as *co-presence*” (46). He references the concept as it was described by Lehmann (co-presence), Husserl (phenomenology and the lived body), and Merleau-Ponty (perception “through the body”). To put it in the context of the 21st century and stage productions with increasingly intermedial elements, Fewster asserts that we may, “construct a liveness and media presence beyond physical proximity...defined not by spatial but by temporal proximity...” (46). Ultimately, he concludes with a statement that looks toward the future of increased potential, one that necessitates an ever-expanding idea of what it means to be present. In Fewster’s words, “Notions of presence, then, exist increasingly as transitional spaces between the live and the digital more than as an absolute ontological condition” (47). It is

precisely in this transitional space that we find artists like Orlin approaching the challenge of marrying established texts with a newly configured physical and mediated space.

Peter Eckersall describes the phenomenon of artists and audiences alike learning how to conceptualize, create, and respond to the increasing possibilities available to them by introducing the idea of New Media Dramaturgy. He states that this “flux” in how we discuss performance in the context of new media is, “facilitated in part by developments in digital culture, and by a desire to respond to and harness these developments” (3). The main ideas guiding NMD provide a useful lens through which we can explore the concepts of liveness, presence, and embodiment in productions like Orlin’s where there are complex arrangements of bodies, both physical and mediated, that are presented dynamically throughout the performance. And by better understanding what implications these elements have individually, we can better understand how they function as a whole in terms of guiding a spectator’s perspective both within and beyond the physical theatre space they inhabit. At the core of NMD, Eckersall states that:

The more we observe new media events, the more we see a decrease in representation of mediated society and an increase in simulation of the agency of its technical creations. We see less figuration of an abstract and dematerialised digitality and more urgent and emerging life forms: images and objects performing alongside humans in ways that seem to refuse old binaries and notions that position the human and the machinic in opposition. Instead, these agentic objects now appear to engage in complex processes of negotiation and reflection on the emergent possibilities of a new order of experience between the machinic object and the active subject. (3-4)

The binary Eckersall mentions – the active subject and the machinic object – can be realized in Orlin’s production as the physical actors and their representations via live video projection and

film. While this is not a new binary, what Eckersall posits as a theoretical development, and thus the need for NMD, is the recognition of the agency these digitized or mediated forms possess. It is not sufficient to state that Orlin projects video of her actors in order for spectators to get a better look at the actor's face or merely as a means of projecting a duplicate image. Rather, the mediated images, and all their digital interference, function with their own agency and thus create their own implications. For a spectator caught in between multiple agents of meaning, a new challenge emerges in how they can make sense of this arrangement occurring all around them.

While my strategy is to pull apart the concepts of live presence and film/video, the ultimate goal is to realize how these concepts are increasingly intertwined within a hybridized performance like Orlin's. The live bodies and the presence shared between actors and spectators makes use of specific dramaturgical tactics, but that's not to say that these tactics occur outside the tactics of live video, film and projection. Often the same principles apply for these mediated bodies as well, especially in a space like that of Orlin's production in which the cameras are positioned from essentially every angle. Furthermore, aligning these tactics with the implicit themes of Genet's work adds a new layer of understanding how they function and why. The physical bodies were always intended to be present in Genet's conception of *The Maids*, and the layered sense of reality and perception of roles and their validity were intended as well. The manifestation of these themes through a hybridized performance in a future guided by New Media Dramaturgy was beyond Genet's conceptual abilities, but still in-line with his ideals in the way these themes are expanded and realized for contemporary audiences.

As a final example of liveness onstage, there is a sound-mixer who is placed on the far-left side of the stage and clearly visible throughout the production. By choosing to position the

sound mixer in this way, Orlin calls attention to the fact that there is a human agent responsible for the sound being used throughout the production. Additionally, this sound is being produced live rather than pre-recorded tracks. Within the world of this production, the live sound complicates another theatrical convention, thereby calling into question a spectator's ability to easily distinguish between reality and curated presentation. Amplified sound is mediated in that it travels through multiple electronic channels before it is received by the hearer, especially in the case of sound created by a DJ and mixing board as opposed to a live band. But there remains a sense of liveness in that the spectator sees the DJ creating this audio in the moment and hears it as it's being created. This is another example of liveness or presence being defined temporally rather than spatially. The origin of the noises occurs long before this moment, in a different space; the sound-generating process is far removed from the process of a DJ on a soundboard. However, the arrangement of these sounds occurs at the same time that they are perceived, resulting in a specific type of liveness. Mediated, amplified sound also relies on the spectator to trust that what they are experiencing truly resulted from the mixing they see before them. There is no way to know if these sounds were in fact pre-recorded, if the DJ is merely an actor as well, or to what extent they are being manipulated.

Orlin's choice to make a live DJ visible onstage is one of the first instances in which she frames her audience's expectations. In addition to physical bodies and sound, she also uses elements of film and live video to tell the story of *The Maids*. The next chapter outlines specific examples from her production and analyzes how they function alongside or in combination with elements of live performance to communicate in a hybridized way.

Chapter 4: Focalization in Film and Live Video

Much like live performance, film and live video offer specific structures and tactics for communicating with audiences. One of the aspects of film often discussed in film studies deals with the duality of visual and linguistic narratives. These two separate but overlapping methods of communication work together to convey meaning to a spectator. To focus this discussion, I will put this conversation regarding narratology within the framework of perspective, as evidenced by the tactics at work in Orlin's production. Such tactics include framing audience expectations, the use of handheld devices, and live projection of the audience.

4.1 Framing Audience Expectation

Once the audience members take their seats and orient themselves to the familiar setting of a theatre space, the lights go out. Two actors emerge onstage and sit in the dark, facing the audience, as the screen at the back of the stage begins to play the opening sequence of a black-and-white film. They are still and silent as scenes of cars driving around Paris in film noir style are projected behind them. These elements, in combination with the DJ who is also present and visible from the onset, perfectly embody the hybridized approach this production takes toward combining theatre and film. A spectator is first oriented to theatre, then begins to question the possibility that this will be a film-based production. After all, the film sequence goes on for longer than five minutes and includes the title screen, stating, "*Les Bonnes, a film by Robyn Orlin.*" Even with this seemingly straightforward statement, the spectator is aware that there are actors, unlit but still visible, waiting to interrupt their cinematic immersion. In a very literal sense, Orlin is framing the expectations of her audience with this introduction. She calls attention

to the fact that everything being presented is aware of its presentation and layered with many other elements of storytelling. It indicates that the world to be created onstage by these performers is no more real than the world of this black-and-white film. Furthermore, the realness of these worlds is essentially irrelevant, as evidenced by the fact that the environmental details of the film play an insignificant role in the production as a whole. This idea of authenticity is also undermined in that the film sequences presented as Orlin's are not of her own creation but are taken from a vintage film version of Genet's text. Not only can the audience not trust the format of the content they are going to see, they cannot trust that anything being displayed is true.

While the presence of a visual and linguistic narrative is widely known and acknowledged, the research behind how these contrasting modes of processing information function in terms of viewer comprehension and the influence or power of the narrator/author/filmmaker is relatively unstudied. In a study by John P. Hutson et al., the researchers set up a number of experiments in order to better understand, "the processes that guide viewers' attention while viewing film narratives" (1). One of their main goals was to track the eye movements of viewers in order to quantitatively map their comprehension and attention during film sequences. This method aimed to better understand the role filmmakers play in dictating specific narrative meanings versus the role of the audience in creating their own interpretive meaning. The study concluded that, "During film viewing, people can look at the same places at the same times but have different understandings of the narrative... This is a counterexample to the common assumption in many eye-movement studies that there is a strong association between eye movements and thought (Just & Carpenter, 1980; Reichle et al., 1998; Reilly & Radach, 2006)." (26). In short, this means that film conventions can effectively guide or

focalize a viewer's perspective, but this does not necessarily dictate that viewer's understanding of the narrative.

The same principle can apply to focalizing attention in a stage production. In Orlin's hybridized production, the experience is more similar to a film than a text in that, "film shots are typically viewed serially from beginning to end... [which] is in contrast with reading in which the reader controls their pace of reading and can vary the amount of time they allocate to processing a piece of information (i.e., fixation/dwell duration) and make regressive eye movements back to previously read words" (4). As a production like Orlin's unfolds, spectators must view it from beginning to end, following the pace of what is presented. However, Orlin's production complicates this convention as well, given that it consistently provides multiple points of view and options for a spectator to navigate. Such choices give a spectator agency to take an active role in where they direct attention and for how long. This is a dynamic process however in that there are instances in which a single stage picture is presented, and eye movements are directed accordingly. As previously stated, this singular focus still poses the opportunity for multiple interpretations, so the complex layering of realities is maintained in both instances. As Kattenbelt states, "...the spectator's attention is guided to a certain extent, particularly by spoken words, movements and lighting, but in principle, they are able to ignore the guiding mechanisms... the space of the performance also contains the space of the spectators, which implies defining the spectators, to a certain extent, as characters in the represented world, and consequently that they are involved in the represented actions and events" ("Theatre as the Art" 36). This phenomenon is the nature of intermedial performance; it strictly follows neither conventions of film or stage, allowing for a new mode of experience to develop. This new mode makes use of filmic focalizing techniques but complicates norms such as the 180-degree rule that

prevents disorientation. Orlin's layering of perspectives might be defined as a "concatenation of space fragments, which are welded together as a spatial totality (Belázs: "visual continuity") in the imagination of the spectator" (Kattenbelt 36). Activating the imagination in this way implicates a spectator both in terms of their active role navigating conflicting signifiers and their involvement in constructing meaning.

4.2 Cameras as Filmic Narrators

Another way film can be used narratively is by making use of an optical point-of-view in which the camera functions as the eyes of the character. A spectator might describe this phenomenon as allowing them to see exactly what the character sees. The implications of this technique, however, go much further than what is immediately seen. This tactic represents one of the ways filmmakers use specific characters in order to focalize narrative information. Robert Stam describes how this may manifest as a point-of-view shot but can be implicit however a character is presented. He states:

...even where a literal point-of-view shot is not present, narrative films may utilize specific characters as centers of consciousness, reflectors, or as "bottlenecks" which convey narrative information, activities which also come under the heading of focalization. Genette redraws the conceptual map of narrative with this refinement, situating the category of point-of-view, or focalization, on the side of the diegesis rather than on the side of narration. (89)

Stam orients the understanding of focalization within the context of film by first establishing the basic principles outlined by Genette and Bal, then applying this to specific examples. He states, "The term focalization was introduced by Gerard Genette to distinguish the activity of the

narrator recounting the events of the fictional world from the activity of the character from whose perspective events are perceived, or focalized... in Genette and Bal the term focalization has a strictly optical meaning—the position or angle of vision from which events are viewed” (90). Stam argues for an expansion of this strictly optical meaning, given the reality that films function within both a visual and linguistic narrative. This same principle applies to a production like Orlin’s in which there is a visual and a linguistic narrative that both have the agency to contribute to the experience of the spectator. It also aligns with the idea that this production does not present a narrator in the form of a specified character, but rather allows different characters to convey meaning through a variety of technical means.

Understanding Orlin’s production in the context of film can add further clarity about how focalization is used as a tool of communication. Taking this understanding as a starting point, one can then expand it to include all the implications of stage and literary elements that are also present. In Sabine Schlicker’s essay, she provides useful language for approaching a discussion of focalization in film. She states, “In film, as I will show, perspectivation is mediated in the form of focalization—by the help of the “camera” as a filmic narrator—and its interplay with “seeing” (ocularization) and “hearing” (auricularization) as well as through editing and montage. On the level of the intended meaning, perspectivation has to be connected with the agent of the implied author or the implied director” (243). All of these elements are present in Orlin’s production. They can be immediately expanded by applying them to the cameras and live video that is implemented alongside film sequences. These cameras, whether offstage or visible as handheld devices, function as filmic narrators. The editing and montage exist as instances in which the live feed is manipulated, such as during Solange’s final monologue where her body is recreated as overlapping outlines in different colors. The idea of editing is also manifested in the

choices Orlin makes to use specific camera feeds at specific times, often presenting varying perspectives. The difference in her production is that these choices were made ahead of time, rather than in a post-production editing phase, but the implications remain the same. The remaining question then becomes, who is seen as the implied author or implied director? At first glance that may be defined as Genet as author and Orlin as director. But just as in the case of an adapted screenplay or a film with multiple writers or contributors, the question of authorship cannot be so easily attributed to one person. Add to this the consideration of the actors and the material elements of the production, and even the active role the spectators play, and the notion of authorship is complicated even further. In truth, all of these agents are responsible for what is seen and heard, and it is their interplay that results in the synthesis of the final experience. That said, there are still concrete narrators or mediated focalizers that contribute, to varying degrees, to this experience. And as Schlicker stated, these contributions are only relevant when approached on the level of intended meaning.

One example of how Orlin uses a character as a bottleneck for conveying information is the choice to implement a camera phone that streams live video. This device is introduced by one of the maids but then is taken by Madame, establishing a point-of-view shot for spectators to see from her perspective. At first this tactic resonates with the effects previously described wherein the actors face upstage but their faces are projected. It invites spectators into the space occupied by the actors more intimately, so they can share the same view as Madame, thereby sharing in her power and position of authority. As Stam describes it, "If the focalizer coincides with the character, that character will have a technical advantage over other characters. The reader watches with the character's eyes and will, in principle, be inclined to accept the vision presented by that character" (96). In this case, the phone itself function as a narrative device and therefore

takes on the role of focalizer. It dictates what a spectator sees, which encourages him or her to empathize with the ideals of the character behind the handheld device. Sharing Madame's line of sight adds credibility to her claims of being economically and therefore socially superior to the maids before her. However, Orlin complicates this tactic by turning the camera toward the audience. Suddenly, any sense of comradery or alignment with Madame is subverted as she zooms in on the chests of male and female audience members in a way that feels violating and embarrassing. She subtly degrades them in front of their peers so that they pivot to empathizing with the maids, suddenly the subject of her vision instead of a co-conspirator. Again, Orlin makes use of this conflicting assortment of signifiers so that spectators are faced with increasingly complex choices about the validity of what they see, think, and hear. In this instance, these choices directly align with the larger themes of the work – economic and social power structures – in a concrete way.

4.3 Doubleness and Reflection

Perhaps the key difference between watching a film and experiencing Orlin's production is the awareness of the audience and the choice to mediate them alongside the actors/characters. The phenomenon of seeing oneself projected as a mirror image adds a layer of agency for the spectator, but also disturbs the boundaries between reality and fiction. In his chapter, "The Digital Double," Stephen Dixon notes the history of doubleness as a theme in intermedial performance, asserting, "The idea of the body and its double pervades digital performance" (242). In Orlin's production, the first example of duplicating the audience occurred when Madame pointed the camera phone at spectators on the front row. This occurs again later in the production when an unseen camera at the back of the stage projects live video of the majority of

the audience, as if they were looking in a mirror. The theme of reflection presents itself throughout Genet's text. On a semiotic level, mirrors and reflection represent perception of ourselves and others. In the context of role-playing, this invites the characters and thus the audience to pause and consider how outward appearance corresponds or perhaps diverges with the true inward nature of a person. Dixon references David Rokeby and his thoughts on contemporary digital art works that use the mirror reflection principle, stating, "transformed reflections are a dialogue between the self and the world beyond. The echo operates like a wayward loop of consciousness through which one's image of one's self and one's relationship to the world can be examined, questioned and transformed" (245). By implementing mediated duplication, Orlin echoes the original semiotic value of mirrors but adds to it a level of control over the final image and therefore another opportunity for manipulation that complicates reality and fiction.

Eva Heisler examines the phenomenon of doubled bodies in her essay, "Doubled Bodies and Live Loops On Ragnar Kjartansson's Mediatized Performances." While her focus is more on performance art and "the doubleness of the performing body," (222) her assertions offer an entry point for discussing the implications of doubling a spectator's body. She states that with performance art, "phenomenological experiences and epistemological questions are entangled and tested; the viewers' unstable experiences become the subject of the work" (223). This unstable experience functions as a technique for guiding spectators to consider their own bodies alongside the real and mediated bodies seen before them, removing the boundary between audience and stage and subsequently between real and fiction. A spectator sees him or herself essentially being used as a piece of the set, but continues to experience living in his or her own body; this conflicting duality of experience forces the spectator to consider the possibility that

other images, whether mediated, pre-recorded, or live, carry the same agency, presence, and “realness” as they experience with their own body. If they are being forced to play the role of background character as well as outside spectator, then they are implicated in the same role-playing experience that the maids have been embodying throughout the production.

The examples from the previous chapters have explored some of the instances of live video, film, and embodied performance that make up Orlin’s production. In the next chapter, I will shift the discussion from considering the meaning-making capacity of specific tactics to focus more on how and why these tactics may have been selected, and where they fit into the overall discussion surrounding contemporary theatre makers who approach established texts with a desire to reimagine them within their own modes of creation.

Chapter 5: Director as Dialectical Agent

Throughout the previous chapters, there has been reference to the question, who is responsible? This was considered in terms of who is responsible for the focalization that occurs throughout Orlin's production, or who is responsible for choosing which themes and ideals are to be communicated to the audience. This question is complicated when Orlin's hybridized production is considered and text is not necessarily at the top of the hierarchy of elements; it is complicated further when a production is viewed in the context of its entirety and each choice is given the agency to affect how meaning is communicated. Therefore, this task of attributing responsibility must be reconsidered in order to result in any worthwhile conclusions. Perhaps a better question is what is the relationship between authorial intent and a director's interpretation?

One way to understand this relationship is to consider the director as a dialectical agent. This term builds on the concept of director as focalizing agent, as defined by Kubíček. Kubíček's assertion that the focalizing agent is responsible for generating the subject establishes that the subject, in this case the experience of Orlin's production, exists as a result of the instances of focalization that occur throughout the production. My argument is that a director like Orlin functions with the intent to create constant points of dialectical inquiry for the spectators. These points of inquiry are often guided toward the larger themes identified in Genet's work, but they are not so simple as to make bold ideological assertions about the truth of economic or social issues. Rather, Genet's themes are about questioning the reality of these beliefs and opening up one's mind to the possibility that truth lies beyond the assumed walls of convention. A director's task then becomes guiding spectators to these various points of inquiry by whichever means they choose. Just as Genet set about a series of "whirligigs" to keep the larger whirligig of the play moving forward, a director like Orlin infuses her production with experiences that continuously

lead spectators to a place of investigating the truth of the opinions and theories they hold, or that dictate how the society in which they live functions.

5.1 Adaptation and Intermediality

Adding in the perspective of Adaptation Studies can illuminate how Orlin's approach to staging *Les Bonnes* generates the experience of spectators because it can help distinguish the lines between directorial interpretation and source material. Lars Elleström makes a case for how adaptation and intermediality are related, stating that:

The undisputed fact that adaptation concerns the transfer of media traits from one medium to another medium is the most fundamental feature of adaptation, I argue, which makes it part of the broad field of transmediality and the even broader field of intermediality. Most theoretical and practical issues discussed under the heading of adaptation are hence subordinated to intermedial research questions. (6)

Having already investigated some intermedial research questions in previous chapters, the question of how authorial intent and directorial interpretation are related can be framed under the subordinate – as Elleström claims – heading of adaptation. Viewing Orlin's production as a remediated adaptation of Genet's original vision will clarify where her production exists within the overlapping boundaries of these terms, and how the insights from these separate fields of study can orient a discussion of the relationships between multiple creative sources.

Elleström provides an outline for how different media relate to one another in an adaptation, stating, "Adaptation is a kind of transmediation that is characterized by a transfer of compound media characteristics among dissimilar media, and in the end media transformation is governed by fundamental presemiotic and semiotic media similarities and differences" (15). This

definition can be easily applied to Orlin's production; she utilizes dissimilar media in a way that results in a transformation into one hybridized product. This final product, the production itself, results in an experience rich with the conflicting and overlapping signifiers brought on by the variety of medial characteristics presented. For example, the narrative characteristics of film, both linguistic and visual, at times work in-line with the way Orlin uses the camera(s), but then the presence of other forms of media sometimes disrupt that narrative. Such a disruption occurs when the handheld device suddenly turns on the audience and implicates them in the action of the stage. The visual themes imbedded in the text, such as the symbolic use of mirrors and windows, takes on a layered meaning when presented through multiple medial channels. Elleström concludes that, "represented objects are, in the end, cognitive entities in our minds, and these entities may be made present by different kinds of signs—although media differences will always ensure that they are not completely similar when represented again by another kind of medium" (18). Genet has a specific way of summoning these cognitive entities, and Orlin's choices as director function to make these same cognitive entities present, but the interplay of various media and staging tactics results in differences in how the spectator experiences them. That experience varies for each spectator but is guided and informed by the series of tactics that make up what can be defined as Orlin's interpretation.

5.2 An Open Process

One way to approach discussing a specific director's work is to take a look at their process. The process for creating productions that combine any level of adaptation and intermediality is often one that involves a more open dramaturgy. Open dramaturgy in this case means a process that is more open to experimentation, one that results in a devised work rather than the traditional

rehearsal approach of memorization and repetition. As an example of another director functioning within this realm of creative intermedial adaptation, Adam J. Ledger explores the work of Katie Mitchell in his essay, “‘The Thrill of Doing it Live’: Devising and Performing Katie Mitchell’s International ‘Live Cinema’ Productions.” He states:

In the context of discourses of adaptation, to discuss live cinema as a devised process, as well as one that concerns how actors shift performance modes, expands preoccupations with the relationship between text and performance, authorship, fidelity, and change, since the intermedial adaptation is produced through rehearsal only if, perhaps unusually for devising, some form of script exists at the outset of the process. (70)

Orlin’s approach to combining film and stage shares many characteristics with Mitchell’s “live cinema.” These characteristics include focusing on “cultural (re)expression of the source content” rather than reconstructing the source text and an emphasis on the use of physical choreography within and alongside live video projection. We know that there was a scripted text at the onset of Orlin’s rehearsal process, and insights into her process align with the idea that her adaptation was produced as much through the rehearsal process as it was conceptualized in advance.

Orlin reveals some details about her process for creating *Les Bonnes* in interviews. For example, she states in an interview with Festival d’Automne à Paris that she uses the film version of *The Maids* starring Glenda Jackson and Susannah York to, “confront yet another norm: a form of acting.” She mentions how the film is over-acted to the point of being hard to watch. Setting this as a starting point allowed her actors to utilize the notion of acting as another tool for exploiting convention, a tactic that aligns with Genet’s often referenced self-awareness of the stage as a medium. Orlin saw a way to apply this concept to the medium of film so that her

actors were allowed to enter new performance modes and generate new points of dialectical inquiry. And while we know that Genet's text was written long before this production and remained essentially unchanged, Orlin comments that she did not insist on it being the starting point for her creative process. In that interview, she states, "I'm not sure if I will start with text. I think I will start with concept, which is the way I work," and, "I use text in my work in the same ways I use cameras. I use lots of things in my text that other choreographers don't use. They make different choices... The other thing is I don't really call myself a choreographer and I don't really call myself a director. I just call myself an artist." Text was not the primary focus of her process, and her performers collaborated to create the final product. These characteristics of the process help to identify the points of interest that allowed for certain themes and moments from the original script to be expanded by creating new modes of expression.

5.3 Cultural (Re)Expression

Ledger's use of the word *cultural* (re)expression carries interesting implications for how one might break down the various elements of a production like Orlin's. In this case, the cultural elements most prominently at work relate to gender and ethnicity. This is evidenced by Orlin's choice to cast male-identifying actors in all three roles and her choice to cast black actors as the maids and a white actor as Madame with costuming choices reflecting Orlin's South African heritage. These tactics function alongside all the technical production choices discussed previously. They reveal how a director like Orlin may guide the process while leaving room for the performers and the material elements to flesh out the product. Orlin also functions to focalize understandings of these tactics throughout the production, resulting in a product that presents her unique expression of Genet's work while maintaining space for each spectator to consider their

own internal dialogue. For instance, the context of power dynamics within South African ethnic conditions informs the experience of these power dynamics on stage, whether by means of camera positioning or audience projection, etc. The same can be said of gender and sexuality, especially when the context of Genet's life and work is made apparent. But these signs carry different ethical and social baggage for each member of the audience, so Orlin leads them to a place of dialectical inquiry without dictating exactly how they should resolve any questions that may arise. A production like Orlin's expands beyond the limits of straightforward semiotic interpretation by consistently disarming the audience's perception of what they are seeing and what those visual clues represent.

It is helpful to understand more recent developments in Adaptation Studies, given that they acknowledge the difficulty of simply defining adaptation in an ever-expanding world of technical and creative possibilities. In Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation*, she states:

Recent translation theory argues that translation involves a transaction between texts and between languages and is thus 'an act of both inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication' (Bassnett 2002: 9). This newer understanding of translation comes closer to defining adaptation as well. In many cases, because adaptations are to a different medium, they are re-mediations, that is, specifically translations in the form of intersemiotic transpositions from one sign system (for example, words) to another (for example, images). This is translation but in a very specific sense: as transmutation or transcoding, that is, as necessarily a recoding into a new set of conventions as well as signs. (16)

Orlin's choices can all be seen in the context of recoding into a new set of conventions and sign systems. She layers these sign systems and conventions, and the hybrid nature of her production

results in an experience that requires spectators to navigate them simultaneously. In a sense, she has developed her own “language” in order to tell the story in a way that makes the most sense to her. And as with any language, the text works in conjunction with physical and social conventions.

Hutcheon offers an analogy put forth by E.H. Gombrich, stating:

He suggests that if an artist stands before a landscape with a pencil in hand, he or she will ‘look for those aspects which can be rendered in lines’; if it is a paintbrush that the hand holds, the artist’s vision of the very same landscape will be in terms of masses, not lines (1961: 65). Therefore, an adapter coming to a story with the idea of adapting it for a film would be attracted to different aspects of it than an opera librettist would be. (19)

Orlin approached her source content, Genet’s text, with her artistic sensibilities which included choreography, film, and live camera projection. What resulted was a production in which the techniques offered by those elements combined to filter (or translate, or transcode) Genet’s words through Orlin’s language. One specific aspect of her directorial language that stuck out was the role of perspective and focalization. Therefore, Genet’s original story gained new meaning that could only be translated to spectators that encountered *The Maids* via the experience of Orlin’s production.

Orlin’s production may or may not be seen as an adaptation, depending on which definition of adaptation one considers to be true. However, it certainly exhibits many characteristics of an adaptation and I would argue it qualifies as an “extended, deliberate, announced revisitation of a particular work of art” (Hutcheon 170). Hutcheon also describes the concept of “cultural revision” whereby “reception-generated changes fit along a continuum of fluid relationships between prior works and later— and lateral— revisitations of them” (171).

Orlin herself states in an interview with *Télématin* that she saw *The Maids* as a young woman during the time of apartheid and was shocked to see the roles played by three white women. This influenced her decision to cast two young black male actors to play the maids, a decision also informed by her research regarding Genet's intention of casting male actors. These decisions, combined with her choices of media occupy a specific space on the continuum of relationships between Genet, his text, and how this story is shared with audiences across time and space. Hutcheon defines the "adaptive faculty" as "the ability to repeat without copying, to embed difference in similarity, to be at once both self and Other" (174). I would argue that Orlin's production fits this description as well. She embedded differences in form and experience, as well as style and culture, into a script that has been the same for decades. Thus, it is both the same and different, a copy that maintains originality.

Conclusion

What began as an investigation into how Robyn Orlin's hybridized film/theatre production of *Les Bonnes* functions as an example of remediated adaptation led to research guided by how specific medial configurations transfer meaning through overlapping methods of focalization, such as audience framing and intermingling. Because of this, chapter five works as an extended conclusion, applying the insights about how these tactics work dramaturgically back to the original question: how do contemporary theatre makers use hybridized film/stage productions to remediate existing works? Addressing subquestions about the main themes/structures in *The Maids*, the experience of Orlin's meaning-constitutional strategies, and how the elements of film and live video function narratively created the space to explore the relationship between authorial intent and directorial interpretation. To summarize more briefly, the nature of media and how it combines and transforms the experiences of spectators works in the space beyond that in which those elements are separated. This enables spectators to understand themes imbedded in the text, such as the layering of social structures and personal identity and the nature of reality, in novel ways. When there is a specific starting point, as in a production with a pre-existing script, this transformation can be labeled as reinterpretation or cultural re-expression. And with this re-expression, new medial elements and arrangements are presented along with new cultural and aesthetic elements to create something new that is neither a copy nor wholly original. It is the nature of theatre as a hypermedium that allows these elements to hybridize on an intermedial stage in ways not possible through film or literature.

There is opportunity for further research regarding how a hybridized performance can be considered remediation and where it should be logically placed within the context of adaptation. Other sources of further inquiry might involve applying these principles about Orlin's directorial

language to other works that are not based on pre-existing texts. How does that affect the ability of these tactics to communicate meaning? Do the same principles of focalization and perspective still apply? This could lead to larger discussions about the role of text in contemporary intermedial productions. Has it changed alongside the developments in film and live video production, and their ability to communicate visual narratives? And how might the concepts learned from film and stage interaction be useful for research that expands into more recent technological developments such as mixed reality or immersive media? Orlin's production of *The Maids* opens up possibilities within and beyond these questions, and if this artist predominantly known for her choreography continues to experiment in the world of theatrical performance, her work could serve as a springboard for dramaturgical inquiry for years to come.

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