Australasian Association of Writing Programs

TEXT SPECIAL ISSUES

Number 62 October 2021

ISSN: 1327-9556 | https://textjournal.scholasticahq.com/

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To cite this article: Maloney, N. (2021). The theatricalised screenplay and the intermedial stage in Ivo van Hove's *All About Eve.* In F. Collins, H. Joyce and N. Maloney (Eds.) *The Place of Writing in Intercultural and Intermedial Creative Collaborations*. TEXT Special Issue 62.

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The theatricalised screenplay and the intermedial stage in Ivo van Hove's All About Eve

Abstract:

In 2019, Belgian theatre director Ivo van Hove directed an adaptation of Joseph L. Mankiewicz's screenplay, *All About Eve*. This production was staged in London, filmed by National Theatre (NT) Live, and screened in theatres worldwide. This article explores van Hove's use of the screenplay within a multimodal theatre production, viewed as a screened event. Drawing on intermedial and postdramatic theory, it compares the screenplay's historically shaped dramatic forms with the theatre production's pursuit of transparency, liveness and immediacy, and NT Live's aim of presenting a unified, globalised experience.

Biographical note:

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Keywords:

Intermediality, *All About Eve*, screenplay, theatre, Ivo van Hove, Joseph L. Mankiewicz

Introduction

In recent years, theatre companies worldwide have discovered the commercial appeal of adapting well-known films to the stage. Simon Stone's reworking of Woody Allen's film *Husbands and Wives* (2016) for Amsterdam's Toneel Group, and Christiane Jatahy's adaptation of Renoir's *Rules of the Game* (2018) for the Comedie Francaise are but two examples. In Australia, the Malthouse Theatre presented an adaptation of Lars von Trier's *Melancholia* (2019), the Melbourne Theatre Company offered a staged version of the film *Shakespeare in Love* (2019), while the musical version of the film *Muriel's Wedding* (2018) continues to be performed in regional theatres.

What becomes of a screenplay when it is produced as theatre? Drawing on post-fidelity adaptation theory we can consider, as Linda Hutcheon (2013) suggests, its intertextuality and how it is transposed, reinterpreted and recreated (p. 9). Following Christine Geraghty (2009) and Thomas Leitch (2007), we can examine how the production might draw attention to itself as an act of adaptation. Yet, a theatre text shares the stage with other mediums, including lighting, audio visual technologies and mechanised scenery. Contemporary theatre, as Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt (2006) argue, is intermedial in the way it incorporates live performance with technologies and media to produce new modes of representation (p. 11). Building on Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's (1999) concept of hypermediacy as a heterogenous space that employs multiple points of view and media, Kattenbelt (2006) configures contemporary theatre as a hypermedium, a unique platform for other media on which to perform self-reflexively, each with their own conventions of perception (p. 37). This hypermediatic theory of theatre opens possibilities for analysing theatricalised screenplays not only as adapted dramatic texts, but as one of several artefacts within a multimodal theatre performance. This article will explore this proposition through an analysis of Dutch theatre director Ivo van Hove's theatrical production of *All About Eve* at London's Noel Coward Theatre (2019), which I saw broadcast in Melbourne's Nova cinema (2019), courtesy of National Theatre Live (NT Live), a service that offers "live" screenings of theatre productions (2021). This framing of the theatre production raises a further question: in what ways does the NT Live screening of this theatre production effect its multimodality?

After a brief introduction to Mankiewicz's screenplay (1951/1972), I will explore its use in van Hove's theatre production. Drawing on Kattenbelt's theory of hypermediality, I argue that there is a tension between the screenplay's dramatic hierarchies of plot, character and dialogue that tell self-enclosed stories of trust and deceit, and postdramatic concerns with transparency, liveness and immediacy through the use of live video feeds and roving camera operators. Ironically, the NT Live screening of the production reduces this tension by promoting itself as a singular, unified and globalised screen event.

The screenplay

Mankiewicz wrote *All About Eve* at a pivotal time in Hollywood when the concept of the screenplay was changing. In the 1930s, Hollywood screenplays, or what were then known more widely as continuity scripts, were regarded as part of an assembly line process (Maras,

1999). By the late 1940s, this had begun to change, with the emergence of what Lewis Herman (1952) identified at the time as a "master-scene" script, containing more detailed scene descriptions, character action, dialogue, and scene headings, although few camera angles. Mankiewicz made *All About Eve* as part of a five-year contract with Twentieth Century Fox that allowed him greater freedom to write, direct and produce his films (Dick, 1983), an arrangement that was unavailable with his previous employer, Metro Goldwyn Meyer.

One of the key problems of screenwriting studies is to identify the text under consideration. As Price (2010) argues, screenplays are "chaotic" texts, often lacking any "final" textual form, and inevitably shaped by collaborative practices, and subject to ongoing revision during production and postproduction (p. 63). The text I refer to in this article was published in 1951 (Mankiewicz, 1951/1972), the first screenplay in the US to be made available in this way. It corresponds to the film, with some minor exceptions, and is written in the "master-scene" script format. *All About Eve*'s provenance as a screenplay, like many others of the 1940s and 50s, can be traced to a magazine story. *Cosmopolitan* magazine published Mary Orr's *The Wisdom of Eve* (1946), based on an anecdotal story she heard about a young woman who manipulated an ageing actress. The story department of Twentieth Century Fox came across the publication and referred it to Mankiewicz, who began work on a screenplay adaptation in 1949, and completed it in early 1950 (Carey, 1972/2008).

The screenplay deploys psychologically motivated characters to further a plot that is shaped by cause and effect logic, key components of what has been described as classical Hollywood cinema (Bordwell, 1985). While it occasionally bemoans the cultures and economies of the theatre and film industries of the time, the screenplay's focus is squarely on interpersonal conflict. It maintains the central dramatic premise in Orr's short story. A Broadway star, Margo Channing, is about to turn forty. She is at the height of her theatre career but beset by fears of ageing. She depends upon the efficiencies of her wise-cracking assistant Birdie, and the warm support of her friend, Karen. Into Margo's life enters Eve Harrington, a seemingly adoring fan, amateur actress and theatrical devotee, but one who will be revealed as a scheming narcissist hellbent on achieving stardom, regardless of the damage she causes others. Eve woos Margo and others with a story about her love of theatre, her poor background and a husband who never returned from the war. With Karen's encouragement, and much to Birdie's disdain, Eve becomes a second assistant to Margo. Her swift and inexorable rise begins early, first as Margo's understudy and finally, by betrayal, as a star in her own right. Margo's friend, Karen, unwittingly encourages Eve, while the theatre critic Addison de Witt is more direct in his support, and eventual manipulation, of the rising star.

The theatre production

Ivo van Hove, along with his husband and theatre designer, Jan Versweyveld, has a considerable history of adapting screenplays for the stage. Beginning with John Cassavettes's film, *Faces*, they have created theatre performances of Pier Pasolini's *Theorem* and Visconti's *The Damned,* to name just a few. They have on several occasions emphasised that they do not adapt their stage productions from films, and instead use screenplays as their starting point

(Bennett, 2018). In the case of *All About Eve*, van Hove has maintained a steadfastness to the screenplay, with few changes made to the text. As part of their working method they avoid watching the films they adapt, and instead go directly to screenplays or transcripts. They take at least a year to develop their productions, with van Hove and Versweyveld running parallel textual and visual dramaturgical processes (Bennett & Massai, 2018). Yet, a screenplay, as van Hove rightly notes in an interview with theatre critic Matt Trueman, has no intention of being theatre. It is, claims Versweyveld in the same interview, "a totally different texture: a tsunami of descriptions, locations and shots. " (Trueman, 2017, para 6). All of that, Trueman adds, needs condensing into "a single space, distilling into a single gesture" (2017, para 6).

There is certainly much to condense in the screenplay. Mankiewicz presents a world comprised predominantly of ordinary interior locations in which small groups of characters play out key dramatic concerns of trust, deceit and revelation. As Brian Dauth (2005) notes, Mankiewicz's concern with locating drama in multilayered interiors was a central feature of his work, a preference that chimed well with the Twentieth Century Fox house style of crisp hard-edged photography. At times, these places are small and tight, forcing intimacy or confrontation, as in the dressing room or Lloyd and Karen's car; or they are more extensive, as in the backstage of the theatre, or the restaurants, enabling characters to observe each other from a distance. In the case of Margo's apartment and the party scenes that occur there, there are interconnected spaces that enable parallel plotting. Notably, these places are at times described as immutable, and grounded in tradition: "aged and venerable" (Mankiewicz, 1951/1972, p. 117) waiters line the walls of the Sarah Siddons society and the backstage doorman appears "fireproof" (p. 133).

The theatre production moves these places into a single box-like set that combines the dressing room, apartments, backstage locations and restaurants. Lilac painted walls suddenly rise and fall to distinguish these locations, at times revealing the cold grey cement walls of the theatre space at the back, on which are propped large photographs of Margo Channing. As the production progresses, these are gradually displaced by similar photographs of Eve. As David Willinger (2018) has noted, the animated boxed set is a signature style in van Hove's and Verweysveld's productions, which suggests an opening up of the rectangular walled worlds of theatrical naturalism and an undermining of its representational strategies. Certainly, this alters the static architecture and interiors suggested by the screenplay. Yet, beyond the rising walls of Verweysveld's animated set there is another wall. Far from producing a sense of endlessness or openness, or providing a meta commentary on the production, this set suggests enclosure and entrapment.

The detailed realism of the screenplay, the "hot water pipes and cracked plaster" (p. 134) of Margo's dressing room, is absent. Instead, the stage is minimally furnished with a large, lilac velvet couch, bed, piano, chairs and a dressing table, with its mirror surrounded by lights. Most prominent of all is the large screen that is suspended above the set, almost the entire width of the stage, onto which is projected live video footage courtesy of two roving camera operators, as well as a camera secreted in the dressing room mirror. The camera operators move stealthily through the performance. They broadcast the party scene, in which we see images of various characters in conversation; the fateful phone call to Lloyd from Eve's flat mate; and Eve's blackmailing of Karen in the restaurant bathroom while, on stage, Bill and Margo celebrate their engagement.

In an interview Mankiewicz gave in the early 1970s, he described what he termed "the inner Self" (Carey, 1972/2008, p. 59) as a central concern in his screenplay. Mankiewicz saw Margo as someone who retained an inner life but covered it over with a tightly held public persona while Eve, on the other hand, lacked any sense of interiority. Her destiny, he claimed in the interview, was to discover that "she has been servicing a bottomless pit" (p. 25). By contrast Margo is willing to consider life away from the public gaze and beyond her theatre career, as she does in Scene 34 when marooned with Karen in a car without petrol (Mankiewicz, 1951/1972, p. 269). This life, it should be noted, involves "settling down" with Bill and putting regular dinners on the table. This is one of several contradictions the screenplay bears in its representation of women. While women drive most of the action, the options Mankiewicz imagines for them, as either helpers, neurotic divas, sociopaths or wives, are depressingly narrow. Yet, they have agency. Curiously, the theatre production responds to the screenplay's gendering by presenting Margo as a tragic figure, aware of her indispensability. She is less feisty and more weary, as several reviewers of the production have noted (Billington, 2019; Brantley, 2019). Ironically, this limits her agency. While the sexism and agism of her world are foregrounded in the production – De Witt's manipulation and Bill's criticisms are savagely performed – Margo seems helpless in the face of it all. Even her marriage to Bill is presented as a sad inevitability.

Van Hove honours the screenplay's dramatic cause and effect progression of Eve's ascendancy: at one level, it remains a dramatic story of trust, deceit and revelation. But he also responds to these jumps in time demanded by the screenplay with a constantly overlapping choreography of entrances and exits that traverse the stage. These dynamic movements, combined with a lighting design that suggests a perpetual night, are very much at odds with the screenplay's diurnal rhythms.

The screenplay uses flashbacks and voice overs as key structural devices to frame every moment as a remembrance. While stylistically bold – of the screenplay's 56 scenes, 21 include voice overs – they nonetheless support the screenplay's organising principal of psychological causality. The emphasis is on history as subjective. Mankiewicz's use of flashback in the screenplay keeps the focus squarely on neurotically charged memory. In her study of flashback techniques in Hollywood cinema, Maureen Turim argues that by rendering tales of ambition and neuroses as individualised accounts, *All About Eve* and other films in what she calls the "Hollywood retrospective flashback" genre "avoid critical analysis of the economic structures and ideological functions of Hollywood" (1989, p. 133).

The first voice over is theatre reviewer Addison De Witt's, as with acerbic authority he introduces and observes the key characters in attendance at the Sarah Siddons award ceremony, a flash forward in the narrative to reveal Eve's success. By starting with a flash forward, and intimating the conflicts that have occurred, the screenplay provides backstory in an efficient and dramatically satisfying way. Voice overs are then shared by Karen and Margo as they try to form coherent memories of the events that took place. These recollections bridge scenes, move the story forwards, and build curiosity through the sharing of a premonition or the intimation of a plan. Van Hove maintains these flashbacks, but he makes the narrators physically present. De Witt, Karen and Margo stride downstage to address their reflections and memories directly to the audience. They remain self-aware, foregrounded subjects, as they are in the screenplay, making decisions, as Dauth (2005) has observed, that will determine the

actions that follow, where more choices will be presented and new decisions made. In this way, they are intricately connected to the dramatic nature of the story. But they also contribute to the production's highly kinetic and visual mise en scène. Van Hove attempts to balance the screenplay's emphasis on subjective perception by commenting on the ideologies that shape this world. This is apparent in the way the men are at times choreographed to circle Margo in a predatory manner. Yet such strategies do little to dislodge the screenplay's dogged focus on individual psychology.

One of the most notable aspects of the screenplay's descriptive prose is the constant reference to looking. In the opening scenes at the Sarah Siddons award ceremony, as the various characters gather to honour Eve Harrington, Mankiewicz delineates in fine detail the way characters observe, and are observed. This is a world in which what or who you look at, and the manner in which you do so, is of utmost importance. A very particular geometry of looking shapes the way the dressing room scene is written, as Mankiewicz describes the demur dropping of Eve's eyes, Bill's fleeting glances and the eyeing of encouragement from Karen. Further along, Mankiewicz describes Eve admiring herself in a stage mirror, as Margo looks on curiously from the wings. Later, he describes a wordless exchange of knowing looks between Birdie and Margo, as it begins to dawn on the latter that Eve is more than she appears. While the story sets a cracking pace in the screenplay, the world Mankiewicz constructs is one of emotional information exchanged slowly and carefully through facial expression. If wit enables his characters to maintain their personas, and arm themselves against attack, it is their faces that allow them to relate and build trust, misguided as it is, and then, as happens in the last third of the screenplay, to be brutally unmasked.

Yet, the production's wide stage strains to exploit the screenplay's emphasis on intimate observation and emotional exchange. The small groupings of characters are still there, but the watching, looking and listening, as they decide and reflect, and the agency and autonomy such behaviour suggests, are diminished. Instead, van Hove's world is one of constant and instantaneous revelation. From the outset, we the audience are provided with a privileged perspective. In close up we see Margo and Eve ageing, Margo vomiting, and Lloyd and Karen in intimate conversation. So much in van Hove's production is presented under the sign of transparency. Throughout the production, there is a feverish compulsion to display intimate behaviour. These moments seem instantaneous. When the camera operator films Margo vomiting into the toilet bowl during the party, it is immediately transmitted as a video image to the screen above the set. The characters in the scene do not see it: this is a privilege afforded to us, the audience. When Margo peers into her reflection in the dressing room mirror, and her rapidly ageing face is projected onto the screen above, it is in dramatic terms, as a private moment in which her fear unfolds. Yet, it is for us to instantly consume. It affords immediacy rather than distance. And significantly, the algorithmic animation of the face's sudden ageing is done with great speed: Margo's and Eve's faces desiccate within the space of a few seconds. Van Hove clearly references the cinematic close up in these moments. The extreme size of the face, screened above the stage, reminds us how scale and magnification play such an important part in the close up. It has the capacity to dominate and overtake. Yet, at the same time, it provides moments of intimacy, as it offers in stark detail the painful vulnerabilities of these ageing faces. In her study of the historical discourse of the close up, Mary Ann Doane (2003) notes how it is informed by this seemingly inextricable relationship between enormity and

closeness, and detail and totality. However, van Hove has something more in mind than just referencing this seemingly paradoxical nature of the close up. In this production, the screened image is always staged as an analogue to live performance. The audience is constantly offered multiple ways of watching.

Van Hove positions the cameras as surveillance machines, dissolving walls and probing the very minds of characters. Mysteries evaporate under their dispassionate, digital gaze, and the images they broadcast to the screen above. The screenplay's concerns are with disguise and revelation, inner and outer lives, and autonomy and constraint. It is a meditation on the problems of trust, something of particular importance for the US at the time, with the onset of the Cold War, and the House Committee on Un-American Activities newly minted status. If the screenplay explores the dangers of stardom and its production of the fabricated self at the expense of authenticity, the stage production claims transparency as its central motif. The roving cameras take us seamlessly into kitchens, bedrooms and bathrooms. Little is censored for the screen hanging ominously above the stage, as intimate acts of facial cleansing, vomiting and despair are broadcast on it.

In his polemical critique of digital society, Byung Chul Han (2012) argues it has made transparency a cultural dispositif; secrecy, foreignness and otherness are dismantled in its name. Transparency, with the promise of immediate availability of information, removes the need for trust, Han maintains. If we know everyone in advance, there is no need for trust. When transparency prevails, no room for trust exists (p. 44). Van Hove's stage, with its seemingly instantaneous video, offers little ground for trust to be explored. His focus, like Mankiewicz's, is on the face, but the screenplay relies on acts of looking to shape dramatic stories of trust and deceit, told in a teleological manner. In van Hove's production, faces are at times detached from their dramatic world, and projected wide and high, as images under surveillance, or as figures of devastatingly instant transformation.

The intermedial stage

Van Hove's fondness for the theatrical employment of cameras and screens has been well documented (Bennett, 2018; Willinger, 2018). It places him in a tradition of European theatre that, since the early experiments by Vsevolod Meyerhold, has used screened images to challenge the logic of dramatic theatre. As Marvin Carlson (2003) argues, this tradition took on a distinctive shape towards the end of the twentieth century with the work of theatre auteurs such as Frank Castorf and Renee Pollesch, who experimented with simultaneous live and screen performances on stage that challenged traditional staged boundaries. This intermedial tradition has also been associated with what Hans Thiess Lehmann named "postdramatic theatre" (2006), a category of performance he claims refuses the dominance of the dramatic text, instead exploring and challenging the boundaries between performance and audience. Van Hove himself has been associated with this movement (Carlson, 2015). However, while van Hove's *All About Eve* uses various devices and concepts Lehmann claims as postdramatic, such as cameras, screens, and highly kinetic performance (2006), it is not entirely non-mimetic, given its reliance on the dramatic forms of the screenplay. On the contrary, van Hove's production welcomes the dramatic story of Margo, Karen and Eve. It honours its structures and

times, but it does so provisionally. While the dramatic logic of the screenplay is allowed to play out, its pivotal moments in which characters weigh up, determine and decide sit in tension with a world of audio visual immediacy.

Phillip Auslander (2002) famously critiques the relationship between live performance and mediatised forms by arguing that the former cannot be ontologically different from the latter. There is, he claims "a progressive diminution of previous distinctions between the live and the mediatized" (p. 7). More specifically, he argues that mediatization is the "experience to which live performance must refer...and recreate" (p. 30). Van Hove's production, like many others in this current genre of screen to stage adaptation, is an obvious attempt to woo audiences more accustomed to screen entertainment. Fox Stage Productions, a subsidiary of Twentieth Century Fox, which Disney Productions recently bought, has for several years been developing stage adaptations of screen titles they own. In association with Sonia Friedman Productions (SFP), Twentieth Century Fox produced van Hove's production of *All About Eve* for the West End in 2018. Significantly, SFP licensed the screening rights to NT Live prior to the theatre production's premiere. However, van Hove's use of the screenplay and video and screen technologies is clearly far more than a cynical commercial gesture. Nor is it, as I have noted above, a slavish copy of the film. The production explores the very encroachment of mediatization on live performance that Auslander critiques. We do not watch the projections of Margo on screen as a purely cinematic event, but as part of a theatre performance about intrusion and dislocation. As Kattenbeltt (2006) argues, when part of a live performance, video is not only screened, but "also, at the same time, staged" (p. 37). In van Hove's production, the camera operators, screens and projections become theatrical signs.

Ironically, in his screenplay Mankiewicz anticipates Auslander's concerns about media's dominance. When Eve disparages Hollywood and romanticises the stage, Bill responds by arguing for a diverse and democratic definition of theatre. It comes down to "magic", "make believe" and "an audience", he proclaims: "the Theatre's for everybody" (Mankiewicz, 1951/1972, p. 160). This democratic vision is something Marvin Carlson (2003) embraces in his assessment of contemporary theatre's use of video and other media. Instead of the simple absorption of reality by image, or presence by absence, or of life by "liveness", he argues that relations between media and performances can be seen as a continual interplay that offers new ways of watching. Such optics are what van Hove's *All About Eve* offers. Screen and camera technology, scripted performance, lighting and set mechanisation all share the stage. At times they unite to tell a dramatic story about trust and betrayal. At other times, they constellate around a different purpose, to represent and critique a culture of transparency and immediacy.

Given these complexities, the notion of a "single gesture" as a design motif, and "condensing" as a metaphor for adaptation (Trueman, 2017, para 6), feel inadequate. Instead, following on from Carlson, I argue that the production gestures in several different directions. One is towards its dramatic characters, as they navigate the pitfalls of a society so intent on performance and so fearful of the inner life. Another is to the camera operators, and the images they produce, as they peer into and dissolve the private. At times, these disparate forms occur simultaneously. Consider the climactic moment when Eve blackmails Karen in the bathroom of the restaurant. This confrontation is broadcast on to the screen, while at the same time, downstage, Lloyd celebrates with Margo and Bill their engagement. Both scenes are performed as written in Mankiewicz's screenplay, cutting from the restaurant to the bathroom and back again, but van

Hove provides an overlap, or more precisely, a choice. We can watch the "live" telecast of Eve's blackmailing of Karen on screen and the celebration on stage. Two very different modes of performance: one broadcast; one embodied. Together, they offer an expansive experience, rather than a condensed one. The former is an ironic reminder of what the screenplay was partly once designed to do: to show us faces on screens, negotiating and shaping emotion. Yet, this video sequence is also a very different offering, in the way it directs us to join with the camera operators in making transparent this devastating exchange between Karen and Eve.

NT Live Broadcast

That I saw this production in a cinema, courtesy of NT Live, would seem to add weight to Auslander's argument. This was a mediated framing of a theatre performance that itself is dependent on media. The NT Live website boasts that its productions will offer intimacy and immediacy, via techno wizardry. Live broadcasts or replays of theatre productions use "state of the art filming techniques" to deliver "every flicker of emotion" and "sweeping wide shots', "as they happen" (2021). Importantly, claims the website, attendance at one of these events will connect you with a global audience, "sharing every gasp, every laugh, every dramatic moment".

NT Live goes to great lengths to include audience arrivals and reactions in its broadcast, as well as an onscreen introduction from a host and a brief interview with the director, in order to create a semblance of live theatre performance. Did media achieve dominion in this relay broadcast of van Hove's *All About Eve*? The production was performed and filmed, without interruption, before a live audience. The NT Live website notes that actors make no adjustments or allowances for their performance during the recording: it is the positioning of the cameras that produce the required effects. Nor was any postproduction manipulation apparent: the switching from various camera shots was done in situ, during the recording. The broadcast also, at times, included audible reactions from the audience.

These representations of "liveness" indicate the importance NT Live places on fidelity in the broadcast of the stage production. While van Hove made no attempt to reproduce the film, NT Live goes to great lengths to boast a faithful recreation of the stage event. Yet, certain elements of the stage production feel lost. The sheer size of the screen on which images are projected in the production must have dominated London's Noel Coward theatre, as it was no doubt intended to do. The algorithmically ageing faces of Eve and Margo, screened in close up, would have been powerfully felt in the live production, but the effect of this particular ratio was diminished in the NT Live broadcast. So too was the sweeping choreography of overlapping entrances and exits. Furthermore, the production's multimodality, which would have provided live audiences with an opportunity to compare simultaneous live and filmed performances, felt compromised in the cinema. Of course, it is tempting to assume that spectators at the live performance of *All About Eve* would somehow be more active than those watching screens, but as Heidi Liedke (2019) cautions, such a simple dichotomy discounts the many and varied experiences audience members at NT Live events might have. In a National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) survey of NT Live audiences who saw its first broadcast, the National Theatre's production of *Phèdre*, 64% strongly agreed that it opened up

new ways of seeing theatre (Bakshi et al., 2010). Of course, this begs a simple question: how many of those surveyed subsequently attended live theatre?

Conclusion

What becomes of Mankiewicz's screenplay in this production? It remains remarkably intact as a dramatic text, yet its presence on van Hove's stage is conditional. Its dramatic tale of hidden or absent selves is still available, but van Hove's mise en scène is at times purposed for non-dramatic ends; his cameras and screens are not entirely in service to the screenplay. The contorted bodies and faces they produce on screen create a sense of immediacy and transparency that seem averse to Mankiewicz's reflective, autonomous characters. There is no resolution to the disagreement that exists in this production, between Mankiewicz's tightly wound scripted dramatics, and van Hove's unsettling mediated aesthetics. This is the point of the production, I contend, one that an intermedial analysis makes clear. Ironically, the NT Live broadcast, with its emphasis on intimacy and availability, promotes the very "liveness" that the production critiques.

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