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Paratext in Contemporary Theatre Practice

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Abstract

This thesis, Paratext in Contemporary Theatre Practice, proposes a 'paratextual model' as a new model of analysis for contemporary theatre practice, applying the concept of 'paratextuality' established by Gérard Genette. This analytical model enables us to flexibly schematise the central/marginal and the textual/paratextual in the audience's appreciation of the work, capturing boundary-crossing acts within a performance work, whether this is explicitly aimed at by the practitioners or not. Such slippages and fluidity of focus within the work are observed particularly in contemporary performance practice that demands a more directly immersed, participatory role for the audience members.

Chapter 1 details the concept of paratextuality by Genette, discussing its departure from a solely literary concept to an analytical vehicle with a wider applicability beyond literature. Chapter 2 establishes the paratextual approach offers a new way to understand and examine theatrical experiments with marginality. Case studies in later chapters illustrate the manifestation of the paratextual across contemporary performance works of diverse forms, ranging from devised performance and site-specific performance to immersive theatre. The primarily spatial concept of paratext is tested through the case studies of selected performance examples that take diverse formats and situated in disparate physical spaces.

The thesis as a whole demonstrates that a paratextual approach usefully supplements the existing critical discourses on the contemporary theatre practice by providing the vocabulary to discuss seemingly marginal elements of performance that are actually integral to the meaning-making process for theatre makers and their audiences. Beginning from the originally literary concept of paratext, the thesis reinterprets and adapts Genette's paratextual model to offer a valuable perspective which enables us to address both text-based theatre and creative experimentation which are often beyond the verbal, potentially bridging the gap between the performance forms.

Contents

Introduction

> 'the work and the œuvre are always to a greater or lesser extent in progress and that the cessation of this labor, like death itself, is always to some degree accidental'[1]
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> '*watch out for the paratext!*'[2]
>
> — Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*

The 'text' is never a static entity. The reading of the text is made and remade by the reader, renewed at each occasion. This claim may seem applicable only to a reading of the main body of a text; however, the marginal materials and messages at its thresholds are always at play, informing the reader's interpretation of the whole. These peripheral elements of a physical book is what Gérard Genette conceptualises as *paratexts*. Paratexts encompass marginal elements in a book that are subordinate to the main body of the text, such as the title, the table of contents, prefaces, notes and appendices. When approaching the text, Genette argues, the reader has to cross the 'threshold' of these paratexts and in so doing, the reader is unwittingly informed and influenced by the information these marginal elements convey.[3] Paratexts operate 'to *present* it [the text], in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its "reception" and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book'.[4] Although paratexts are always subordinate by definition to the text they support with a purpose of ensuring due interpretation of the text, the paratextual messages must not be disregarded in the reading of the text, since they constitute an essential part of meaning-making, however subtle their signals might be. 'The Death of the Author', a 1967 essay by Roland Barthes, privileges the reader's interpretation of the text over the intention of the author, noting: 'the reader is the very space in which meanings are inscribed, without any being lost, all the citations a writing consists of; the unity of a text is not in its origin, it is in its destination'.[5] The reader is the primary space where the meaning-making takes place and their act of reading is, according to Genette, always under the influence of paratextual information.

In this thesis, *Paratext in Contemporary Theatre Practice*, I apply the concept of paratexts, or paratextuality, to an analysis of contemporary theatre performance by considering

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[1] Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 402.
[2] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 410. Italics in original.
[3] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2.
[4] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 1.
[5] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *The Rustle of Language*, trans. by Richard Howard (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 49–55.

the performance experienced by the audience as the text itself. If the reading of the text in physical books never remains static, then the text of a theatrical performance, which is ephemeral by nature, is arguably even less static, always charged with the possibilities of shifting and renewal. Paratexts, as detailed in the following chapters, are inherently indeterminable in nature, acting as 'a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*'.[6] The concept of paratextuality provides a productive analytical model for theatrical performances in which we may say that a transaction of text between performers and the audience takes place. The 'paratextual model' I propose in this thesis enables us to discuss that space of transaction, which, in the context of theatre, is never limited to verbal or word-based interactions.

This thesis aims to examine the value of the paratextual model in an analysis of contemporary theatrical performance works, especially in performances which demand a more directly immersed, participatory role for their audience. The key research questions that this thesis addresses are as follows: What paratextual force can be observed in contemporary performance works? What does the application of a paratextual model to contemporary performance works reveal about the relationship between the space and the performance that occupies it? And what new perspectives will a paratextual model provide in the context of theatre and performance studies? In particular, how does it supplement existing critical discourses and what opportunities does a paratextual model open up in performance analysis? To fulfil this aim and explore the answers to these research questions, in Chapters 1 and 2 I establish how the concept of paratextuality by Genette remains relevant to both literary and performance analysis and investigate what new analyses are enabled by the paratextual model in the context of theatre and performance studies. An awareness of liminality and an attempt to embrace the marginal are not new ventures in theatrical art; yet the paratextual model enables the discussion of a range of contemporary theatrical practices for which existing critical discourses do not necessarily provide an encompassing critical view. Following this, in Chapters 3 to 5, I conduct an inquiry into a variety of paratextual functions that can be observed in contemporary performance works. This is achieved through case studies of experiential performance pieces premiered in the past decade, between 2009 and 2019. The thesis as a whole demonstrates that a paratextual approach, adapted and developed from Genette's concept of paratextuality, enables us to scrutinise the ways different textual elements of theatrical

[6] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2. Italics in original.

performance function together and how they inform the meaning-making processes of the audience. In preparation to set out the basis of my argument, I firstly dissect the key term for this thesis — 'paratext' — in the following section.

The concept of 'para'

The usefulness of the concept of paratextuality derives from the fact that it enables flexible application that is predicated by its prefix, 'para'. The prefix 'para-', rooted in ancient Greek, originally means 'by the side of, beside', or, 'alongside of, by, past', and 'beyond'.[7] While Genette's study is conducted mainly discussing French literary works, Genette affirmatively quotes J. Hillis Miller's account of what 'para-' denotes in the English language with its root in Greek, '*para*', or ultimately in Indo-European root, '*per*':

> 'Para' is a double antithetical prefix signifying at once proximity and distance, similarity and difference, interiority and exteriority, something inside a domestic economy and at the same time outside it, something simultaneously this side of a boundary line, threshold, or margin, and also beyond it, equivalent in status and also secondary or subsidiary, submissive as of guest to host, slave to master.[8]

Miller further defines 'para' as 'the boundary itself, the screen which is a permeable membrane connecting inside and outside'.[9] This undetermined and porous quality, highlighted by Genette, makes the concept of paratext a subtle analytical tool and provides new perspectives in the analysis of contemporary theatre practice. One of my research questions — which asks what new perspectives a paratextual model may provide — will be explored through case studies of different performance pieces, by determining how specific aspects of performances can function 'paratextually'. I argue that one particularly important aspect is the space, explored in Chapters 3 and 4, with my discussion here guided by another research question which asks what a paratextual model may reveal about the relationship between the space of performance and the event or work that occupies it. When the essence of a performance piece is inseparably connected to the space it inhabits and is created for, the boundary where the performance starts and ends becomes blurred. The concept of the 'para' provides a vocabulary and an opportunity to examine and better understand the exchange that takes place in this encounter.

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[7] *OED*, *Para-* prefix[1]. Etymology.
[8] J. Hillis Miller, 'The Critic as Host' in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. by Harold Bloom and others (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 217–53 (219). Quoted by Genette in *Paratexts* (Footnote 1 in p. 1).
[9] Miller, 'The Critic as Host', p. 219.

This indeterminacy and permeability, however, also constitutes a risk that attaches to a paratexual model. Given the fluidity of paratexts, straddling both the inside and the outside, the very definition of what paratexts are is also inevitably fluid. Although Genette admits that every context potentially serves as a paratext in essence,[10] he cautions against giving in to the indeterminate nature of paratexts and letting their definition expand without limit. In the conclusion of *Paratexts*, he states:

> Inasmuch as the paratext is a transitional zone between text and beyond-text, one must resist the temptation to enlarge this zone by whittling away in both directions. However indeterminable its boundaries, the paratext retains at its center a distinctive and undisputed territory where its "properties" are clearly manifest and which is constituted jointly by the types of elements I have explored in this book, plus some others. Outside of that, we will be wary of rashly proclaiming that "all is paratext".[11]

While channelling analysis through the concept of the paratext makes it possible to pay attention to subtle, yet significant transactions happening at the boundaries of text and beyond-text, at the same time the indeterminacy, permeability and fluidity of the paratext makes this a somewhat delicate tool which calls for scrutiny in definition on each occasion of application. To lay down a basis for my thesis, Chapters 1 and 2 will discuss each paratextual element explained by Genette and how they are applicable to theatrical analysis. The new perspectives enabled by an application of a paratextual model and how it will complement the existing critical discourses will be explored through these chapters. In the following section, I set out a definition of 'text' in the context of theatre, and by extension in the context of the para*text*ual model I propose.

The 'text' in paratext

I am proposing to apply the concept of paratextuality in performance analysis and thus far have discussed the etymological root of 'para'. Yet the word 'text' in the context of this thesis also needs unpicking. Genette begins the discussion of paratextuality by defining text '(very minimally) as a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance.'[12] Genette's analysis of paratext is based around this very literal and literary

[10] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 8.
[11] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 407.
[12] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 1.

idea of 'text', which limits the text and paratext to the verbal articulations or word-based dimensions of physically tangible books. Derived from the Latin which means 'to weave' (*texĕre*), text originally means written or printed words, and '[t]hat portion of the contents of a manuscript or printed book, or of a page, which constitutes the original matter, as distinct from the notes or other critical appendages.'[13] However, the term 'text' has been widely extended to describe those expressions that are not limited to the written or printed words, enabling the discussion of semiotics of visual and intangible art, including theatrical performances.

In *Ways of Seeing* (1972), John Berger argued influentially that the modern experience of perceiving images and paintings had changed dramatically, due to the invention of the camera and the increased reproducibility of images.[14] These developments removed images from their unique physical connection to place and problematized their authorship. What is perceived by modern viewers who read the images is 'a language of images', visual messages constructed by semiotic signs.[15] Hence visual images have become a text whose messages are conveyed in relation to and constantly influenced by the other images/texts surrounding them.[16]

The concept of text as an element of theatre was significantly expanded in the 1980s and 1990s to encompass wider elements than that which is manifested in the written text alone. This conceptual expansion was aligned with the development of a semiotics of theatre. 'Text' in terms of theatrical performance works is complicated by the two different dimensions of the event to which it can refer: on the one hand, the playtext; on the other, the performance. Literary critics, given the chronological precedence of the written text to the performance, 'have usually implicitly or explicitly assumed the priority of the written play over the performance, the latter being more often than not described as a "realization" (actual or potential) of the former.'[17] By contrast, Keir Elam, in *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (1980), presents a semiotic reading of theatrical performance that refutes such assumptions, arguing that the audience attending a theatrical performance 'perceive the performance *as a network of meanings*, i.e., as a *text*'.[18] Elam notes that while the performance text is constrained by the dramatic text in a variety of ways, the dramatic text is also constrained by the performance text, being 'both a *pre*-text and a

[13] *OED*, text, n[1], 2.c.
[14] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books, 1972; repr. London: Penguin Classics, 2008), pp. 7–33.
[15] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, p. 33.
[16] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, p. 29.
[17] Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, 2nd edn (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 190. Originally published in 1980.
[18] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p. 10. Italics in original.

constituent of the performance text'.[19] The relationship between the dramatic text and the performance text is not linear or explained by the priority of one over the other; rather, they mutually inform and are reflected in one another.[20] In Elam's words, the two comprise 'a complex of reciprocal constraints constituting a powerful *intertextuality*.'[21] Based on this principle, therefore, the ephemeral performance of a playtext that an audience experiences should also be read as a text in its own right, as a complex synthesis of meanings that certainly carries a trace of the preceding written text (if any) but is not limited to verbal communication.

Writing later in the 1980s, Martin Esslin in *The Field of Drama* (1987) supports Elam's central claim that the text in theatre is not limited to the verbal, saying that it encompasses 'the entire "texture" of interacting sign systems'.[22] Although Elam would himself criticise Esslin's semiotic analysis in the later edition of *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* for having fallen in a trap of over-simplification,[23] it is important for this thesis to highlight that Esslin acknowledges a significant role played by subconsciously perceived signs and what the audience members bring with them in their meaning-making of theatrical performances.[24] Esslin says that the audience's familiarity with canonical works and established theatrical conventions, as well as thematic and stylistic assumptions brought by the genre, all fundamentally shape their experience of the work.[25] He adds that these consciously perceived signs are synthesised with those perceived unconsciously and culminate in producing the 'overall "meaning" of the drama'.[26] However, Esslin does not go further in his analysis of this '"meaning" of the drama', perceived by individual spectators, nor of the 'subliminally perceived signifiers' that remains 'peripheral to our main focus of attention'.[27] This is probably to avoid, first, going into details that are specific to individual audience members and, second, the risk of indeterminable 'enlargement' that Genette warns against. While what Esslin calls 'subliminally perceived signifiers' are undeniably broad, his examples resonate distinctly with Genette's definitions of paratextuality. Esslin includes, for instance, the lasting and formative impressions made on an audience by set and costume, elements selected and designed with care by practitioners to lend significance to the production, but conventionally considered as

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[19] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p. 31. Italics in original.
[20] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p. 191.
[21] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p. 191. Italics in original.
[22] Martin Esslin, *The Field of Drama: How the Signs of Drama Create Meaning on Stage and Screen* (London: Methuen, 1987; repr. 1988), p. 143.
[23] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, pp. 209–10.
[24] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, pp. 141–53.
[25] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, pp. 143–46.
[26] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, pp. 151–53.
[27] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, pp. 151, 153.

subordinate to character, dialogue and action in the process of meaning-making. Such elements of performance — the 'supporting', or marginal — are precisely those aspects that can be scrutinised, explained and revalued by applying the concept of paratextuality. The paratextual approach to performance analysis, therefore, can help to expand such 'subliminally perceived' elements of performance that Esslin and Elam had already identified as important. As Elaine Aston and George Savona note, semiotic reading of theatrical performances since the 1980s provided 'the key to unlocking theatre from literature' as well as offering 'a way of seeing the dramatic text which furthers our understanding of *how* the text is *made*'.[28] The practice of reading dramatic performances as a layered text or 'sign-system', established by Elam and followed by many, including Esslin, Aston and Savona, marked a departure from traditions of analysis in which the playtext was considered the primary and decisive factor in drama.

Elam's and Esslin's semiotic reading of theatre and Genette's paratextuality in the 1980s were also significantly influenced by the idea of framing conceptualised by Erving Goffman in *Frame Analysis* in 1974. The scope of Goffman's sociological study embraces all situations and events which individuals experience as a form of 'reality', from everyday life and conversation, to games, rituals and highly fictional theatrical performances.[29] A 'frame' for Goffman comprises a set of elements which prescribes the boundaries of a given situation, through which individuals subjectively experience the event.[30] According to Goffman's frame analysis, the meaning of experience is inherently relative; not even the most ordinary event in everyday life can be taken as an unchanging norm, but merely constructs another realm of reality among many other framed activities.[31] In the introduction to his book, Goffman demonstrates what frame analysis is about by drawing on a preface of a book as an example. Prefaces are '[a]ccounts, excuses, apologies designed to *reframe* what follow after them'.[32] He then questions whether comments on prefaces would destabilise the frame set by the very prefaces themselves and recast them again: now that comments on prefaces function as a framing device, are prefaces considered to be written 'in bad faith' merely for the sake of the comments to follow?[33] Despite Goffman's metaphorical use of preface in explaining the process of frame

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[28] Elaine Aston and George Savona, *Theatre as Sign-System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991; repr. 2013), p. 99.

[29] Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986).

[30] Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, p. 10.

[31] Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, pp. 560–64.

[32] Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, p. 16. My italics.

[33] Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, p. 17. However, such reframing can go on endlessly and further relativise the experience, just as there is a danger of overgeneralisation of saying every context serves as paratext.

analysis, the complexity which this textual device is capable of achieving is well captured here, and is later unpicked further by Genette in his dissection of paratextuality. Where two or more situations with sets of principles intersect, however subtle their differences are, a frame emerges. It is such framing devices, or paratexts, that produce the meaning-making processes of the text as well as behaviours of participants in the situation.

Esslin uses the term 'frame' to encompass a range of devices which set the expectation of the audience prior to attending the theatre spectacle.[34] The semiotic reading of drama, therefore, resonates with a paratextual model in the interpretation of a performance at its basis. Examples of devices Esslin names that function as 'frame' in theatrical performance have their equivalents in Genette's paratextual elements: for example, Esslin's 'title and the generic description of the piece' accords with what Genette calls 'genre indication'.[35] A more recent study by Aston and Savona notes the potential significance in meaning-making of what Genette would have called epitext:

> [B]efore we even purchase a ticket for a performance (the sign of a contract between actor and spectator) our expectations of the theatrical event may already have been shaped by pre-publicity, location of venue, knowledge of the text, critical reviews, judgements of friends who have been to see it. All of these factors have a possible bearing on how we shape a meaning from the production.[36]

These paratextual devices that surround and precede the performance text work to inform the audience about the text before they receive it formally and in full, creating expectations. Esslin also adds that earlier in the history of theatre, the functions of such framing devices used to be fulfilled by prologues and epilogues in the form of words spoken by the actors.[37] 'These preliminary, or framing, devices', Esslin states, 'belong to a higher order of sign than any individual signifiers, as they set the initial mood, the level at which all other signs are to be "decoded"'.[38] Yet while Esslin recognises the important influence of these 'framing' devices at the outset of the performance, he disregards the potential of such peripheral devices in their function during or after the performance. However, the marginal aspects of a dramatic performance that are dismissed as social or theatrical conventions, or in Esslin's terms 'a

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[34] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*. Although Esslin refers to Goffman's other works, he does not specifically refer to *Frame Analysis* as the source of inspiration or one of the bases of his writing.
[35] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, p. 54.
[36] Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign-System*, pp. 120–21.
[37] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, p. 55.
[38] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, p. 55.

personal intertextuality' can, I argue, exercise a vital framing function as paratextual elements.[39] In this thesis, while adopting the concept of 'text' as 'a network of meanings'[40] and 'the entire "texture" of interacting sign systems',[41] I emphasise the temporality and the spatiality of interacting theatrical sign systems with the audience's experience at its core. The amalgam of memory, experience and knowledge each audience member brings with them to the performance can operate paratextually to inform the interpretation of the text, and moreover can be shaped by artists as a framing function not necessarily limited to taking place in advance. As we shall see, just as framing is inherently relative, the text also shifts fluidly as it unfolds for the audience.

Paratextuality in theatre texts and performance

The overall structure of this thesis draws two thematic arcs: the paratextual and the spatial. Firstly, this thesis is constructed with the paratextual arc in mind, following the structure of Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, the theoretical basis of the thesis. Genette's work introduces a range of paratexts in the order they typically appear within books, hence in the order the reader normally encounters them as they approach a book and turn the pages to access the text. It starts with the publisher's peritext and the name of the author and is concluded with notes and epitext. In order to echo that structure, my discussion begins with the paratextual element of 'preface' (Forced Entertainment' work in Chapter 2) and ends with 'notes' (Punchdrunk's immersive theatre in Chapter 5), with two chapters in between dealing with 'peritexts' and 'epitexts' in performance. These two chapters, Chapters 3 and 4, apply the concept of paratextuality in performance analysis and discuss how the boundary between peritexts and epitexts is permeable in performance works that are situated in non-theatre spaces. I argue here that these performance works consciously exploit the potential of elements that originally appear as external or peripheral to the 'main' performance text, embracing their ability to function paratextually in shaping the audience's production of meanings.

Secondly, in an effort to encompass the use of physical spaces in contemporary theatre practice as widely as possible, the structure of the thesis also presents a spatial journey arching across the different performance spaces. The innovative potential of performance space has been persistently tested by practitioners throughout the history of theatre, as performance maker

[39] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, pp. 148–49.
[40] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p. 12. Originally in italics.
[41] Esslin, *The Field of Drama*, p. 143.

Andy Field playfully observed in the late 2000s: 'As long as there has been theatre (nay, as long as people have been standing up), there have been performances in locations other than a purpose-built theatre.'[42] Increasingly, productions in the contemporary theatre scene seek their inspiration in non-theatre spaces and incorporate the local geography and history into the work, as I explore in Chapters 3 and 4. The analysis I offer in the thesis begins with Forced Entertainment's works designed for purpose-built theatre spaces (Chapter 2), then moves on to performance situated in the non-theatre indoor space of the hotel (Chapter 3) and non-theatre outdoor space of the city (Chapter 4). Chapter 5 returns focus to an indoor space rigorously adapted for the purpose of a particular and highly distinctive production form, still marking a departure from purpose-built theatre spaces (Chapter 5). Prolific use of and experimentation with an environment that is not originally designed for a theatrical performance presentation is one of the trends observed in contemporary theatre practice. Examining the performance pieces situated in a variety of environments is an integral part of this thesis that demonstrates the applicability of a paratextual model regardless of the genres and formats of the performance works themselves. These two thematic arcs together allow me to cover a sufficiently broad range of performance phenomena to assess the operation of the paratextual in contemporary theatre practice and test the potential of this as a critical model. I aim to illuminate how different paratextual functions are observable in contemporary performance works that inhabit these distinctive orders of space and how these spaces paratextually contribute to the meaning-making processes of the audience. Throughout the thesis, my discussion of the performance works that occupy this diverse range of spaces will seek to reveal the dialogue between space and performance in which each paratextually informs the other.

The performance works I present as chapter case studies are works premiered in the past decade, between 2009 and 2019, for the purpose of keeping the currency of my argument to the contemporary. Due to the experiential nature of the works I mainly focus on in the thesis, my own experience as an audience member, including drawing upon first-person accounts such as a journal entry, will be cited as a point of reference to support a paratextual reading. The personal experience of an audience member is inevitably shaped by a subjective point of view; however, those performance works I discuss as key examples invite the audience to participate actively in shaping the experience by engaging in the dialogue with the performer, making individual choices in the route they take, and making subjective sense of the environment they navigate

[42] Andy Field, '"Site-Specific Theatre"? Please Be More Specific', *The Guardian*, 6 February 2008 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2008/feb/06/sitespecifictheatrepleasebe> [accessed 30 November 2020].

themselves. In *The Emancipated Spectator*, Jacques Rancière reflects upon the active role increasingly attributed to the theatre spectators in contemporary theatre. Rancière argues that the spectator 'observes, selects, compares, interprets' what she sees and 'participates in the performance by refashioning it in her own way', and that '[t]hey are thus both distant spectators and active interpreters of the spectacle offered to them.'[43] The audience members are not merely a collective of passive viewers of the spectacle, Rancière shows; rather, they individually engage with active meaning-making of the performance as they experience it. Furthermore, the majority of examples discussed in this thesis invites the audience members to active participation not only as interpreters of the performance text, but as contributors who help generate the meaning of that text, since they are placed in the midst of the performance and become a shaping part of it. In this context, an audience member's account and interpretation of a performance work — however (necessarily) subjective — provides legitimate and valuable insight, especially for modes of practice that explicitly foreground experiential processes.

Within this thesis I use this understanding of audience participation as part of my methodological and analytical approach by including myself as a Spectator-Participant-Researcher, through first-person narratives, at select moments in my analysis. Using the first-person narrative as one means of developing a scholarly argument is supported by recent development in the field of ethnographic research. Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh observes an increasing use of the first-person narrative voice in ethnographic research in sociology especially since the early 2010s.[44] Reflexivity, which used to be deemed a problematic stance that can 'undermine the authority of the ethnographer' as well as the subject's voice, has been revalued as a positive component that may help to advance the argument by enabling reflection, drawing on first-hand experience, and leading to insights that would be difficult or impossible to access otherwise.[45] In the context of analysing participatory performance, reflections on direct involvement in the event situation and the decision-making processes this entails can similarly be a valuable tool. Another concept that supports inclusion of personal audience experience is the term coined by Deirdre Heddon, Helen Iball and Rachel Zerihan, 'SPaR', or Spectator-Participation-as-Research.[46] These scholars define their participation in one-to-one

[43] Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, trans. by Gregory Elliot (London: Verso, 2009; repr. 2011), p. 13. Originally published in French as *Le Spectateur émancipé* (Paris: La Fabrique, 2008).
[44] Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, 'The Reflexive Turn: The Rise of First-Person Ethnography', *Sociological Quarterly*, 54.1 (2013), 3–8 <https://doi.org/10.1111/tsq.12004>.
[45] Venkatesh, 'The Reflexive Turn', pp. 5–6.
[46] Deirdre Heddon, Helen Iball, and Rachel Zerihan, 'Come Closer : Confessions of Intimate Spectators in One to One Performance', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 22.1 (2012), 120–33 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2011.645233>.

performances as that of 'well practised participants in the circuit of exchange and desire that functions as the architecture for One to One performance' and thus argue that their personal accounts of or perspectives upon such performance constitute a valid point of reference.[47] For highly participatory performances, the audience are invited to become part of the performance and 'the boundary between those who act and those who look; between individuals and members of a collective body' is blurred.[48] An audience member can be an observer and an interpreter of the text while physically located in the performance space at the same time, contributing to the text as an integral part of it. Therefore, my own personal experience and the first-person narrative based on it constitute one possible and valid angle from which to examine the performance work, although my experience will differ from that of other fellow audience members in a variety of ways. While I acknowledge the partiality of a first-person account, this thesis uses personal audience experience as one of the potential readings of performance texts, hence as a research source amongst others that can be drawn upon in building an argument.

The chapter structure of this thesis is as follows. Chapter 1, 'The paratextuality of Gérard Genette', elaborates on the concept of paratextuality by detailing Genette's definition of paratextuality and the functionality of individual paratextual elements. This chapter explores the relevance of Genette's concept of paratextuality and the new perspectives the paratextual model provides in the context of theatre and performance. Here, I provide examples of paratexts in theatrical performance alongside Genette's literary examples, anticipating the fuller development that comes with the case studies in later chapters. I also discuss the application of paratextuality beyond literature, including recent updates and adaptations of this concept.

Chapter 2, 'Paratext and Theatre', provides an overview of the ways in which paratextuality, or a conscious privileging of 'marginality' both in terms of text and performance, has been manifested, explored and experimented with a theatrical context since radical experimentation in the 1960s. I discuss Jerzy Grotowski's 'paratheatre', Alan Kaprow's Happenings and Richard Schechner's 'environmental theatre' as key practices that demonstrated an awareness of the potential of liminality in theatre and aspired to holistic audience experience. This chapter is also informed by the framework of 'postdramatic theatre', established by Hans-Thies Lehmann, and proposes how a distinctive perspective enabled by a paratextual approach may supplement existing critical discourses. The chapter considers the postdramatic theatre's

[47] Heddon, Iball, and Zerihan, 'Come Closer : Confessions of Intimate Spectators in One to One Performance', p. 122.
[48] Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, p. 19.

departure from dramatic representation towards an emphasis on processes in and of performance, and in showing the relationship between the postdramatic and the paratextual model, a development in the use of intertitles in performance presents a good example. Intertitles in the dramatic text which indicate acts and scenes are not usually designed to be seen or heard in performance, as Genette himself observes that playtexts intended for oral delivery have difficulty in indicating the presence of certain paratexts, such as intertitles.[49] Divisions and breaks in dramatic texts, which could be marked by verbal intertitles in literature, tend to be tacitly signalled in performance by theatrical conventions such as black-outs, the changing of the scenography and the rise and fall of curtains. However, experimentation with those conventions can be found in the mid-twentieth century in works by Bertolt Brecht, who is known for his use of intertitles that provide an effective summary of the scene in order to create his intended alienation effect. For instance, the first scene of *Mother Courage and her Children* (1939) is preceded by the following text: 'Spring 1624. The protestant king of Sweden invades catholic Poland. Recruiters for the Swedish general Oxenstjerna search in Dalarna for soldiers. The Merchant, Anna Fierling, who goes by the name Mother Courage loses a son.'[50] This text is designed to be presented directly in the theatre, not only to be incorporated within the published text, so that the audience can engage critically with the subject explored and avoid being carried away emotionally by the action. Caryl Churchill's *This is a Chair* (1999) presents a contemporary example of this enacted intertitle: the author articulates in the playtext that the title of each scene must be projected, shown or narrated.[51] *This is a Chair*, however, displays further experimentation, since the intertitles such as 'The War in Bosnia' or 'Pornography and Censorship' do not seemingly match the action that follows. This discrepancy creates another layer of meaning in juxtaposition with the otherwise banal scenes, enabling the audience to critically examine what the distance between the title and the scene could possibly signify. The ways in which a paratextual approach might support and supplement existing critical discourses such as postdramatic theatre will be further explained in Chapter 2, where the work of Forced Entertainment is cited as an example *par excellence* that illustrates the paratextual elements operating in performance and demonstrates the value of this analytical model.

The latter chapters of the thesis, Chapters 3, 4 and 5, undertake case studies of selected experimental theatre practice of the past decade. Chapters 3 and 4, titled 'Paratexts and

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[49] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 295.
[50] Bertolt Brecht, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, trans. by Tony Kushner (London: Methuen Drama, 2009), p. 7.
[51] Caryl Churchill, *This Is a Chair* (New York: Nick Hern Books, 1999).

Performance Space' I and II, focus on the ways in which public and semi-public spaces interact with the performance that occupies the space, informed by Henri Lefebvre's concept of space, the semiotic understanding of space by Michel de Certeau and Marc Augé's concept of non-places. Chapter 3 focuses on performance works designed to be performed in the functioning hotel space, where the external elements of the locale are admitted to inform and embellish the text. This chapter enquires into how the hotel space — one that is heavily encoded with specific rules, functions and significances — informs these performance works paratextually, and highlights the creative opportunities that space and performance might each bring to the other. Chapter 4 examines performance walks in the city space, where physical walls marking the defining boundaries of the event are no longer present. In these works, elements that initially appear marginal are shown to become central to the meaning-making processes of the mobile audience, both accidentally and by design. This chapter explores how the city, as a text that is incessantly overwritten paratextually, distinctively constructs performance works. Furthermore, I show how a performance text 'on the move' can interact with the city to enhance the meaning of the performance.

Chapter 5 investigates Punchdrunk's practice of immersive promenade performance, where I argue that multitudinous of fragmented pieces of information function as 'notes' to the text of performance, with that 'text' constantly withheld from the audience, consciously complicating the meaning-making process. In recent years, the practice of prefacing the performance 'proper' with smaller framing acts or teasers has become more prevalent with these prefacing events or elements acting as paratexts that guide the audience, implicitly or explicitly, as to how they should experience 'the performance'. Similarly, the use of participatory props for audience members, such as masks, have become popular paratextual devices to frame theatrical performances. I explore these practices through an analysis of the production of *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable*. This final chapter investigates how the paratextual is engrained in the structure of Punchdrunk's works as a propelling force for audience participation, while examining if the audience's accumulating fragmented paratexts on their journey would indeed allow them to access the text of Punchdrunk's works.

To summarise, this thesis demonstrates how a paratextual analysis helps us better understand contemporary experimental performance practices in all their fullness and across theatrical genres whose languages constantly seek to move beyond the verbal in an effort to offer new modes of experience to its audience. The focus of this thesis is centred on a paratextual reading of experimental theatrical performances which significantly rely on building

meaning by means beyond verbal articulation. As signalled in the attention my analysis pays to questions of space, the paratextual model I propose and detail in this thesis does not limit the application of paratext to verbal communication within a performance, such as instructions given at the outset of the work, or tangible subordinate texts, such as programme booklets. While these ephemera also function as paratexts and are included in my analysis, the innovation of this model is that it embraces the full extent of elements that the audience experiences in association with a performance — however seemingly minor, peripheral or scattered — and recognises their shaping role in forming interpretation and critique. In the wake of the increasing popularity of experimental and participatory performances, I argue that paratextual analysis is an important and necessary tool for understanding how an audience's experience of such works is framed. The thesis concludes by considering the further potential of the paratextual model with application to a wider range of theatrical works. The paratextual model, I argue, can be a productive and provocative critical tool not only for the analysis of avant-garde practice, but as a means of understanding the layered operation of all forms of theatrical performance.

Chapter 1: The paratextuality of Gérard Genette

This chapter lays the foundations to my argument by detailing the concept of paratextuality by Gérard Genette with an emphasis on the elements I discuss in the case studies. The text — whether conceived in writing, as performance, for the screen, or taking any other form of material culture — has become understood as always already multiple, rather than a singular, clearly boundaried entity. As Barthes says, both etymologically and metaphorically, the text is 'a tissue, a woven fabric' in which traces of plural existing texts are already present.[1] Every text as a cultural product, therefore, needs to be read and understood in relation to other texts. One of the key concepts that shapes this form of analysis is that of paratext. In order to discuss what paratextual force can be observed in contemporary performance works and what new perspective a paratextual model may bring to the analysis of those performance, I firstly discuss Genette's definition of paratextuality, individual paratextual elements and their functions observed by Genette in literary works. This section scrutinises how each paratextual element is defined by Genette, what function they perform and their potential value when applied to performance analysis. Wherever possible I refer to equivalent examples in contemporary theatre performance to anticipate the discussion in later chapters.

This is followed by the section which explores the application of paratext to the art form beyond Genette's formulation, such as the practice of periodical publication, films, digital media, fan fiction and paintings. While flexibility is one of the distinctive features of the concept of paratextuality, applying this concept to wider art forms with a variety of format inevitably calls for adjustments in its definition. Here, I conduct a review of existing scholarly attempts at redefinition of and expansion to the concept of paratext, using Dorothee Birke's and Birte Christ's work on digitised narrative as a guidance.[2] Finally, I establish the validity of an application of paratext to an analysis of contemporary performances, where the audience display distinctive status from that of the reader of literary works. The audience who are physically present in the same space where the performance as text unfolds are not, as I show, simply on the receiving end of the text and paratexts; rather, their active engagement with the performance

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[1] Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text', *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), p. 159.

[2] Dorothee Birke and Birte Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative: Mapping the Field', *Narrative*, 21.1 (2013), 65–87 <https://doi.org/10.1353/nar.2013.0003>.

and their very co-presence in the space may qualify them as collaborators, hence as generators of paratexts themselves.

Definition of paratext

Paratextuality is one of five types of 'transtextuality' defined by Genette in *Seuils*, first published in 1987.[3] Genette uses the wider term, 'transtextuality', as a way to scrutinise texts in relation to other texts, signifying 'the textual transcendence of the text'.[4] Genette further classified transtextuality, which largely overlaps with what is commonly referred to as 'intertextuality' by many other critics, into five categories: intertextuality, paratextuality, metatextuality, hypertextuality and architextuality.[5] Genette's definitions of these five types of transtextuality are found in the second book of his triptych on this subject, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, which followed *The Architext: An Introduction*.[6] I will briefly outline Genette's five types of transtextuality before discussing paratexuality, which will be the focus of this thesis. Given the complexity and detail of Genette's discussion of paratextuality, this chapter will largely focus on the works of this single author.

'Intertextuality' is the first type of transtextuality examined by Genette, defined as 'the actual presence of one text within another', such as quotes and plagiarism in which another text is explicitly summoned within one text.[7] Genette's definition is far more restrictive than the commonly employed definition, since the 'intertextuality' referred to by other thinkers is often explained as the meanings observed within a text in relation to other literary or cultural texts.[8]

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[3] Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Seuil, 1987).

[4] Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p. 1. Originally published in French in 1982. See footnote 4.

[5] The concept of 'intertextuality' has been interpreted and used in different ways since it was coined by Julia Kristeva in 1966 and detailed in her *Séméiôtiké* (Paris: Seuil, 1969). In *Palimpsests* (1997) Genette names Michael Riffaterre as the major scholar who elaborates the study in intertextuality after Kristeva and Genette argues that Riffaterre's scope of intertextuality is so broad that it overlaps with almost the entire area which Genette calls transtextuality. Genette also acknowledges Harold Bloom's study of 'influence' as 'intertextual' in Genette's sense (*Palimpsests*, pp. 1–3).

[6] The trilogy of transtextuality by Genette appeared in the order of *The Architext*, *Palimpsests* and *Paratexts*. Gérard Genette, *The Architext: An Introduction* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; Oxford: University of Califolnia Press, 1992) was originally published in French as *Introduction à l'architexte* (Paris: Seuil, 1979); *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* as *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1982); and *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) as *Seuils* (Paris: Seuil, 1987).

[7] Genette, *Palimpsests*, p. 2.

[8] The idea of intertextuality originates from the work by Ferdinand de Saussure in the twentieth-century linguistics, and developed by Mikhail Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva, and Roland Barthes before Genette works on transtextuality from an open structuralist approach.

The term ‘intertextuality’ is now well established, continuously developed by a wide range of theorists since it was first coined, with its interpretation and function varying depending on the contexts in which it is used.[9] Genette’s scrutinising of textual transcendence resulted in separating intertextuality into three categories of ‘intertextuality’ in a narrower sense, ‘hypertextuality’, and ‘architextuality’, among which the latter two will be briefly described below.

‘Metatextuality’, Genette’s third type of transtextuality after ‘paratextuality’ as the second, refers to the relationship better known as ‘commentary’ upon texts. Critical essays that deal with a literary work inevitably involve this relationship with the text which they are analysing. Although Genette uses the term metatextuality he states that it is not the focus of his study because it would require a more comprehensive understanding of literary criticism.[10] The fourth, ‘hypertextuality’, is scrutinised in *Palimpsests* and defined as ‘any relationship uniting a text B [the *hypertext*] to an earlier text A [the *hypotext*], upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary’.[11] According to Graham Allen, hypotexts are what is commonly referred to as an ‘inter text’ because they are ‘a text which can be definitely located as a major source of signification for a text’.[12] The practice of hypertextuality includes pastiche, parody, and caricature; thus it is the reference to a particular text which exists before the text in question. For example, Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966) is a hypertext which reveals the diegetic world of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (hypotext) as a backdrop, and which loosely evokes Beckettian works, particularly *Waiting for Godot*.[13] ‘Architextuality’ is the fifth type of transtextuality and ‘the most abstract and most implicit of all’, studied in detail in *The Architext*.[14] It is defined as ‘the entire set of general or transcendent categories […] from which emerges each singular text’, namely, the literary genre of a text.[15] Where hypertextuality references another specific and singular text, architextuality refers to the ‘relationship of inclusion that links each text to the various types of discourse it belongs to’, for

[9] Kristeva’s intertextuality addresses allusion and influence between two or more texts, whereas Riffaterre extends the concept more widely as a meaning-making process of literary reading. Both Kristeva’s and Riffaterre’s concepts include Genette’s intertextuality in a restrictive sense (*Palimpsests*, pp. 1–3).
[10] Genette, *Palimpsests*, p.4.
[11] Genette, *Palimpsests*, p. 5. Italics in original.
[12] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 109.
[13] Genette, *Palimpsests*, pp. 292–93.
[14] Genette, *Palimpsests*, p. 4.
[15] Genette, *Palimpsests*, p. 1.

example pointing to ways in which the text refers to the discourse of tragedy, of comedy, or of the novel.

'Paratextuality', the focus of this thesis, is the last of Genette's five types of transtextuality (although it is placed second within Genette's own schema). While the other four types of transtextuality describe the relationships between two or more texts, and the functions of these relationships, the concept of paratextuality addresses liminal — in a sense, subliminal — textual devices which the reader is unlikely to register consciously yet is likely to be influenced by unwittingly. Paratextuality is used by Genette to encompass those elements that give unity to a text, that bind a text into a physical book, and that help and guide the reader to interpret the text within a book: thus paratextuality includes titles, prefaces, forewords, epigraphs, blurbs, notes and more other subsidiary elements surrounding the main text of a book. *Seuils*, the third volume of Genette's trilogy of transtextuality, translated into English in 1997 under the title of *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, sees the author conduct his most expansive and detailed study on functions of paratextuality.

In *Paratexts*, Genette elaborates on categorising paratextual elements, labelling them according to their characteristics. The characteristics include the location of whether they are within a book (*peritext*) or outside it (*epitext*), the temporal situation of whether they emerge before (*prior*), at the same time (*original*), after (*later*) or much later (*delayed*) than the original publication of the first edition, or even after the author's death (*posthumous*), and the illocutionary forces or messages they convey, such as the *intention* or *decision* of the author, genre indication (*commitment*) or *advice* or *command* from the author. Genette employs spatial metaphors such as a 'threshold', a 'zone' and a 'fringe' for understanding paratext, appropriate for examining the space where the text and the reader meet. Here, he conceptualises and provides necessary terms to discuss marginal elements of a book — the paratext — which not only gives material cohesion to a book but also functions as part of the reader's meaning-making processes.

Defining paratexts is inherently challenging, as Genette acknowledges, because they belong neither to the inside nor the outside of the text. The way Genette conducts his analysis suggests a paratextual study can only be conducted *a posteriori*, through symptomatic analysis of each occurrence. Indeed, he asserts that '[t]he function of the paratext […] must be brought into focus inductively, genre by genre and often species by species'.[16] Moreover, Genette

[16] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 13.

precisely states that 'just as the presence of paratextual elements is not uniformly obligatory, so, too, the public and the reader are not unvaryingly and uniformly obligated'.[17] Thus, in general, not all paratextual elements are necessarily in operation in one book, nor is there a guarantee that messages conveyed by paratextual elements are received by the reader, because of the paratext's liminal nature. The messages and functions of a paratextual element are likely to vary at every occurrence — one may not necessarily read a preface or notes to supplement one's reading, for example. The parameters of paratext are just as elusive as the influence the reader unwittingly receives from the paratextual elements in the production of meaning.

Paratextuality is therefore inherently unstable, and it is impossible to establish steadfast principles for a deductive analysis of its elements. Genette therefore develops his analysis on the basis of examples of paratextual phenomena gathered from a wide variety of works of European, especially French, literature.[18] A paratextual element, for Genette, is a liminal aspect of a book, situated spatially and temporally in relation to the text, which is 'the conveyor of the commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author'[19] and which is 'often […] itself a text: if it is still not *the* text, it is already *some* text'.[20] Genette commences his discursive journey into the realm of paratextuality with this flexible definition and a series of classifications for temporal (prior, original, later and delayed), spatial (peritexts and epitexts), and situational aspects (*authorial* and *allographic*, *official* and *unofficial*, for example). Such a flexible definition derives from the ambiguous characteristics of paratext itself; however, the capacity to accommodate a variety of liminal textual aspects not only opens up the opportunity for analysing literary texts and prints from a new perspective, but also provides a wider applicability beyond literature, as will be further discussed later in this chapter.[21]

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[17] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 4.

[18] Genette predominantly uses literature, particularly European novels of the nineteenth and twentieth century, as examples for his analysis and discussion of paratextuality. However, wherever possible, he traces back the origin of paratextual elements, and illustrates the practice and evolution of the paratextual elements through literary history.

[19] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2.

[20] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 7. Italics in original.

[21] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 405–06. Genette admits in his conclusion that in his analysis, he omits three relevant paratextual aspects: translation, serial publication and illustration. These are respectively expected to be such prolific areas, Genette writes, that the analyses of them require as much knowledge and attention as that required for his work on *Paratexts*.

Paratexts in Literature

The diverse paratextual elements Genette addresses in *Paratexts* are illuminated by multiple examples that collectively demonstrate the different functions and meanings which each form of paratext can convey. Genette further categorises paratexts into two parts, depending on its location in relation to the text. Those liminal aspects of a book which exist 'around the text and […] within the same volume' are called 'peritext', as opposed to 'epitext', which are 'at least originally, located outside of the book, generally with the help of the media (interviews, conversations) or under cover of personal communications (letters, diaries, and others)'.[22] The paratextual elements are treated in *Paratexts* in roughly the same order as the elements typically appear within a book, therefore, according to their distribution. Additionally, paratexts can be considered in terms of their temporal aspects, for example, with reference to the intentions of the author, or subsequently, those of the publishers.[23]

Here, a summary of Genette's paratexts is given, with particular emphasis on the elements that are most applicable to theatrical performance and that will be further examined in this thesis. In order to elucidate the functions of each element, brief examples are given, some from Genette's study and others which anticipate my own analysis.

Titles

'Titles' are arguably the paratextual element which almost no reader can avoid encountering when approaching a text. As Genette states, 'if the text is an object to be read, the title is an object to be circulated', and a title is one of the first points of contact with the text for the reader, along with the name of the author.[24] Titles enable the reader to acknowledge a text through a publisher's catalogues or a library's catalogues, by word of mouth and, of course, on the book's cover and the title page within.

[22] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 4–5.
[23] Temporal aspects relate to when a paratextual element arises: for example, whether on publication of the first edition, in the subsequent edition, or posthumously.
[24] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 75.

Genette divides the functions of titles into two: 'thematic' and 'rhematic'.[25] Thematic titles communicate 'what one talks about'.[26] A 'literal title', such as *Madame Bovary* or *War and Peace*, directly signifies the theme and the central subject of the narrative; alternatively, a title can represent the subject matter in a symbolic way, as in Stendahl's *Le Rouge et le Noir* [The Red and the Black].[27] Rhematic titles, by contrast, indicate the type of text; the titles which represent the genre of the text are categorised in this type, for example, *Poems*, *Essays*, *Memoirs*, and *Autobiography*. Titles which refer to purely formal features are also considered rhematic (for example, *Decameron* [Ten-Day Event] by Boccaccio or *Écrits* [Writings] by Lacan).[28] However, the status of titles is not completely static, since the recycling and imitation of existing titles can transform a thematic title into a rhematic one. Titles such as 'Sequel to…' or 'New…' followed by the title of an existing literary work, Genette suggests, make the original title nothing but a sign which indicates the book they mention, removing any thematic meaning originally attached to it. Imitated titles, whether of a particular title, of the style or of the convention of certain genres, can also indicate genre without naming it. For example, titles with a single word of the name of the hero can be easily associated with tragedy (*Iphigénie* by Jean Racine) and the dramatised characteristics as titles suggest comedy (*Le Misanthrope* [The Misanthrope] by Molière).[29] This connotative function of titles is closely related to hypertextuality (parody or pastiche), and the indication of genre is the realm of architextuality. Titles, at the very threshold of the book, already exercise an influence on the reader, identifying and describing what it is, carrying a connotation, and tempting the reader to approach the text.

The function of the title can be more complicated when individually published works are eventually gathered into a larger unity as a series, for example, Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du Temps perdu* [In Search of Lost Time].[30] The author originally conceived of the novel as one published volume without paragraph indentation, yet it soon proved inevitable that

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[25] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 55–57. Prior to the discussion of 'thematic' and 'rhematic', Genette names each part of the titular device as 'title', 'subtitle', and 'genre indication', based on the debate between Leo Hoek and Claude Duchet. It is explained using *Zadig ou La destinée, Histoire Orientale* [*Zadig or Destiny, An Oriental Tale*] by Voltaire as an example: *Zadig* (title), *ou La destinée* (subtitle), and *Histoire Orientale* (genre indication).

[26] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 78–85.

[27] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 85.

[28] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 86–89.

[29] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 89–91. These are called *connotative titles* by Genette, which represent the 'echoes that provide the text with the indirect support of another text, plus the prestige of cultural filtration'. The connotative values can hardly be systematically categorised, and thus require individual examination.

[30] It was firstly translated as *Remembrance of Things Past*, in the first English translation, taking the phrase from Shakespeare's *Sonnet* 30. The U.S. version in print today still retains this title.

it would be published as a series of multiple volumes.[31] It was proposed that it should be published as a diptych and then triptych when it was reissued in 1913, and it was further divided into five parts in 1918, then finally into seven volumes, which is the version that the contemporary reader has access to today. The Grasset edition of Proust's work published in 1913 in three volumes already bore the overarching title as we know it today, *À la recherche du Temps perdu*; however, this was printed in a smaller type font on its cover above the volume title, thus the primary information the reader of the time accessed was the title of each volume, such as *Du côté de chez Swann* [The Way by Swann's, or Swann's Way]. The overarching title, originally secondary to the volume titles in the Grasset edition, was treated differently in the subsequent editions, sometimes as the title and other times as the subtitle. Since the authoritative Pléiade edition in 1954 gave priority to the general title as the only titular element appearing on the external presentation of the volumes, the volume titles have since become the equivalent of secondary titles or subtitles.[32]

This particular example is used by Genette to show that readers of different generations have significantly different perceptions of Proust's work. While those who accessed the three-part edition saw three independent novels making up a larger narrative, later generations recognise it as an epic novel consisting of seven parts. These changes to the overarching title and volume titles over time, dictated by publishing conventions, may seem only a minor aspect in an interpretation of the entire novel. Since Proust originally planned this novel as one volume, today's arrangement which stresses the continuity of the seven parts may be closer to the authorial intention. On the other hand, Genette suggests that Proust gradually became 'intrigued with the notion of division and paratextual proliferation' with a growing awareness that the subdivision and intertitles support the structural unity of his long novel, although his idea was not fully adopted by the publisher.[33] Whether it reflects the author's intention or not, encountering a literary series which has smaller units or an independent artwork which makes up a larger narrative with other works can open up different interpretive possibilities for the reader. In this case, while the former implies a strong sense of continuity among the sections,

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[31] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 62–64.

[32] The 1954 Pléiade edition was published in three volumes, each containing two or more sections: Volume I (*Du côté de chez Swann - À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*), II (*Le Côté de Guermantes - Sodome et Gomorrhe*) and III (*La Prisonnière - La Fugitive - Le Temps retrouvé*). The titles of the seven volumes are undermined by the overarching title.

[33] Gérard Genette, 'The Proustian Paratexte', trans. by Amy G. McIntosh, *SubStance*, 17.2 (1988), 63–77. Both Proust's initial intention of having no division and his later idea of having prolific divisions were countered and neutralised by the editors.

the latter emphasises the independence of each section and allows more fluidity in the reading of multiple volumes.

The Trilogy, by the British writer-performer Michael Pinchbeck, a series of performance pieces conceived across 2011 to 2013, usefully illuminates these issues of overarching title versus volume titles in the context of contemporary theatre. *The Trilogy* consists of *The Beginning*, *The Middle*, and *The End*, and is performed in this order when it is presented as *The Trilogy*. However, *The End* was conceived first in 2011 to mark the artist's last appearance in front of the audience, while *The Beginning*, premiered in 2012, has been toured extensively as an independent performance piece; finally, *The Middle* was made in 2013.

The Beginning is a performance loosely based on the text of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which takes the form of a rehearsal.[34] This is marked by the calling of times by Pinchbeck at the stage manager's desk displayed on stage: it begins with 'an hour till the show' at the start of the performance and ends with the final call. The performance is concluded at the very moment when the promised 'show' is about to begin, which leaves the audience with their expectations suspended. With a crafted fragmental narrative about the beginning of a show, an acting career and a relationship, this performance piece on its own can be compared to the act of opening a bracket which is never to be closed. Therefore, the title *The Beginning* represents what this performance piece is about, and thus, it operates thematically.

When *The Beginning* is performed as a part of *The Trilogy*, however, the thematic function of the title becomes less predominant.[35] Within *The Trilogy*, *The Beginning* is directly followed by *The Middle*, which takes place in the foyer during what is supposed to be the interval, starring Pinchbeck's own father. The audience are encouraged to move to the foyer from the theatre auditorium by the ushers to see a sort of sequel to 'the beginning'. Here, the suspension of lingering at the beginning, sustained throughout and even after in the case of the independent showing of *The Beginning*, is lost. It must have already 'begun' somehow, since it reaches 'the middle'. When performed as part of *The Trilogy*, the fact that *The Beginning* only makes up a third of the whole becomes clearer, and the rhematic aspect of the title is emphasised. The thematic aspect of this title, which embodies the piece and lends to its aesthetic, is undermined by the overarching title: *The Beginning* becomes merely the first of the

[34] Michael Pinchbeck, *The Beginning*, premiered in 2012. Attended on 25 January 2013, Lantern Theatre, Sheffield, the UK.
[35] Michael Pinchbeck, *The Trilogy*. Attended on 30 January 2014, Lincoln Performing Arts Centre, Lincoln, UK.

three units of *The Trilogy*, and the presence of the other two elements of the trilogy foregrounds the status of the piece in relation to those, rather than in its own right. Thus, this seemingly minor difference of a paratextual information, whether the title carries the thematic or rhematic function is closely connected to the way the audience encounter the piece. The presence of and the immediate connection with the other two parts, or the lack thereof, to some extent dictate how the audience appreciate *The Beginning*, either as the first part of the triptych, or a piece about the idea of beginning but which does not necessarily begin the trilogy.

Prefaces

A 'preface' can be one of the most influential elements in guiding the reader's interpretation, although inclusion of this is never obligatory, unlike the name of the author or the title. Genette testifies to its importance by devoting approximately a third of *Paratexts* to an analysis of prefatorial situations and the functions of prefaces. According to Genette's definition, a preface is 'every type of introductory (preludial or postludial) text, authorial or allographic, of a discourse produced on the subject of the text that follows or precedes it'.[36] Genette's understanding of prefaces, therefore, includes 'postface' which appears after the text, at the end of a book, as well as preambles which appear before the text. A preface can function in a variety of ways, for instance, to instruct the reader as to the spirit in which the text should be read, or more pragmatically, the order in which this should be done. Alternatively, it can elaborate upon the author's intentions in writing the text. A preface can also be a place for accounts of the authenticity or truthfulness of the text, a place for screening the reader by addressing itself to a particular group of readers, and a place for making an implicit contract with the reader about the fictive status of the text.

The practice of including prefatorial materials can be traced back to the ancient Greek epic poems and historical texts like *The Iliad* and *Histories*, according to Genette.[37] At that time, the prefatorial functions were usually performed by the opening lines of the text rather than a section independent from the body of the text as in modern paratexts. As Genette explains, *The Iliad* opens with an invocation of the Muse, an announcement of the subject to establish the narrative to begin, while *Histories* announces the name of the author and the title of the book. Much later in medieval romance, it became common for prefatorial sections to

[36] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 161.
[37] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 163–70.

name their source texts in order to guarantee the authority of the work and ensure its trustworthiness. A preface can take an epistolary form, as in the authorial prefatory letter which accompanies Edmund Spencer's *The Faerie Queene* (1589). While it is addressed to a specific individual, Sir Walter Raleigh, and the author maintains his humble attitude throughout, in this letter Spencer explains the future plan for the development of his work as well as the allegory intended in each of the three volumes, having the general reader in mind who would benefit from 'great light […] for the better understanding'.[38] This original authorial preface provides the rationale behind the choice of historical figure, saves the work from being a narrative 'which otherwise may happily seeme tedious and confused', and makes an excuse of his work not following a chronological progression.[39] On the other hand, the first edition of collected plays by William Shakespeare, known as the First Folio and which was published posthumously in 1623, is equipped with an allographic posthumous preface by the author's actor friends, which is addressed '[t]o The Great Variety of Readers'.[40] The major part of this preface is general commendation of Shakespeare's work for which the reader should '[r]eade him, therefore; and againe, and againe', yet it tries to convince the reader to purchase a volume foremost.[41] Therefore, its function perhaps is more similar to that of a please-insert, or the commendation found on the back cover with the purpose of promoting the work.

In modern literature, the preface became further complicated in its status and function along with the development of the convention of publication. Since it is renewable with each edition, a preface characteristically has a certain immediacy for the reader of the day and directly intermediates between the text and the reader. Some authors — and some editors — prefer to retain an older preface in later editions, whether situating these in the text by chronological or by reverse chronological order. Chronologically displayed prefaces invite the reader to trace the development of the author's idea over time, while placing the most recent at the beginning arguably allows the author or editor to push the earlier prefaces closer to the text, by implication reascribing these from the immediate and fluid paratext to the relatively static and stable text. In addition, the location of preface may also affect its status: a prefatorial section of a book (paratext) can later become a chapter of a collection (text), and an essay originally

[38] Edmund Spencer, 'Prefatory Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh on *The Faerie Queene*', in *Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books*, ed. by Charles W. Eliot (Danbury: Grolier Enterprises Corp., 1980), pp. 61–65.

[39] Spencer, 'Prefatory Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh on *The Faerie Queene*', pp. 63–65.

[40] John Heminge and Henry Condell, 'Preface to the First Folio Edition of Shakespeare's Plays', in *Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books*, ed. by Charles W. Eliot (Danbury: Grolier Enterprises Corp., 1980), pp. 148–49.

[41] Heminge and Condell, 'Preface to the First Folio Edition of Shakespeare's Plays', p. 149.

published separately on a book (text) can be subsequently absorbed by the book as preface (paratext).

Genette argues that prefaces in dramatic works have a different status to prefaces in other literary genres. The preface which appears in a published dramatic text can come into existence after the original performance takes place, particularly because it is typically not meant to be delivered aloud to the audience.[42] Ancient Greek drama commonly has a 'prologue' that precedes the entrance of the chorus, either in the form of a scene or a monologue, the latter of which perhaps anticipates the modern preface. Prologues in the form of a monologue, a common feature in comedy, can alert or even warn the audience about what will follow. It is likely to inform them of the name of the author, the title, and the source of the text, but in some cases may go further to provide satirical comments on fellow playwrights or to relate a counter-opinion against criticisms. This practice is not as common as before, and Genette names just a few works as examples of exception, including the prologue of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in which the entire plot from the two households in rivalry to the death of the young 'star-cross'd lovers' is concisely related in the first person plural, representing the company of actors.[43]

Determining the 'sender', that is the person who transmits the message through paratexts, is a particularly complex matter for a preface, as Genette points out.[44] He himself classifies the sender of a preface according to the 'role' (*authorial*, *actorial*, and *allographic*) and 'regime' (*authentic*, *apocryphal*, and *fictive*) in order to enable a detailed classification. A 'role' shapes the relationship the author of the preface has with the text, whether the putative author of the preface is the author of the text itself (authorial), a character within the text (actorial), or a third person who is unconnected to the authorship or content of the text (allographic). The English edition of *Paratexts* itself provides an example of allographic preface, since this translation is equipped with the Foreword by Richard Macksey, an academic in critical theory, who is neither the author nor the translator of the book.[45] By contrast, 'regime' relates to whether the author of a preface actually exists; in other words it deals with

[42] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 165–67.
[43] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 166–67.
[44] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 178.
[45] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. xi–xxii. As is noted as a characteristic of prefatorial section by Genette, the foreword by Macksey is marked by roman numerals, although it should be also noted that *Paratexts* is a didactic text of a theory rather than a literary work. Genette himself also provides an authorial preface in this book, titled 'Introduction', which Genette refers to as 'threshold of the threshold' within it.

the plausibility of the attribution of the author. A preface is authentic, apocryphal or fictive, when the attribution is confirmed to be real, false or unreal by other paratexts respectively. These categorisations, however, cannot resolve the self-contradictory situation the preface can create. For instance, 'Laurence Templeton', who claims to provide the authentic authorial preface to *Ivanhoe*, was later disclosed to be a fictive character by Sir Walter Scott himself; therefore, the preface proves to be fictional actorial, actually written by Scott.[46] Such self-contradictory situations are only to be resolved by the reader's suspension of disbelief: the reader, once engaged with the text, surely is capable of coping with the fictional status of the preface-writer, abiding 'by what must indeed be called the contract — the bilateral contract — of fiction'.[47]

In the case of Scott, the question of authorial intention — one of the important aspects for Gennete's paratexts — is tested to its limit. Being at the edge of the text, paratexts are already in an ambiguous position in terms of their 'real' or fictive status. Yet, the reader's interpretation of fiction would not be influenced by the discordance between the author's name on the cover and the preface-writer or the narrator who claims to be 'the author of the book'. Nevertheless, the fact that Genette brings back the authorial intention into the argument of paratextuality itself articulates that the paratext is a point of contact between the author and the reader. By reclaiming authorial intention, Genette neutralises the radical dismissal of the author figure in poststructuralism and casts light upon paratexts as this marginal yet potentially creative space. It is the very nature of paratext as a point of contact, or 'a zone not only of transition but also of *transaction*', that makes it appropriate for theatrical analysis, as theatrical performance literally provides a point of contact between the text (performance) and the audience in a mutually shared here and now.[48]

The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable, an immersive theatre production by Punchdrunk which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, incorporates what Genette would have termed 'prefatorial' sections at the beginning of the audience experience.[49] On entrance, the audience firstly go through a dark and narrow corridor and find themselves in another space, where carnivalesque half-masks are handed out. The deep and forceful voice of the owner of the Temple Studio, 'Mr. Stanford', from above, welcomes the audience and tells them to put on the

[46] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 182.
[47] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 182.
[48] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2. Italics in original.
[49] Punchdrunk, *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable*, premiered in 2013. Attended on 3 August 2013 and 19 September 2013, Temple Studio, London, UK.

masks and not to speak. The now-masked audience are squeezed into a service lift, where a performer in the role as an employee of the film studio awaits the arrival of the audience, or, as they are characterised, 'the studio guests'. During the ride, they are briefly informed about the main characters and asked to be silent throughout the event 'because film shooting is going on in the studio'. The audience members are also recommended to navigate the journey alone, rather than remaining with friends, before being dispatched to begin their three-hour long journey through a four-storey warehouse, highly adapted for the purposes of the production into a 1960s Hollywood film studio and its surroundings. Located between the real life where the audience come from and the fictional world of the performance, these phases serve as a fictive actorial preface.

A preliminary journey through the corridor to the lift, as preface, prepares the audience both by giving a space for them to adjust to the environment and by offering instruction on how to experience the 'text', or the performance. The instruction is directly given by one of the characters in the same space, meaning that the instruction itself belongs to the fictional world that the audience are about to enter. This performative preface is arguably more imperative and binding than a literary preface: whereas the literary preface typically gives *suggestive* guidance to the reader, this particular theatrical preface assigns a role to the audience with a *physical* mask they are obliged to wear. The mask screens the audience from the fictional world they enter and make them invisible; the openings for the eyes force the audience to become a silent pair of eyes. The dark corridor is what Punchdrunk call a 'decompression zone', a space which encourages the audience to develop heightened senses and to leave the 'real' world behind.[50] The darkness marks the entrance to an other-worldly space and gently invites the audience to prepare themselves for the extra-everyday experience which awaits them. The masks act as a ticket to Punchdrunk's world, which is a 'critical device' for director Felix Barrett in the aesthetics of Punchdrunk's production: the masks concentrate focus and simultaneously liberate the audience from the constraints of everyday behaviour.[51] This is followed by a 'transition zone', the brief ride in a service lift in the case with this production. This space brings the audience into the fictional world, splitting them from friends, the familiar faces they came

[50] Sarah Dowling of Punchdrunk, at a workshop offered as part of Theatre Practice for the third year and MA students in Theatre and Performance Studies at the School of English, the University of Sheffield, which took place on 21 March 2014 at the Theatre Workshop, the University of Sheffield.

[51] Felix Barrett of Punchdrunk, quoted in an interview by Josephine Machon in *Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 160.

with.[52] By the time they are ushered out of the 'preface' through the door of the lift, the audience are ready to commence what is, typically, a solitary journey into the text, through an unfamiliar fictive environment.

Intertitles

'Intertitles' are a less conspicuous paratextual element than titles, since intertitles are located internally in the text, addressing themselves to the reader (or the potential reader, at least), and are not obligatory by any means. Intertitles are given to sections of the text and potentially appear at the beginning of sections, in the running heads of the pages, or in the table of contents. Although their use is common, it is not unusual for a book to do without them altogether.[53] Genette observes that the intertitles which originally took the form of simple numerical divisions and which later developed to use words and description have been inclined towards brevity since the beginning of the nineteenth century.[54] Completely mute divisions are now most commonly practised, particularly in fictional narratives, which are only marked by starting a new page, by the insertion of some symbols or simply by having extra white space. Genette remarks on such contemporary practice of mute divisions as 'a kind of respiratory scansion', a momentary pause for the narrator to take a breath. This comparison between mute divisions — or non-verbal and almost invisible intertitles — in contemporary literature and an act of taking a breath between speeches evokes a sort of theatricality this paratextual apparatus possesses.[55] Intertitles, dispersed throughout and buried within the main body of text, contribute to sustain the unity of a book and those divisions arguably set a rhythm to the act of reading.

Genette argues that intertitles enunciated in the first person in a fictive narrative imply that the narrator-hero of the work represents 'not only narrative authority but also literary authority', exerting control over the presentation of the book as well as writing his own account.[56] Yet, the internal nature of intertitles — that is, often embedded within the text or between the sections of the text — suggests that the status of intertitles in the first person is spatially close to that of the text. The implication of the narrator's editorial authority may only become apparent when those intertitles appear in the places which clearly belong to the editors such as running heads and table of contents. The different type fonts and sizes of intertitles in

[52] Dowling, at a workshop on 21 March 2014.
[53] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 316–18.
[54] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 309–11.
[55] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 309.
[56] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 302.

the text can arguably be noticed as merely accentuating the enunciation of the continuous narrative voice. However, this subtle piece of information as to the narrator-hero's status can prove to be helpful in considering the genre status of some works. For example, the intertitles of *À la recherche du Temps perdu* are written in the first person, reinforcing the ambiguity between the narrator-hero ('I' or 'Marcel') and the author himself.[57] This confirms the ambiguous genre status of this work, hesitantly located between first person narrative fiction and autobiography.[58]

Notes

'Notes' are 'the eminently transitional field of the paratext' since they present a variety of types ranging across the spectrum of peritext: on one end it can be extremely close to the body of the text and on the other end it can be slipping outside the limit of a book, or the realm of peritext.[59] Paratexts are the textual elements which hesitantly exist at the threshold of the text; therefore, all paratextual elements by nature exist between the inside and outside of the text. '[T]he note', Genette remarks, 'perfectly illustrates this indefiniteness and this slipperiness' of paratexts in general, because the status of the positioning of notes varies greatly: authorial original notes have such a close status to the text, whereas allographic notes (editorial notes) are objective and metatextual to the point where they are almost slipping out of the text to exist independently.[60] A note refers to a partial segment of the text at a time, thus the statement of a note inevitably has a local character, connecting itself closely to a part of the text.[61] Therefore, notes are often inseparable from the text, whether the relationship between a note and the referred segment is supplementary, digressional, documentary or commentarial. As a result of this partial and local nature of notes, they contrast with prefaces, according to Genette.[62] Whereas a preface is located before the text and addresses the reader to explain the entire text to follow, as if to bracket the text as a whole with its statement, notes are often distributed throughout the text or located at the very end of a page or a book, referring to a particular detail within the text.

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[57] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 303.
[58] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 302–03.
[59] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 319.
[60] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 343.
[61] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 319–20.
[62] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 319–20. Here, Genette notices briefly that prefaces and postfaces can appear, titled as 'notes'. A recent example of this can be seen in *Peter and Alice*, a play by John Logan premiered in 2013. It has a 'note' page before the dramatis personae, which explains how the basic idea of this play, about two people who were respectively the main inspiration for the protagonists of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll and *Peter Pan* by J. M. Barrie, occurred to the author.
John Logan, *Peter and Alice* (London: Oberon Books, 2013), p. 3.

Despite the formal distinction between prefaces and notes, their functions greatly resemble each other, often showing 'continuity and homogeneity'.[63] Sometimes new notes are included in later editions of a book which may function hand in hand with the preface of the same date, locally supporting and explaining the critical statement made in the preface.

Genette explains that the practice of annotation dates back to the Middle Ages when texts placed in the middle of the pages tended to be surrounded by annotations in smaller letters. Such early practice has developed into various forms throughout the course of history and the modern practice still retains its variety. Some occupy marginal areas of a page, while others have a consolidated paratextual space of their own, that is, they present a cluster of annotations in one place rather than a scattering throughout the text: footnotes or notes between the lines fall into the former, while the latter includes endnotes and a final chapter of a book devoted to notes.[64] Genette distinguishes between notes in discursive texts and notes in fictional texts. Original authorial notes on discursive texts basically serve as a supplement and less frequently as a digression or a commentary. Notes offer 'a second level of discourse' in which the author can relate a supplementary account, digressional sub-narrative, or commentary on his own writing.[65] One might think that original authorial notes that are supplementary or documentary in nature could be incorporated into the body of the text; however, Genette remarks that it is the co-presence of the discourse on different levels that gives depth to the text.[66] The main advantage of having notes is that they enable the author to emphasise a certain nuance of a particular part of the text, giving a variation and intonation to a narrative which can otherwise be monotonous and linear.[67] In discursive texts, later notes, or notes added to an edition published later than the original, often function together with their preface, responding to the critique the original edition received or making corrections. The commentary aspect is magnified even further in delayed notes, subsequently added much later than the publication date of the original edition.

Notes on fictional texts function similarly to notes in discursive texts to some extent, referring to non-fictional elements such as historical backgrounds or geographical facts, as is observed in the historical novels in the early nineteenth century.[68] *The Waste Land*, a poem by

[63] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 320.
[64] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 319–22.
[65] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 328.
[66] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 328.
[67] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 328.
[68] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 332.

T. S. Eliot, on the other hand, is annotated extensively with literary references for those who seek 'elucidation of the poem', offering an authorial critical edition.[69] Authorial notes on texts of fiction are sometimes used to make meaningful gestures by inserting the author's perspective on the narrative and showing the author's uncertainty about what a character has in mind. For example, Samuel Beckett contradicts the narrator of *Watt*, who is not clearly differentiated from the author himself, about the accuracy of the statement by the narrator.[70] Such notes that offer the author's aside may seem to resemble the stage directions in dramatic texts which give authorial explanation as to the emotions and movements of the characters in action. However, stage directions are one of the two registers comprising dramatic texts along with dialogues.[71] Stage directions are mostly addressed to directors and actors, or those who deliver the text, while dialogues are addressed to the audience or the reader, those who receive the text. Although stage directions belong to the realm of the text, not to the paratext, Genette suggests that the 'oral stage direction' given by the author during the rehearsal processes can belong to the paratext.[72] Stage directions, particularly those presenting a commentary function, may qualify as paratextual elements — or more specifically, as notes — on a textual level, since they are arguably not a part of the narrative but commenting upon or nuancing the dialogue to be delivered by actors. It is important to remember that, as Genette emphasises, such a thing as the definitive paratext does not exist: the idea of the paratext only exists in relation to the text and should be applied to each occasion, depending on its usefulness and relevance.[73] Although categorising stage directions as notes does not seem to be particularly productive in theatrical analysis, the idea of notes in a theatrical context becomes a rich and fruitful area when considering a performance piece experienced by the audience as the 'text' itself.

Notes in performance can take as diverse forms as the notes in books and are observed particularly often in experiential performance pieces which invite the audience to become a part of the performance environment. Such performance practice may call themselves as 'immersive', 'promenade' or 'environmental' performance. *Starr & Pitt*, an experimental

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[69] T. S. Eliot, 'Notes', *The Waste Land Text of the First Edition New York, Boni and Liveright 1922* in *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts Including the Annotations of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971), in *ProQuest*, <https://search-proquest-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/docview/2147609834?accountid=13828> [accessed 30 November 2020].

[70] Samuel Beckett, *Watt*, ed. by C. J. Ackerley (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 158. Originally published in French by Olympia Press in 1953. Footnote 3, quoted in Genette's *Paratexts* (p. 335) reads: 'The figures given here are incorrect. The consequent calculations are therefore doubly erroneous.'

[71] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 334.

[72] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 333–34.

[73] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 342–43.

performance piece devised in 2014 by Sad Siren, a performance group based in Sheffield, invites its audience to accept the role of uninvited guests and to seek the text out of peripheral disconnected information.[74] *Starr & Pitt*, which is set in 'after the show', can be considered as a piece that consists entirely of endnotes without the main body of text. This piece was presented as a part of *Horror Souk*, a three-week event showcasing emerging artists in Northern England by Theatre Delicatessen which was then based at a disused department store building in the Moor, Sheffield. In this interactive performance piece, the amateur magician duo, Starr & Pitt, willingly embrace the milieu where the piece takes place. Thus, they acknowledge that the fictional world they are creating is a continuation of the reality of what the audience just left behind, an arcade full of different performance pieces of *Horror Souk*. Upon entering, the audience members are informed that they have (supposedly) missed the magic show, yet they are still invited half-heartedly to a post-show drink in the auditorium where the show seems to have happened. The performers commence their interaction by apologising that their magic show has already finished and asking the audience whether they have been to other shows, taking place as part of *Horror Souk*. Locating their piece that is set after the show within the reality where the audience are attending to see 'the show' further complicates what is on offer here, and emphasises the uncanny atmosphere of the piece that is already engendered by the reluctance of the two magicians who receive the audience. The residue of the magic show, such as the smell of candles and matches just put out, scattered cards on tables with glitter, and magic props left here and there in the room hint at what might have happened, yet none of them reveal anything substantial. The awkward silence dominates most of the performance and occasional conversations with the nervous magicians do not offer a satisfactory explanation. Their evasive answers only add to the anxiety of the audience who are challenged to find their roles in this piece and to take control of the interaction. The audience in this piece, therefore, are given a series of annotations without knowing the narrative to which they are supposed to be connected. Despite the presence of the reluctant yet interactive performers, the experience of the audience revolves around the marginal information given by the performers and the environment which only leads to more questions and wild presumptions in search of the narrative. As the audience members start to realise that what they are experiencing is hinting at a potentially larger narrative, the fragmented information that had appeared as marginal and disconnected notes now becomes the event focus for the audience, who are consequently prompted to attempt —

[74] Sad Siren, *Starr & Pitt*, premiered in 2014 as part of *Horror Souk* by Theatre Delicatessen. Attended on 4 November 2014 and 12 November 2014, The Moor Theatre Delicatessen, Sheffield, UK.

albeit in vain — to acquire more information, piecing together the performance's puzzle and construct an encompassing narrative.

Other peritexts

Other peritexts defined by Genette in the order of appearance in a physical book are: 'publisher's peritext', 'the name of the author', 'the please-insert', 'dedications', 'inscriptions' and 'epigraphs'.

'Publisher's peritext' indicates an entire realm of 'spatial and material' paratexts determined by publishers, such as the format of a book, a series of which a book is part and typesetting.[75] These elements can influence the potential reader's understanding of the text before they reach the content, filtering them by the visual materiality of a physical book. A variety of paratextual information is already contained within the appearance of a book, and this can express whether it is an academic critical edition of classics or a fiction for general readers. Genette observes that the format historically indicates the type of work, and that in modern practice, books in 'trade edition' and 'pocket edition', or hardcover and softbound paperbacks present distinctive qualities to the reader; for example, the pocket edition implies the economic and cultural qualities of the book simply by its format.[76] Softbound books are usually affordable compared to hardbacks and offer assurance to the reader of the quality since they are mostly revivals of hardcover books.[77] A softbound book already speaks to the reader with its appearance; its format claims the quality that deserves wider readership and presents itself as approachable.

Genette also names appendages on the cover, particularly that of the Pléiade series, as a special yet important example of a publisher's peritext. The Pléiade edition by Gallimard, a series of well-known critical editions of classical masterpieces, has a blank cover without the name of the author or a title. The white jacket which contains a volume, therefore, fulfils the functions that are normally performed by the cover, including accompanying the photographic image of the author. The photographic portrait of the author on the 1954 edition of *À la recherche du Temps perdu* by Proust, according to Genette, had a certain influence on the reader's interpretation. Each of the three volumes of the 1954 edition presents different

[75] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 16.
[76] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 21.
[77] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 19–22.

photographs of the author, dated to 1891, 1895 and 1896 respectively.[78] These years are all irrelevant to the author's age when each part of the novel was written, let alone to the progression of the time within the novel. Nevertheless, the reader may establish a connection between the aging of the author in these three photos and the aging of the narrator of the novel in each volume, consolidating the impression that the work is an autobiographical novel. Therefore, a paratextual meaning can be evoked even in an element where no authorial intention is involved, and in this case portraits of the author function as an indication of genre. Genette does not entirely exclude such interpretations made by chance from his range of paratextual functions as 'wholly illegitimate', rather, he simply accepts that 'it is generated, or reinforced, surreptitiously by a paratextual arrangement that in theory is wholly innocent and secondary'.[79] Genette does not rule out coincidental attribution, as he suggests in the introduction that the *true* identity of the producer of a paratextual message is not very important in understanding the functions of paratext: the sender of (or the individual that is responsible for the production of) the paratextual message is defined by 'a *putative* attribution and an acceptance of responsibility'.[80] The inclusion of the reader's presumptive attribution to valid interpretation illustrates that Genette's model in fact implies a reciprocal relationship between the reader and the text, mediated by the paratext.

The equivalent of a publisher's peritext in theatrical practice can take several forms. For instance, a performance production touring nationally after success in London. Information such as being programmed at large-scale festivals like SPILL Festival or Edinburgh Festival Fringe may attest to the quality of the performance, as a nationally acclaimed live art platform and a festival with intense competition respectively. Another example is the number of stars and excerpts from reviews in major newspapers and theatre magazines which often appear in the production's advertisement as proof of its quality. Finally, the reputation of the venue where a performance piece is presented may to some extent inform the audiences' expectations as to the quality of the show. On some occasions, the absence of such peripheral information can add a layer of meaning just as much as its presence can: some productions hold the performance in hidden or secret venues, keeping their show under an enigmatic veil. For instance, details about the venue for Punchdrunk's *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* was only revealed as 'at secret venue in London' until close to the premiere, suspending the audience's expectation by

[78] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 31.
[79] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 30–31.
[80] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 8. My italics.

refraining from disclosing this detail. This may have attracted a different demographic than the mainstream theatregoers of the West End. The paratextual meanings offered by such 'packaging' of the text are intertwined with other paratextual elements and will be revisited throughout this thesis.

'The name of the author' may be a paratextual element whose presence within the peritext is taken for granted along with the titles, yet it was often unmentioned or embedded within the text at the beginning or at the end in ancient and medieval times.[81] The status of the name of the author can be categorised into three types: *onymity* (the author is credited with their real name), *anonymity* (the author's name is unmentioned) and *pseudonymity* (the author is credited with a name which is not their own).[82] Anonymity, or the absence of the author's name, was common practice in the classical period. It was also employed by Scott in the eighteenth century to arouse the reader's curiosity and maintain the fiction, adopting the formula used by Jane Austen: most of Scott's novels published subsequently to *Waverley* mention the author as 'By the author of *Waverley*'.[83] The anonymous status of the author does not necessarily endure since it can be disclosed by the author himself, as Scott did in 1829, or by allographic notes in critical editions. Onymity can cast complicated layers of meaning onto the reader's interpretation despite its façade being straightforward. The name certainly communicates gender, nationality, kinship and perhaps the social class of the author, and the real name can also add a 'personality' to the book when the author is already established in other fields. In such genres as autobiography, historical writing or documentary, presenting the real name can function as signing a sort of 'contract' to attest the genre, in conjunction with other paratextual elements which support the authenticity of the work.[84]

Pseudonymity is primarily practised in literature among the arts, which has more variations than the commonly understood use of the author taking another name.[85] Other variations include apocryphal use (attributing a work to a known author) with permission or without, plagiarism (signing on someone else's work) with permission (ghostwriting) or without, and creating a specific imaginary person who is attributed as the author. Genette argues that the use of a pseudonym presents two paratextual functions: an effect of *a given pseudonym*

[81] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 37.
[82] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 39. 'Onymity' is a term coined by Genette in the style of the other two commonly used terms for the sake of the equilibrium of the argument.
[83] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 43–45.
[84] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 39–42.
[85] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 53.

and *a pseudonym-effect*.[86] An effect of a given pseudonym is the effect the reader receives through the text from the imagery conjured up by the pseudonym, regardless of whether the reader is aware of the name's pseudonymic status or not. On the other hand, a pseudonym-effect is related with the reader's awareness of the pseudonymous authorship, which may support or undermine the effect of the pseudonym. For example, Sarah Kane originally used a pseudonym 'Marie Kelvedon' for her play, *Crave*, written for the theatre company Paines Plough in 1998, in the hope of 'shaking off the negative effects of *Blasted*' which aroused great controversy when it was premiered in 1995.[87] It was a playful gesture as well as a serious one for Kane to release herself from the pressure she suffered from the identity engendered around her own name.[88] This is an attempt to exploit an effect of a given pseudonym: Kane tried to avoid any preconceptions in order to prevent her new work from being judged by the author's name attached to it and the reputation built around the name.

Genette mentions that pseudonymity of actors is the second most prolific use of the pseudonym next to that of the authors in literature, which extends to show business in general.[89] A pseudonym arguably enables an actor to have a dual presence on stage, as a character and as an actor. Many actors today use their own names (onymity) in their profession, while contemporary performance practitioners sometimes go step further and choose to appear under their own names in a piece which is not necessarily autobiographical, for example in the practice by Forced Entertainment. Genette suggests that 'the author is allegedly more himself' in their own names, which implies that in a dramatic context using one's real name in a performance can manifest both as an attempt to increase the authenticity of the work and as an act of anchoring to reality the piece which is otherwise solely fictional.[90]

Shunt, a performance collective based in London presented a unique example of collective pseudonymity. They kept their profile as a group of artists without any member officially credited for their roles in any show.[91] The definition of this collective on their web

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[86] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 48–53.

[87] Simon Hattenstone, 'A Sad Hurrah', *Guardian Weekend*, 1 July 2000 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2000/jul/01/stage> [accessed 30 November 2020].

[88] Graham Saunders, *"Love Me or Kill Me": Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 129, 148–49. Kane hints at her identity within this pseudonym by using her middle name, 'Marie', and the name of the town near where she grew up, 'Kelvedon'.

[89] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 53.

[90] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 51.

[91] Alex Mermikides, 'Clash and Consensus in Shunt's "*Big Shows*" and the *Lounge*,' in *Devising in Process*, ed. by Alex Mermikides and Jackie Smart (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 147–64 (p. 159).

page embodied this policy to mention only who they were as a group rather than whom the group consisted of: 'Shunt is a collective of artists creating and curating live performance in unusual locations within London'.[92] This collective pseudonymity did not entirely achieve the anonymity of each member partly because of their individual artistic activities. Also, the roles usually taken by each member became known to some extent (for example, David Rosenberg mostly took the role of director) in sixteen years since the collective was founded in 1998 until they ceased their operation as a formal collective after *The Boy Who Climbed Out of His Face* (2014). However, the collective pseudonymity represented the ethos of the group to 'challenge the model of the single author', and to avoid any hierarchical relationship within the collective towards producing performances.[93] The avoidance of naming the individuals behind this collective identity can be seen as a declaration that Shunt defied the model of a singular authorial voice in their devised performance practice and it kept the profile of their performance pieces a mystery for the audience until they experienced them.

Both 'dedications' and 'inscriptions' are the act of 'offering the work as a token of esteem to a person, a real or ideal group, or some other type of entity.'[94] The difference between the two lies in the way the work is addressed to a dedicatee or an inscribee: an inscription which only appears in a single physical copy of a book has a confidential and personalised quality, whereas a dedication, even addressed to a single person, is inevitably more of a public act, appearing in all copies of the edition. Dedications, which usually appear just after the title page or, in rather rare occasions, at the end of the book, used to be practised mainly for economic or political reasons to justify the existence of the work by affiliating it to authoritative figures.[95] The modern use of dedications is, however, often to acknowledge a private, intellectual or artistic relationship with the dedicatee and is characterised by their brevity, appearing in any extended version of 'To X, Y' as Genette formulates.[96] *The Entertainer*, a play by John Osborne premiered in 1957, has an anonymised dedication 'To A. C.', followed by a reference to the memory the author shares with the dedicatee which is not clearly understood by the reader —

[92] Shunt web page <http://www.shunt.co.uk/> [accessed 23 January 2015].
[93] Mermikides, 'Clash and Consensus in Shunt's "*Big Shows*" and the *Lounge*,' p. 153.
[94] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 117.
[95] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 117–26.
[96] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 117–26.

only the dedicatee;[97] whereas *Peter and Alice* by John Logan, carries the dedication to the theatre director of the original production, Michael Grandage, expressing his gratitude for their artistic relationship.[98] As with intertitles, dedications are less commonly used in drama perhaps because of the simple difficulty of presenting it in the performance.[99] Nevertheless, dedications have affinities with performance practice: dedicating a work is a performative act in two ways. For one thing, it is 'performative' in the grammatical sense, since 'for in itself, it *constitutes* the act it is supposed to describe'; that is, an enunciation of dedication of the work to a certain addressee itself fulfils its purpose.[100] Dedications are also 'performative' in the theatrical sense, because it is 'a matter of demonstration, ostentation, exhibition'.[101] It is a gesture to announce a relationship between the work and the dedicatee in front of the readers other than the specific person who is addressed. This is particularly true for dedications in the style of an epistle which conveys a prefatorial function. By openly addressing a dedicatee at length, dedicatory epistles prepare the reader, establishing a context for the work to be situated.

Inscriptions, on the other hand, add value to a printed copy of a book by leaving a 'fingerprint' of the author himself.[102] By virtue of being unique, inscriptions can enhance the material quality of the copy, and they are, like dedications, a performative gesture which achieves its purpose by the very act of inscribing.[103] It is a gesture of gratitude from the author which, in exchange, expects a commitment from the reader to the book by reading it (or, in some cases perhaps, having read it). Signing a book, therefore, is analogous to signing a contract: I, the author, hereby attest my authorship of this book and express my gratitude, in exchange for which, you, the reader, are expected to fully appreciate the book by reading it as well as possessing it. The situation this paratextual apparatus of individual and singular nature presents can be usefully compared to that of one-to-one performance practice, a form of performance which takes place for one audience member at a time, usually delivered by one performer. The personalised imprint of one-to-one performance which invites the audience

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[97] John Osborne, *The Entertainer* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p. 5. 'To A.C. who remembers what it was like, and will not forget it; who, I hope, will never let me forget it—not while there is still a Paradise Street and Claypit Lane to go back to'.

[98] John Logan, *Peter and Alice* (London: Oberon Books, 2013), p. 7. 'Dedicated to Michael Grandage. For his faith in this play and its author. And for giving an actor the single best piece of direction I have ever heard.'

[99] The dedication on a printed play text can be re-printed in the programme for the audience to access it; however, the programme in a theatrical performance is classified as *epitext*, which is discussed in following pages.

[100] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 134. Italics in original.

[101] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 135.

[102] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 139.

[103] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 140–43.

member to become a participant of the text draws a parallel with an individual inscription in a book, giving a space for the reader to participate, even if in infinitely subtle ways. One-to-one performance also presents the same contradiction as inscriptions do: while involving the private nature of relationship and communication ('no two performances are completely the same' or 'no two published copies of a single work are absolutely identical'),[104] people share the common knowledge that this very act of offering a performance or an inscription is repeated for many other audience members and the readers.

The 'epigraph' is defined by Genette as 'a quotation placed *en exergue* [in the exergue]' or more precisely, 'at the *edge* of the work, generally closest to the text'.[105] Epigraphs can refer to a commentary or offer a justification of the text or the title. The epigraph of *Sodome et Gomorrhe* [Sodome and Gomorrah], the fourth part of Proust's *À la recherche du Temps perdu*, fulfils this function: it opens the work with a biblical quotation, followed by a line from Alfred de Vigny's "La colère de Samson" [The Anger of Samson], 'Woman will have Gomorrah and man will have Sodom', both of which justify the title.[106] Epigraphs can also fall into a so-called 'romantic' function, Genette claims: epigraphs are sometimes employed for affective or ornamental purposes, to heighten the reader's sentiment.[107] Such epigraphs are semantically less relevant to the text and other paratexts. The textual relevance also becomes less important in cases where the author's name itself carries the value of the epigraph: the act of quoting does not require consent from the epigraphed author, which allows the author of the book (the epigrapher) to show textual and intellectual affiliation to certain authors or a certain tradition of culture, freely borrowing the authority of the epigraph. Finally, the very presence or absence of the paratextual apparatus of epigraph signals some paratextual information: the *epigraph-effect*. The presence of epigraphs can imply the period in which it was written, the genre of the text, and the tenor of the work.[108] Although they are never an obligatory paratextual element, epigraphs function to enhance the cohesion of the book, to emphasise the reader's emotion and to enforce the authority of the work. Theatrical performances rarely find their counterpart of epigraph in performance, again perhaps for the difficulty in presenting it in performance as

[104] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 142.
[105] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 144. Italics in original.
[106] Genette, *Paratexts,* pp. 154–56.
[107] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 158.
[108] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 160. Genette summarises that prolific use of epigraphs is observed in early nineteenth-century novels which aspire to integrate the genre of fictional prose within historical and philosophical narratives, and that similar ethos can be observed in the writers of the 1960s and 1970s.

observed with intertitles and dedications. Yet, theatrical adaptation of literature or performances inspired by source material may present a quote from the text or the non-textual materials to navigate the audience's attention. In a duet performance piece *Control Signal* by Haranczak/Navarre Performance Projects, a programme is distributed to the audience on entrance before the performance. The programme is folded in three and predominantly occupied with a number of images of source materials of the performance along with fragments of texts.[109] The old drawings of electrical equipment and the figures presumably from the experiments along with the photographs in sepia allow the audience to familiarise themselves with and to tune in to the aesthetics of the piece inspired by 'the 18th-century electrical pioneers'.[110] The performance piece, which explores the interaction and relationships of the human body with the surroundings, can be appreciated on its own without the imagery provided. However, the information on the aesthetics of this piece prepares the audience to better notice the minor details, such as a demonstration of thought transference, or telepathy, which recurs from time to time, and which are in tune with the overall aesthetics of this performance. Programmes may be seen as outside of the text, thus 'epitext', which will be discussed in the following section; however, the distribution at the beginning in this case, I argue, fulfils the condition of peritext, being at the threshold which must be stepped over in order to access the text to which it is attached.

Epitexts

All paratextual elements mentioned above are 'peritexts', which appear at the fringe of the texts within the same volume of a book. Other paratextual elements spatially separated from the text are called 'epitexts', which is defined by Genette as 'any paratextual element not materially appended to the text within the same volume but circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually physical and social space.'[111] The physical independence of epitexts from the text means that they can reach a wider public than peritexts which in principle only reach to the (potential) readers of the book; however, the lifespan of such epitexts is inevitably shorter than that of peritexts unless they are included in the later edition as appendices, changing their status into a

[109] Haranczak/Navarre Performance Projects, *Control Signal*, a duet performance by Karen Christopher (Haranczak/Navarre Performance Projects) and Sophie Grodin. Attended on 18 November 2014, Beckett Studio, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, UK.

[110] Description of the piece in *Control Signal* programme, Haranczak/Navarre Performance Projects, 2014.

[111] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 344.

peritext.[112] In addition to the wider circulation and ephemerality, epitexts possess a temporal variation that cannot be seen in peritexts. By virtue of being independent from the text, epitexts can be produced prior to the publication of the text. Paratextual functions of epitexts do not have precise limits, according to Genette, since everything written or said by the author on his or her work and life can be paratextually relevant to the work, however indirect or spatially and temporally remote the epitext is from the actual text in question.[113] This suggests the danger of letting the analysis drown in the abundance of authorial discourse. If the notes display the lack of internal borders between peritexts and text, epitexts merge into 'the totality of the authorial discourse', disappearing into the outside of the text.[114] The relevance of a particular epitext to the meaning of the text should therefore be assessed at each application.

Genette explains epitexts in two categories, *public* and *private*. A public epitext, whether it is *autonomous* (issued by the author himself) or *mediated* (reported by an intermediary), is directed to the general public, whereas a private epitext, which can be *confidential* (addressed to a confidant) or *intimate* (addressed to the author himself), is directed to a certain individual. Genette's autonomous epitexts include *auto-review* (a review by the author himself on publication), *public response* (often in defence against criticism or a slander) and *auto-commentary* (the author's comments upon his own work, often concerning the inceptions of the work), whose temporal status is described as original, later and delayed, respectively. However, the development of online platforms which include for example blogs, social networks and video-sharing websites has greatly expanded the realm of public autonomous epitexts. The technology has assisted the authors and practitioners not only in communicating their authorial intention to the reader and audience, but also in sharing the day-to-day creative process and so interacting with the general public. In theatre and performance practice today, it is not uncommon for theatre companies and artists to upload photographs of the rehearsals and production updates, stimulating the audience's anticipation and offering to the audience a better understanding of what to expect at the upcoming shows. Some long-term projects, like *What I Heard About the World* (2010) by the Sheffield-based performance company Third Angel, continuously encourage the audience members to contribute to the content by commenting on the blog as well as via social networks and emails.[115] In such cases,

[112] Genette, *Paratexts,* pp. 344–47.
[113] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 346.
[114] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 346.
[115] Third Angel, 'Better Words Than "Fake"', *Third Angel Blog* (2010) <http://thirdangeluk.blogspot.com/2010/04/better-words-than-fake.html> [accessed 30 November 2020].

the platform for the public epitexts becomes a space for mutual communication between the author (the practitioner) and the reader (the audience). The temporal categorisation by Genette, therefore, may not necessarily be the case for such epitexts online: the time lapse between the author publishing their commentary and the reader responding to them has become so diminished that the variety in epitexts and their paratextual functions may be more immediate. Another example can be seen in a project called '#FE365' by the performance collective Forced Entertainment, which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 2014. They published an open call for people to contribute by submitting texts about the company's work that are 'exactly 365 words long' throughout the anniversary year.[116] The submitted texts by a number of people, who range from artists, academics and audience members, were uploaded to the 'Notebook Collection' section of the company's website, where other autonomous epitexts such as images and videos were also available. Located amongst the autonomous public epitexts, these allographic texts authored by members of the public are arguably admitted into the authorial discourse, which in turn may inform the audience's understanding of the company and their work.

While autonomous epitexts are directly communicated to the general public, mediated epitexts illustrate a complex situation which Genette describes, borrowing the words of Philippe Lejeune, as 'not a true dialogue in the first degree'.[117] Whether it is an *interview* (Genette's definition limits this to those that take place on publication of a specific work), *conversations* (later mediated epitext, often conducted by a more personalised intermediary than journalists) or *colloquia* (involving multiple interlocutors), the author speaks to the public, in response to the interlocutor(s), therefore, it is not a simple dialogue mediated by an intermediary but is also mediated or affected by the situation of the interlocution.[118]

Regarding both autonomous and mediated epitexts, Genette embraces immaterial acts as important paratextual elements to examine, perhaps because of the more ephemeral and likely to be orally communicated nature of public epitext. Genette emphasises the importance of 'silent', non-verbal utterance in the mediated epitexts and admits his omission of public reading by the author himself as a type of autonomous epitext.[119] Genette explains that in public readings by

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[116] Forced Entertainment, 'Notebook Collection — #FE365', *Forced Entertainment Web Page*, 2014 <http://www.forcedentertainment.com/notebook-category/fe365/> [accessed 30 November 2020]. The selection of texts and the full collection of submitted text are available from their website: <https://www.forcedentertainment.com/projects/fe365/> [accessed 30 November 2020].

[117] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 357.

[118] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 356–70.

[119] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 357, p. 370.

authors, everything from delivery and stress to gestures and facial expressions accompanied for emphasis counts as manifestations of authorial interpretation, and, therefore, a sort of paratextual information.[120] The parallel of such paratextual function in theatrical performance is the text performed by the author themselves. In 1998, the playwright Sarah Kane performed in her third play, *Cleansed*, towards the end of the run, replacing the actress who withdrew because of an injury.[121] Reflecting on her performance, a co-actor in the production Daniel Evans describes that he remembers 'how "real" Sarah's acting was. She made our [other actors'] acting look fake and theatrical.'[122] This in itself might have represented her own commentary upon the character and the play she herself had created. This is more applicable in the case of performances which are designed to be performed by the performer-writer himself or the company which has conceived the piece, because of its autobiographical nature or the artistic choice of the company. Since interpretation of one's own text is conveyed by the presentation of the text itself, it again refers the reader back to the inherent difficulty of clear distinction between text and paratext.

The application of paratext beyond literature

The concept of paratext has been deemed a useful analytical vehicle in discussing the importance of marginal elements in the meaning-making process of the artwork, since the publication of *Seuils* in 1987. This work by Genette explains the idea of paratext and its taxonomy, giving vocabulary to the peripheral aspects of the text that subtly affect the reader's interpretation, which had not yet been articulated or theorised until then. The translation of *Seuils* into German in 1989 and finally into English in 1997 under the title *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* made this analytical tool more widely available, prompting the application of the concept of paratext beyond literature. Analyses of paratexts became particularly popular after the beginning of the twenty-first century. Researchers have attempted to apply the concept of 'paratext' in analysing different genres of art such as paintings, theatre and visual art, exemplifying the author's suggestion that paratextuality is applicable to other art forms:

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120 Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 370.
121 Hattenstone, 'A Sad Hurrah'.
122 Sheffield Theatres, 'Sheffield Theatres Announces New Season For 2015', 17 October 2014. <http://www.sheffieldtheatres.co.uk/about/news/press-releases/sheffield-theatres-announces-new-season-for-2015/> [accessed 22 February 2015].

> For if we are willing to extend the terms to areas where the work does not consist of a text, it is obvious that some, if not all, of the other arts have an equivalent of our paratext: examples are the title in music and in the plastic arts, the signature in painting, the credits or the trailer in film, and all the opportunities for authorial commentary presented by catalogues of exhibitions, prefaces of musical scores (see the 1841 foreword for Liszt's *Years of Pilgrimage*), record jackets, and other peritextual or epitextual supports.[123]

While Genette recognises the potential application of paratext to different art forms and media, the majority of suggested examples here are those which consist of the communicative qualities found in non-verbal media, such as titles and prefaces. Genette restricts the idea of 'text' to the domain of printed books or at least implies an unwillingness to apply the concept of paratext to non-verbal media. Koenraad Claes, in his article in 2010 which discusses periodical supplements as a paratext, expands the concept of paratext to the texts of non-literary genres, such as periodicals, but remains conservative about the application of paratext to 'nonverbal (pictorial, musical) carriers of information', surmising that Genette does not necessarily encourage the extension of the relevant domain, and that he has left it to the extent one wishes to expand the definition of 'text'.[124] However, '[t]he inadequacies of Genette's book orientation are being successively brought to light through the research being done on other media in the neighbouring cultural disciplines,' as Georg Stanitzek argues in 2005. This is particularly true in audio-visual artwork such as film and television where the application of paratextuality has arguably been the most prolific among genres beyond literature.[125]

Cinematic paratexts include trailers, opening title sequences, subtitles, spinoffs and star persona in relation to the interpretation of filmic texts. Johannes Mahlknecht, for example, argues that the cinematic motto is a sort of equivalent to Genettian 'epigraph' in 2011.[126] A motto in cinema is a short piece of writing, which often appears just before the fictional narrative starts to unfold. '[L]ocated at the interface between nondiegesis and diegesis', Mahlknecht argues, motto lies at the threshold of fictional narrative as extradiegesis, occupying a unique status compared to other paratextual elements of film which deliver the factual

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123 Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 407.

124 Koenraad Claes, 'Supplements and Paratext: The Rhetoric of Space', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 43 (2010), 196–210 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/vpr.0.0120> (p. 201, endnote 17).

125 Georg Stanitzek, 'Texts and Paratexts in Media', trans. by Ellen Klein, *Critical Inquiry*, 32 (2005), 27–42 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/498002> (p. 36).

126 Johannes Mahlknecht, 'The textual paratext — the cinematic motto and its visual presentation on the screen', *Word & Image*, 27.1 (2011), 77–89 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02666286.2010.489740>.

information about the production.[127] Although the motto is primarily connected thematically to the narrative, it is 'not *part* of the narrative; it *encloses* it and *frames* it.'[128] Cinematic motto, like Genettian literary 'epigraph', offers commentary or moral advice to the audience as well as giving more intellectual and sophisticated weight to the text it introduces, yet its success depends upon the merging and transition from the extradiegetic (motto) to the diegetic (narrative).[129] From such a medium as film, with more than a century of history, to the newly emerging media of the digital age, paratexts are found to be useful in understanding what a particular medium can offer in 'shaping its reception and interpretation', as Dorothee Birke and Birte Christ note in their study in 2013.[130] Although literature remains the dominant field in which paratextuality is applied to and debated to this day, the concept of paratextuality also presents a productive perspective in examining new media. In the following sections, I consider the efforts that have been made to redefine and expand Genette's paratextuality so it can be opened up as a useful analytical tool for other art forms than literature, and discuss the challenges posed to the concept that are brought by such adaptations.

Redefinition

There have been recurrent redefinitions and expansions of the concept of paratext as well as enquiries into its validity, as the concept finds its way into 'texts' outside the domain which Genette discusses. The concept of paratext needs redefining or reiterating at every occasion because of the inherently relative nature of paratext. The long-debated questions around Genette's concept of text and authorisation of paratext thus call for the redefinition of this analytical tool in its application to art forms beyond literature. Genette's scope of enquiry sometimes proves to be limiting due to its exclusive focus on printed books, which leads to the need for further expansion of the concept. This is the case not only with the application of the originally literary concept of paratextuality to other media, but also with the development of media through which literary work is now available, such as e-books and audio-visually enhanced literature. The validity of applying paratextuality itself is questioned when the text under discussion is outside of Genette's theoretical framework, which he had based largely on

[127] Mahlknecht, 'The textual paratext', p. 78.
[128] Mahlknecht, 'The textual paratext', p. 78. Italics in original.
[129] Mahlknecht, 'The textual paratext', p. 89.
[130] Birke and Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative', p. 68.

classic French literature in print, for example in the form of electronic books, fan-generated fiction and non-verbal artwork.

Birke and Christ, in their article on digitised narrative, attempt to reconfigure Genette's paratextual model, summarising the study into paratext in digitised narratives of e-books and DVD, conducted by Ellen McCracken and Paul Benzon.[131] Birke and Christ succinctly describe the utility of the paratextual model: '[t]he concept's prime achievement […] is that it focuses attention on how an abstract entity like a text is always presented in a specific form, which is affected by historically and socially determined modes of production and reception.'[132] In this article on digitised narrative, the paratextual functions are reorganised into three categories (interpretive, commercial and navigational functions), while the unresolved controversies regarding Genette's concept of paratextuality, particularly those which are relevant in the discussion of digitised narrative, are also detailed (materialisation, boundaries and authorisation). They provide an overview of extending and applying paratextuality to contemporary digital narratives, concluding that the concept of paratext is still relevant and fruitful for analysing emerging media in relation to its traditional form, although modification and adaptation of this analytical tool are required accordingly.

An attempt of such modification of Genette's concept of paratext can be observed in a journal article in 2013 by Ellen McCracken who discusses paratextual elements observed in digitised literary works accessed on e-readers, or handheld devices developed for reading electronic texts. McCracken proposes a departure from Genette's framework, which is based on the materiality of printed books, and replaces the ideas of peritext/epitext with 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal' vectors of paratextual functions.[133] This augmentation to Genette's concept, McCracken explains, is to cover 'the new elements of *motion*' created in the reading experience on e-readers.[134] E-readers also have a distinctive materiality compared to traditional printed books: on one hand, as long as one uses a single device, the materiality of multiple texts never varies, unlike that of individual printed books, since it is possible to store and display different

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131 This article by Birke and Christ precedes and contextualises the two articles in the same volume of the journal, 'Bootleg Paratextuality and Digital Temporality: Towards an Alternate Present of the DVD' by Paul Benzon and 'Expanding Genette's Epitext/Peritext Model for Transitional Electronic Literature: Centrifugal and Centripetal Vectors on Kindles and iPads' by Ellen McCracken.

132 Birke and Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative', p. 68.

133 Ellen McCracken, 'Expanding Genette's Epitext/Peritext Model for Transitional Electronic Literature: Centrifugal and Centripetal Vectors on Kindles and iPads', *Narrative*, 21 (2013), 105–24 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/nar.2013.0005>.

134 McCracken, 'Expanding Genette's Epitext/Peritext Model for Transitional Electronic Literature', p. 106. My italics.

texts on the same device. On the other hand, the materiality of a text changes drastically, depending on the type of devices and files, to the extent where '[t]he text's materiality changes the sense readers make of the "same" content'.[135] McCracken argues that new paratextual elements found in electronic literature and the devices that deliver them encourage the reader both to move away from the text (centrifugal) and/or move closer to the text (centripetal). Some electronic paratexts such as a list of titles in one's library on a Kindle enable the reader to access the texts, moving in a centripetal vector, by clicking the links provided. Other electronic paratexts such as 'Book Description' on the Kindle's dropdown Menu may send the reader away from the text they are engaging with, thus driving the reader in a centrifugal vector, to the Amazon page where the additional information on the book including the customer reviews and the price is available.[136] Such 'motions' in the reading process resonate with what Birke and Christ call the 'navigational function' of paratexts that 'guide[s] the reader's reception in a more mechanical sense, both when approaching the text and when orienting herself within the text'.[137] These centripetal/centrifugal vectors arguably exist in Genette's formulation as well, even though Genette's concept is deeply grounded in the materiality of largely paper texts. Although it was not termed as such by Genette, titles and prefaces tend to draw the reader into the text, whereas notes can manifest both centripetal and centrifugal functions. A note may encourage the reader to engage more deeply with the particular sentence of the text it is referring to, while it may drive the reader away from the text by naming a source material for further reading.

McCracken's reformulation of Genette's concept with centripetal/centrifugal vectors points to the movement such paratexts assist the reader to make. The awareness of 'motion' in the reader's experience with the text and the navigational aspect of paratextual elements is also highly relevant in the analysis of contemporary theatrical performance and informs my argument on immersive performance works in Chapter 5. Those performance works which invite the audience to navigate themselves in a given space, whether a mental or physical one, ask them to step out of the conventional role of the audience, a recipient of the texts and their meanings communicated by the practitioners. Instead, the audience are tasked with orientating themselves within the space, which in the case of participatory productions may involve literally finding their own ways in the physical space. These motions prompted by paratextual elements

[135] McCracken, 'Expanding Genette's Epitext/Peritext Model for Transitional Electronic Literature', p. 108.
[136] McCracken, 'Expanding Genette's Epitext/Peritext Model for Transitional Electronic Literature', p. 113.
[137] Birke and Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative', p. 68.

and the decision-making involved significantly comprise the audience's experience and cannot but influence their interpretation of the text.

Expansion

One of the examples of scholars' expanding Genette's paratext is found in a journal article in 2010, in which Robert Allen brings a diachronic dimension to the spatial concept of Genette's paratext. Allen does this by applying the idea to Victorian serialised novels.[138] Taking Charles Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–37) as a main example, Allen argues that the interpretation and reception of Victorian novels were heavily influenced by the publishing convention of serialised novels in the nineteenth century. Periodical publications create a rhythm in the act of reading for the reader and in the waiting period between publications, rather than there being a silent gap. This rhythm functions as paratext which generated active discussion among the readers as to the narrative currently suspended. Moreover, Allen illuminates the complicated status of the preface in serial fiction as a 'special kind of middle' where the past and the future converge at the perpetual present, addressing both readers who had faithfully followed the serial publication, having experienced the narrative periodically, and new readers who are going to read the published volume, encountering the narrative as a whole from the beginning.[139] Extending Genette's concept with an emphasis on spatial aspects by introducing a diachronic perspective, Allen as a result emphasises the performative nature of paratext and suggests that a paratextual element of a work does not necessarily materially exist within the volume, but can be embedded within the cultural practice in question.

Diachronic aspect of paratext also applies to digital narrative such as *Karen* (2015) by Blast Theory. This digital performance takes the form of a smartphone application which invites the user to have a series of life-coaching sessions with Karen Elliott, 'a divorcee with just enough knowledge to be dangerous' in a form of pseudo-video chat.[140] In each short session, a user has a conversation with a character and is asked a range of questions to which he or she answers either in multiple-choice or a 'personal profiling scale', which Karen claims to have newly developed for this new life-coaching system.[141] The story unfolds offering a tailored

[138] Robert Allen, 'Perpetually Beginning until the End of the Fair: The Paratextual Poetics of Serialised Novels,' *Neohelicon*, 37 (1) (2010), 181–89 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11059-010-0061-x>.
[139] Robert Allen, 'Perpetually Beginning until the End of the Fair', pp. 185–86.
[140] Blast Theory, 'Karen' (2015) <http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/karen/> [accessed 30 November 2020].
[141] Blast Theory, 'Karen'.

narrative, responding to the answers, and the initial counsellor/patient relationship starts to collapse shortly after one embarks on these 'life-coaching' sessions, which take the user through the voyeuristic experience of looking into a stranger's life at close proximity. The application finally invites you to a paid option to retrieve the personal profile data collected throughout the interactive narrative.[142] This application does not allow you to rush through to the next episodes one after another; rather, it asks you to wait for a couple of hours or a day until the following episode becomes available. Therefore, a user experiences the narrative by revisiting it over and over again across a certain period of time. This rhythm created by the waiting time inevitably causes the experience of the narrative to be interrupted by and hence embedded in one's everyday life. This diachronic paratext of having to wait between episodes dictates the way the user engages with Karen, inviting the user to maintain a relatively long-term, active commitment to this experience. This is also helped by the privacy and the intimacy that this application asks the user to embrace: the locus of experience is likely to be limited to a more or less personal space because of the personal nature of the interaction and the fact that you need to be able to hear the character's voice to engage with the narrative.

The silence between the publications of instalments of serialised novels, Allen also points out, encouraged the lively discussion amongst readers of the time, creating a 'kind of socialised reading experience'.[143] Therefore, the paratextual element derived from the convention of periodical publications provides a platform for the readers to communicate with one another to enhance the reading experience, which is primarily a solitary act. Digital narratives of the twenty-first century took this even further, according to Maria Lindgren Leavenworth, by allowing the reader to be involved in epitextual conversations which often leads to collaborative writing.[144] In her journal article, 'The Paratext of Fan Fiction', Leavenworth analyses a highly participatory literary genre of fan fiction, or fanfic, expanding Genette's formulation of paratext. Published online, often pseudonymously, fanfics present obvious hypertextuality by borrowing characters and settings from pre-existing narratives. Leavenworth argues that these characteristics lead paratextual elements of fan fiction to manifest differently from those of printed books. Fan fiction websites enable the author to

[142] This report is categorised in two sections, 'dimensions of your personality' and 'you and Karen'; both have three elements respectively that show different aspects of one's personality, such as 'openness to new experience', 'control over one's life' and 'focus of one's life'. The report also explains how each answer affected the following comment by the character or the course of the narrative.

[143] Robert Allen, 'Perpetually Beginning until the End of the Fair', p. 185.

[144] Maria Lindgren Leavenworth, 'The Paratext of Fan Fiction', *Narrative*, 23.1 (2015), 40–60 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/nar.2015.0004>.

interact with fewer time gaps with readers, which facilitates epitextual communication becoming collaboration between the author and readers to co-create a 'live' text, challenging the idea of a single authorial figure which has control over the entire text. Leavenworth also argues that notes in fan fiction are integral rather than marginal to the reading of the text, since this paratextual device enables the author to continue the conversation with the reader.[145] As a consequence of temporal immediacy and the co-creative activity it enables, paratexts in fan fiction are more directly telling the reader the way the text should be read (or not read) rather than hinting or implying how the text should be approached, as is argued in Genette's study which advocates the marginality of paratexts. The immediacy in the relationship between the author and the reader is enforced in fan fiction, just as fan fiction manifests an enforced and transparent relationship with its hypotext.[146] An equivalent of such co-creation in theatre can be sought in post-performance discussion, which certainly functions as a paratextual element for the audience participants who just experienced a performance. In the article on the role of audience in the post-performance discussion, Caroline Heim argues that audience members become 'active contributors to and co-creators of the theatrical event' through participation in post-performance discussion, creating an 'audience text' co-authored with fellow spectators.[147] Considering its liminal status and the fact that it offers commentary upon the performance as a text, 'audience text' would be more appropriate to be considered as a paratext (even though it can still be *a text*). The status of this paratextual element, whether it is epitextual or peritextual, cannot be easily decided. When facilitated appropriately, according to Heim, the audience members' meaning-making processes is examined, refuted and agreed among them through discussion, and then the participants of the discussion reach a consensus about their audience experience.[148] Although such discourse generated amongst the audience members at a particular discussion event is not very likely to refer back to and directly inform the performance itself, it

[145] Leavenworth, 'The Paratext of Fan Fiction', p. 52. For example, Leavenworth observes that a fanfiction author CavalierQueen's use of endnotes as a space to directly address her readers and prompt them to review her work and leave comments is an act of encouraging the reader's engagement in the conversation with the author, and thus, collaboration in the writing process.

[146] Leavenworth, 'The Paratext of Fan Fiction', p. 57.

[147] Caroline Heim, '"Argue with Us!": Audience Co-creation through Post-Performance Discussions', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 28.2 (2012), 189–97 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0266464X12000279> (p. 189).

[148] As Heim noted, an audience text created in post-performance discussion can be 'considered autonomously as a review or an epilogue' when transcribed, or 'as a continuation of performance text' (p. 195). Thus, its paratextual status remains ambiguous: on one hand, it is a public epitext, existing autonomously from the text; on the other hand, it can be deemed as a later allographic peritext, inseparably connected to the main body of the text.

surely gives additional room to the audience to have a prolonged and meaningful engagement with the performance, or the text.

The puzzle of paratexts

The inherently ambiguous nature of paratext causes difficulty in drawing out a steadfast definition on application. Moreover, questions about the validity of applying the concept of the paratext to different genres of art are still a focus of many studies. Confusion is often added due to the controversies over Genette's concept of paratextuality. Three fields of contention are identified by Birke and Christ in their article in relation to digitised narrrative: 'the materialization of the text', 'the boundaries of the text' and 'the question of authorisation'.[149] These unresolved issues problematise the application of paratext and complicate the validity of taking a paratextual approach in the discussion of not only digitised narratives but other genres of art beyond literature.

'Materialization of the text' addresses Genette's conceptualisation of paratexts based on physically tangible printed books and the problems which arise when applying paratextual analysis to artworks with intangible qualities. Genette himself begins the discussion of paratextuality from the act of defining what text is '(very minimally) as a more or less long sequence of verbal statements that are more or less endowed with significance.'[150] Genette's analysis of paratext in literature, built upon this literary idea of text, therefore limits the text and paratext to the verbal, mostly written words, of physical volumes of books. The application of paratextuality in other contexts is sometimes justified by the claim that the paratext of the art form under discussion communicates a verbal message to the reader, abiding by Genette's definition. Marcin Stawiarski, in his article in 2010, extends the notion of paratext by Genette in his analysis of musicalised paratexts, explaining that this type of paratextual element also conveys verbal messages to the reader.[151] Musicalised paratexts, according to Stawiarski, invite the reader to draw a parallel between music and literature, such as Richard Powers' *The Gold Bug Variations* (1991) whose title refers to the idea and structure of *Goldberg Variations* by J.S.

[149] Birke and Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative', p. 68.
[150] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 1.
[151] Marcin Stawiarski, 'This is All But a Book: Musicalized Paratextuality in Literature,' *Neohelicon*, 37.1 (2010), 93–112 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11059-010-0054-9> (p. 94).

Bach.[152] Not only does it draw parallels between the musical piece and text, *The Gold Bug Variations* also accompanies an ante-text called 'Aria' before the body of text, which presents a template for the variation to follow. Likewise, in an article in 2012, Levilson C. Reis justifies the application of the concept of paratext in analysing self-portraits by Frida Kahlo, explaining that they contain textual inscriptions inspired by the Mexican tradition of *retablo*.[153] *Retablo* or *ex-voto* is a painting of a traumatic event, accompanied by an inscription explaining the occasion and expressing the gratitude to divine intervention at the event. Kahlo's self-portraits are characterised by their accompanying verbal text, contexualising the image of the self in the painting.

The application of paratext in theatre research has also justified its validity based on its physical tangibility in the form of a booklet. Gilbert David argues that the programme in theatrical events is one of the prolific theatrical paratexts in his article in 2003.[154] Although David deems a performance of ephemeral nature as text, the paratext discussed in the article remains what takes the form of a book, containing primarily verbal information. However, Genette's account reiterating the verbal quality of paratext, 'almost all the paratexts I consider will themselves be of *textual*, or at least verbal kind', is followed by a comment that 'we must at least bear in mind the paratextual value that may be vested in other type of manifestation', noting those non-verbal manifestations including iconic, material or factual ones.[155] This shows Genette's awareness that text is abstract as much as material, and therefore paratext can be a non-material entity, even though he firmly grounds his argument in the text as physically tangible objects of printed books. When the text itself is intangible, as in theatre performance discussed in this thesis, it is the most beneficial for the argument to expand the issue of 'materialization' and consider the materialisation of the text as what is materially present for the audience to experience, although material objects in such forms as programmes, posters and tickets must not be disregarded.

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[152] Stawiarski, 'This Is All but a Book: Musicalized Paratextuality in Literature', p.101. According to Stawiarski, the term 'musicalized paratext' refers to 'paratext of literature related to music', which either thematically or formally imitates a work of music. *The Gold Bug Variations* (1991) by Powers also refers to *The Gold-Bug* by Edgar Allan Poe, usefully complicating the layers of references.

[153] Levilson C. Reis, 'Paratexts to Frida Kahlo's Oeuvre: The Relationship between the Visual and the Textual, the Self and the Other, from the Self-Portraits to the Diary Entries', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 48.1 (2012), 99–111 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/fmls/cqr040> (p.101).

[154] Gilbert David, 'Éléments d'Analyse du Paratexte Théâtral: Le Cas du Programme de Théâtre', *L'Annuaire théâtral: Revue québécoise d'études théâtrales*, 34 (2003), 96–111 <http://dx.doi.org/10.7202/041542ar>.

[155] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 7. Italics in original.

Such limitations of the theatrical application of paratext to supplementary booklets like programmes and wordbooks are derived from the second field of issue discussed by Birke and Christ, 'the boundaries of the text'.[156] Genette indeed comments that 'the paratext is essentially itself a text: if it is still not *the* text, it is already *some* text'.[157] This statement suggests that the paratext consists more or less of the same material as the text (which is verbal text in the case of books) with the only difference being its location and its function. As Genette acknowledges, if the paratext itself is in theory a sort of text, the boundaries between the text and the paratext become indeterminable, particularly when the text consists of art forms of an intangible nature such as music or theatre.

Marie Maclean in her article in 1991 argues that the understanding of differences between the text and paratexts would be facilitated by referring to speech act theory.[158] Maclean sees paratexts as '[t]he verbal frame' which enhances, defines, and distantiates the text, or occasionally disguises itself as text, explaining that frames are essentially for connecting the text to context, thus, diegesis to extradiegesis.[159] Maclean attempts to elucidate the concept of paratexts by using the vocabulary of speech act theory, categorising the illocutionary act of paratexts into the first order (where the sender of a paratextual message is the author) and the second order (where the sender of a paratextual message is the narrator). [160] This comparison, however, needs further explanation when applied to theatre because of the immediacy of the audience's agency and engagement. Theatrical performance only comes into being as a text when performed for an audience. In other words, it is presented and developed simultaneously with the audience, who are physically co-present with the performers, and/or other kinds of communicative elements within the performance setting. This simultaneity is especially important in experiential performance which asks the audience to step inside a fictional narrative and become a part of the performance. In such circumstances the distinction between who initiates the message and who receives and interprets it is blurred, and so, therefore, is the boundary between text and paratexts.

According to Genette, a peripheral textual element can only be a paratext if it is *authorial*.[161] In this sense, 'the question of authorisation' is one of the basic criteria for

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156 Birke and Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative', pp. 69–70.
157 Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 7. Italics in original.
158 Marie Maclean, 'Pretexts and Paratexts: The Art of the Peripheral', *New Literary History*, 22.2 (1991), 273–79 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/469038>.
159 Maclean, 'Pretexts and Paratexts', pp. 273–74.
160 Maclean, 'Pretexts and Paratexts', p. 274.
161 Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 2.

Genette's concept of paratext. For books, the ownership of, or the responsibility for, the paratext can generally be attributed to the author, the editor or the publisher. In contrast, plays or theatrical performances, like films, are traditionally highly collaborative genres, although the authorship in these genres also often seems to embrace the idea of the single authorial voice at a glance by foregrounding a representative individual, as seen in the idea of auteurism in film criticism. Traditionally speaking, a theatrical work produced by multiple authors is not unusual, and when plays are made into productions, theatre directors are entitled to amend some or most of the parts according to their interpretations of the text.[162] This matter extends to the question of censorship. For example, up until 1968 in Britain, censors could alter the lines or contents of a play against the writers' intention, although this must have been an unwanted collaboration from the playwright's perspective. Moreover, collaborators who contribute to generating the theatrical text are not limited to writers and directors. Actors, in collaboration with directors, enact the text, in the course of which their interpretations are added to the text. As mentioned above, since plays and performance texts are written for the sake of being performed, with some exceptions of closet drama, they should be considered as complete only when they are realised as theatrical performances in front of an audience. The authorship of plays, therefore, can be attributed to any individual described above who is involved in the decision-making processes of creating the piece within a specific time and place.

There has been, and still is, a tradition of text-oriented theatre productions, where in most cases a playwright is credited as the single 'author' of the playtext on which those productions are based, or among a very few 'author(s)', including the director, who are responsible for the production of the performance as a *text*. This has changed over recent decades, as more performance groups develop rich theatrical language that is not necessarily limited to the words in a script to be spoken by performers, and apply non-text-based methodologies, such as devising or improvisation. Contemporary theatre practice, as a result, has diversified the ways for the audience to engage with performances. Performances with fragmental narratives challenge the audience to actively engage with what is offered and make sense of their experience. Productions which invite the audience to physically enter the performance space to navigate themselves often actively encourage the audience to become a part of the scene, to make decisions and to interact with the performers. The 'audience text' through post-performance discussion argued by Heim is an example where the audience is

[162] Jack Stillinger, '8. Plays and Films: Authors, Auteurs, Autres,' *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of the Author in Criticism and Textual Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 163–81.

explicitly invited to collaborate outside of the fictional narrative.[163] In such practices, the playwrights or writers are no longer the single authorial voice. Ideas are often conceived by the whole company, in which case, even when there is a writer who is in charge of establishing a script or text, his or her authority is no greater than that of other members of the company. Theatrical performances today consist of a congregation of multiple authorial voices, which makes attributing the authorship of texts and paratexts even more complicated to justify.

Although Genette emphasises the importance of paratexts as authorial, he also suggests that the *true* identity of the producer of a paratextual message is not very important in understanding the functions of paratexts; the sender of (or, the individual that is responsible in a production for) the paratextual message is defined by 'a *putative* attribution and an acceptance of responsibility.'[164] By saying so, Genette has laid 'the groundwork for an extension of the concept of authorship and for a multiplication of authorizing figures behind the single text', as Birke and Christ state.[165] Given the co-presence of the performers and the audience in the same space, the audience (and their reactions) take part in creating meaning in theatrical productions as well. This is perhaps even more so in such forms as promenade performance, which tend to incorporate the presence of the audience within the scene, or one-to-one performance which, in many cases, requires the direct response and active participation of a solitary audience member. In such pieces, it is the audience as a recipient of a particular paratext that decides who the sender is, and moreover, the audience themselves can be one of the generators of paratextual meanings.

Conclusion

The concept of paratextuality, originally established by Genette, has been adjusted and enhanced in subsequent scholarship in response to diversity of art forms and 'texts' to which this analytical tool might be applied. Paratextuality is indeed characterised by its marginal and peripheral nature; however, a paratextual element is no longer a simply spatial aspect found in the physical pages of the text which supplements the reader's interpretation. Ass shown, it can also manifest in an intangible form, for example in the cultural practice of periodical publications, or it can exert a force against the reader to help them navigate the text. Just as the

[163] Heim, '"Argue with Us!"', pp. 193–94.
[164] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 8. My italics.
[165] Birke and Christ, 'Paratext and Digitized Narrative', p. 71.

idea of ‘text’ has been usefully extended to encompass diverse cultural practice and phenomena, the concept of paratexts has also been redefined and expanded so it is applicable to a far wider variety of art forms and contexts than Genette originally conceived. I have shown that theatrical performance works are no exception, and that paratextual elements that influence the audience’s interpretation are manifest as vital forces within contemporary performance works.

Furthermore, the audience of theatrical performance may not remain in the position of receivers and interpreters of paratexts but can also become generators of paratexts. This is because the text of a theatrical performance unfolds then and there in the co-presence of the audience, and because performance works — especially those that adopt the interactive and immersive strategies I consider later — increasingly demand the audience’s active participation. Therefore, the application of the concept of paratext is not limited to boundary-crossing acts in which the paratexts are consciously foregrounded by the practitioners as authors; the model can also be usefully applied to boundary-crossing acts achieved as a consequence of the structured performance setting, in which the presence, participation and potential authorship of the audience themselves are creatively sought and embraced.

Chapter 2: Paratext and Theatre

The originally literary concept of paratextuality, rooted in the materiality of physical books, has been applied to the 'text' of cultural products beyond literature, as seen in the previous chapter. The awareness of the 'paratextual' or liminality, however, is not a particularly new perspective and has been present in theatre practice and criticism since well before the conceptualisation of paratextuality by Genette. To explore one of the key research questions — What new perspectives will a paratextual model provide in the context of theatre and performance studies? — I firstly discuss the awareness of the paratextual and experimentation around it in theatre in the Sixties. Experimental practice of this period has significantly influenced contemporary theatre, specifically work that is participatory in nature of the kind I analyse in later chapters. In this chapter, I review selected models of innovative practice from the mid twentieth century which pioneered inclusion of the marginal in theatre, yet as I show, still leaving room for further and future experimentation. This is followed by a discussion of more recent scholarly endeavour that focuses on adapting the concept of 'para' in the context of theatre and performance studies, assisting my examination of another research question: How does a paratextual model supplement existing critical discourses? While recent refashioning of the concept of 'para' in the context of theatre has shaped a vocabulary that makes it easier to examine elements outside the live, face-to-face event — including engagement with performance via streamed broadcasts, or through the traces left by performance documentation — this scholarship remains distinct from the model this thesis proposes. Here, I establish a paratextual model as that which focuses on the paratextual and their functions as part of the live event, and specifically with reference to the audience's experience: with the complex text with which the audience engages at its heart, this model enables us to read and understand a performance work in its fullness, generating an interpretation that is supported, supplemented and usefully complicated by the paratextual.

This chapter then moves on to take the concept of postdramatic theatre proposed by Hans Thies-Lehmann as a theoretical support and visits this within an examination of selected work by Forced Entertainment. Lehmann considers that the company's work typically demonstrates the aesthetics of postdramatic theatre: manifest, for example, through emphasis on presence over representation and a non-hierarchical use of disparate materials on stage. In my analysis of the company's work, however, I argue that Forced Entertainment presents an example *par excellence* of the manifestation of the paratextual in theatrical performance,

showing that their distinctive aesthetics can be articulated precisely and powerfully through this model.

The paratextual in the context of theatre

The awareness of the marginal, or the paratextual, itself is not a particularly new discovery of contemporary theatre in the twenty-first century. Exploration into the boundaries of the inside and the outside the performance can be traced back at least to the practice of experimental theatre and performance in the 1960s, which aspired to break the dualisms such as performers/audience and stage/auditorium and to embrace less central aspects in performance, such as the tacitly understood theatrical conventions and non-performance area of theatre houses. It is this experimental practice that laid the foundation, implicitly or explicitly, for the majority of the works analysed in the later chapters of this thesis. The examples I discuss in case studies are characterised by their inclusive nature, where they invite the audience to accept a significant degree of agency. An expectation of active spectatorship established in these works I discuss is derived from avant-garde performance experimentation of that period.

Jerzy Grotowski conducted his exploration into theatre's boundaries by abolishing the distinction between performers and audience, creating a Theatre of Participation or 'Paratheatre' in his post-theatrical phase of work in the late 1960s and 1970s. This practice was conceived as research into performance as a creative process, to be encountered as directly as possible by all those present, and without the end product of a public performance. As Jennifer Kumeiga explains, the main feature of the paratheatrical work is that it was 'intended not to be observed but to be directly experienced in a participatory way'.[1] Grotowski says that in paratheatre 'action is literal — and not symbolic, there is no division between actor and spectator, space is literal — and not symbolic'[2] and therefore, '[a]cting is simply abandoned here'.[3] In paratheatrical projects, participants — both members of public and members of Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre alike — contribute equally to the creative process where the participants are disarmed of their social selves. A paratheatrical work, in Grotowski's words, aspires to achieve '[a] perspective which transcends acting, with all pretense, with all playing'; therefore, this is a process without any representations or any spectators who cast their one-directional gaze on a

[1] Jennifer Kumeiga, *The Theatre of Grotowski* (London: Methuen, 1987), p. 162. Originally in italics.
[2] Kumeiga, *The Theatre of Grotowski*, p. 227.
[3] Jerzy Grotowski and Boleslaw Taborski, 'Holiday', *The Drama Review*, 17.2 (1973), 113–35 <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1144817> (p. 120).

spectacle.[4] One of the early paratheatrical projects in 1973, *Special Project*, took place in the rural village of Brzezinka, Poland, with some members of the public involved, though they were a carefully selected few, or Grotowski's 'ideal' spectators so to speak.[5] In paratheatrical meetings, isolation from civilization and immersion in nature are the keys to enabling the disarmament of the participants and their confrontation with their vulnerable selves. In the conception of Grotowski's paratheatre, it is through taking participants to a non-theatrical and geographically marginal place that an inclusive creative process is achieved, in which all present mutually contribute, and without a hierarchy between those who see and those who are seen. Grotowski's model thus borrows the 'para' to denote a form of theatrical activity proximate to, yet clearly distanced from, the traditional process of artistic creation that assumes that its end point being a public product.

Similarly aspiring to challenge the boundaries between performers and audience, or art and life, were the Happenings, a series of performance events started in the 1960s in the U.S. by Alan Kaprow. A term formally coined after Kaprow's work *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* (1959), a Happening originated as a development of art synthesising different art forms and juxtaposing irrelevant elements.[6] According to Richard Walsh, it was never intended to take the form of a performance; a Happening clearly defined itself as an art form with a synthetic approach, which merely resulted in taking the form of a performance through its evolution.[7] Two key forms taken were the 'Assemblage' and the 'Environment'. Assemblages incorporated everyday objects into artwork, which contributed to the destruction of the boundary between art and everyday life. It could often be unclear in a Happening 'what has taken place, when it has ended and even when things have gone "wrong"', since Happenings embraced the chance for unplanned elements to become a part of them, in turn bringing new, unexpected meaning to the

[4] Grotowski and Taborski, 'Holiday', p. 120.
[5] Kumeiga, *The Theatre of Grotowski*, pp. 165–70.
[6] Richard Kostelanetz focuses on collage of different modes of expression in an artwork in the Happenings in his book *The Theatre of Mixed-Means* (New York: Dial Press, 1968). Kostelanetz argues that in the Happenings artistic elements in different media are employed in the same piece independently in pursuit of their possibility respectively rather than complementing one another. For this reason, Kostelanetz proposes a new terminology for this genre, 'theatre of mixed-means', in the book, which consists of four types of practice: pure happening, staged happening, staged performance and kinetic environment. These terms to define the emerging genres of experimental theatre practice then, however, are not in use today.
[7] Richard Walsh, *Radical Theatre in the Sixties and Seventies*, BAAS Pamphlet No.24 (Keele: British Association for American Studies, 1993) <http://www.baas.ac.uk/richard-walsh-radical-theatre-in-the-sixties-and-seventies/> [accessed 30 November 2020].

whole.[8] The concept of the Environment was to reconceptualise an artwork as 'the entire physical arena',[9] meaning that 'there should not be (and usually cannot be) an audience or audiences to watch a Happening' but only active participants, all of whom would be actively contributing to the event.[10] The Happenings emphasised the importance of both performers and audience staying 'present to the immediacy of their perceptions and experiences', which paved the way for the holistic approach in theatre-making that contemporary performance has inherited.[11] Happenings, therefore, are also a precursor of the awareness to the peripheral in theatre practice, crossing the paratextual threshold and thereby confronting and questioning the dichotomies attached to theatre practice: stage/auditorium, performer/audience and art/life.

Following the holistic approach of the Happenings, the performance theatre in the 1960s America was developed and defined by three groups of practitioners: Julian Beck and Judith Malina's Living Theatre, the Open Theatre directed by Joseph Chaiki, and the Performance Group directed by Richard Schechner. Rejecting the mimetic representation associated with the mainstream dominant theatre, these companies shared a perception of a performance as fundamentally an event or experience, actively incorporating the audience into the performance space and inviting them to take part in the action. Schechner, who led the Performance Group, further developed the idea of Environments derived from the Happenings, which he conceptualises as 'environmental theatre'. Environment, according to Schechner, embraces all space 'where the action takes place', which is not limited to the stage or the space occupied by actors, but including backstage, the foyer and even the transportation the audience use to attend the performance.[12] In the production of *Commune* in August 1972, the Performance Group experimented with eliminating the difference between theatre door and stage door, between onstage and backstage by allowing audience members who were to attend the performance that evening to enter the theatre along with the performers, exploring backstage and observing the preparation for the performance.[13] An experiment in the opposite direction took place in *The Tooth of Crime* in 1973, where performers appeared in front of the audience in

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[8] Alan Kaprow, 'Happenings in the New York Scene (1960)', in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. by Jeff Kelley (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of Calfornia Press, 2003), pp. 15–26 (20).

[9] Walsh, *Radical Theatre in the Sixties and Seventies*.

[10] Alan Kaprow, 'The Happenings Are Dead: Long Live the Happenings! (1966)', in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. by Jeff Kelley (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of Calfornia Press, 2003), pp. 59–65 (64). Originally in italics.

[11] Walsh, *Radical Theatre in the Sixties and Seventies*.

[12] Richard Schechner, *Environmental Theater: An Expanded New Edition including 'Six Axioms For Environmental Theater*' (New York: Applause, 1994), p. x. Originally published in 1973.

[13] Schechner, *Environmental Theater,* p. 35.

the operational roles of the theatre, staffing the box office, selling drinks and socialising with the spectators offstage.[14] These experiments were designed to expose the traditionally hidden inner machinery of theatre to the audience and thus to demystify those mechanisms and challenge assumptions of artistic exclusivity.

Schechner's design of an Environment as 'an irregular circle' demonstrates the way he reimagined the centre and periphery, or text and paratext, of the performance. For Schechner, the irregular circle consists of text-action, performers, space where actions take place, and audience, and all four of these elements fluidly change the shape of the circle, or the text of the performance.[15] In contrast, the conventional theatre would have the audience clearly separated from the other three elements, excluding the audience from where the text is generated and placing them in the physically passive role of viewers. This schematisation by Schechner displays his willingness to incorporate traditionally marginal elements within the larger whole, demolishing a rigid hierarchical structure in the act of spectating. Supporting his view that in performance '[t]here is no dead space, nor any end to space', Schechner's concept of environmental theatre extends well beyond the immediate space occupied by actor and audience-participants, acknowledging that the event-space must remain open to the larger reality of which the performance is only a small part.[16] In this way, environmental theatre reflects the paratextual in its complication of that which is considered interior or exterior to the performance 'text'.

Each of these early experimentations with the peripheries, however, had its limitations and implicit problems. Grotowski's paratheatrical projects deliberately moved away from public performance, but in so doing they restricted access; limiting a viewing audience also meant that the work removed itself from the scrutiny of critics. Grotowski's model of paratheatre attracted charges of elitism; according to Kumeiga, this criticism had been levelled at his work in previous years but the paratheatrical phase effectively compounded this.[17] Rejecting an assumption of an artistic end-product means that every part of process is a part of an event; however, it also makes evaluation and judgement of the experience subjective to the point that the role of theatre critics becomes redundant.[18] Paratheatrical activities thus posed a challenge to reporting and critiquing the event with any degree of objectivity. Grotowski's reluctance to

[14] Schechner, *Environmental Theater,* pp. 35–36.
[15] Schechner, *Environmental Theater,* pp. 36–37.
[16] Schechner, *Environmental Theater*, p. 2.
[17] Kumeiga, *The Theatre of Grotowski,* p. 168.
[18] Kumeiga, *The Theatre of Grotowski,* p. 185.

explain or theorise the work added to the mystification of his practice. A similar criticism could be made of Kaprow's Happenings, which aimed to create holistic experience in which art was no longer discriminated from life, and the participants were aware of 'the immediacy of their perceptions and experiences'.[19] However, since these were to be 'unrehearsed and performed by nonprofessionals, once only', they could sometimes cause bafflement among the participants, eventually leading to repetition and reductivism and losing their analytical value to withstand critique as an art practice.[20]

Schechner's environmental theatre had the participation of the audience at its heart, which, while admirable in theory, manifested a certain limitation in practice. Schechner was aware that a completely open invitation would only result in a chaos, and consequently that a more 'controlled' form of participation could risk being manipulative or forcing the audience into a dubious position (as he records happened with *Dionysus in 69*).[21] For Richard Walsh, the holistic nature of Schechner's practice, and likewise the holistic impulse of performance theatre in the 1960s effectively 'generated a dynamic reciprocity' between conventional dualisms in theatre such as representation and presence, yet the same processes also brought about a loss of depth.[22] Democratisation of the performance, which opened up the performance for the audience to step in impromptu, unfortunately led to unprofessionalism and uncritical acceptance of the idea that every single performance is different. The holistic approach of performance theatre, by its very aspiration of refusing dualisms, risked disregarding the essential differences in the roles of the performer (generator of the text) and the audience (recipient of the text and its authorial intention primarily).

The concept of 'para' in contemporary scholarly work

The potential value of the 'para' as a categorical term has been recognised in performance analysis as well as in theatrical performance. The term has also inspired a variety of additional interpretations and applications. This has recently been exemplified by Lib Taylor, who uses the term 'para-performance' to refer to those 'events that occupy the space between performance

[19] Walsh, *Radical Theatre in the Sixties and Seventies*.
[20] Kaprow, 'The Happenings Are Dead: Long Live the Happenings! (1966)', p. 63. Originally in italics.
[21] Schechner, *Environmental Theater*, pp. 77–84. One of the scenes in which the audience participation was called for in *Dionysus in 69* asked the audience members to pile up on one another to caress each other's bodies. This scene was later taken out from the sequence, as '[t]oo often the performers — especially the women — felt used, prostituted' (p. 42).
[22] Walsh, *Radical Theatre in the Sixties and Seventies*.

and reality', that is, events that occur alongside the performance and which destabilise viewers' perceptions and trouble the boundary between performance and reality.[23] The examples Taylor uses include a site-specific production of *Walking* (2012) by Robert Wilson on Norfolk coast, which, on the occasion she attended, happened to be disrupted by a thunderstorm.[24] In this case, the storm that coincidentally occurred alongside the performance constitutes a para-performance, not designed as part of the performance yet certainly attached to and influencing the audience's experience. Taylor also offers as para-performance the very different example of live theatre broadcast at the cinema, such as NT Live by National Theatre, available across the country, or sometimes across the globe. Such screenings primarily take place simultaneously while the live performance is in process in a theatre, as the branding of the live theatre broadcast enterprises emphasise their 'liveness': NT Live, The MET: Live in HD, RSC Live and the Live in Cinema Season by Royal Opera House. Taylor argues, however, that the viewers of the live theatre broadcast are the audience of 'para-performance', not of the performance itself. Taking place in parallel to a live theatrical event, 'para-performances' are thus physically or conceptually connected to the performance and coincide with it, yet can be recognised as adjacent to and clearly distinct from the 'official' performance text.

The ontology of this recent phenomenon of live theatre broadcast and its distinctiveness from the live performance in theatre is recognised by the critics, yet their accounts vary. Bernadette Cochrane and Frances Bonner consider live relay as 'the production of a different text' and that this process is obscured by the insistence on the sameness and liveness.[25] Analysing the differences between the experience of the remote audience and that of the live audience, Cochrane and Bonner argue that the remote audience surrender their 'rights of reception', or the ability freely to choose one's perspective in spectating, and they are also informed during intervals with extra paratextual materials which the live audience may only find if they choose to read the programme, such as backstage interviews and footage from rehearsals. The live theatre broadcast is a process where a different text derived from the live performance is produced with a controlled and enforced framing. Due to the emphasis on appreciation of the relayed text, which can be screened with delay or as an encore, the

[23] Lib Taylor, 'Phenomenologies of Para-Performance', as part of the panel 'Audiences and Para-Performance', in Live Theatre Broadcast Symposium, at Department of Theatre, Film and Television, the University of York, 25 June 2015.

[24] Robert Wilson, *Walking*, performed at the Norfolk and Norwich Festival 2012 in collaboration with Theun Mosk and Boukje Schweigman.

[25] Bernadette Cochrane and Frances Bonner, '"Screening from the Met, the NT or the House: What Changes with the Live Relay"', *Adaptation*, 7.2 (2014), 121–33 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/adaptation/apu015>.

simultaneity that the transmission happens alongside the actual performance is dismissed in their discussion as often illusory. Janice Wardle shares this view, saying that '[t]heir [live relays'] versions of "liveness" and "communities of perception" are crafted and constructed' and that live relays have an intertextual (or hypertextual in Genette's theoretical framework) relationship with the main text.[26] Evoking authentic locations with theatrical significance such as London and Stratford-upon-Avon, and introducing theatrical conventions like intervals construct 'communities of perceptions' among the cinema audience of live relay, which contributes to the reception of the live transmission as 'theatre'. Wardle suggests the live theatre broadcast ventures make an effort to approximate the experience to that of the live audience by introducing the additional paratextual framing of time, place and occasion. Claire Read, citing Philip Auslander's idea of 'digital liveness', defines the footage captured under control and with extra directions during the live performance as 'the mediatized document' which can 'perform anew' rather than merely archiving the performance.[27] Read reflects upon the concept of 'liveness' based on this idea that live theatre broadcast is an actively performing document which has a cyclical relationship with the original performance. Since the footage captured live is shown within the theatre as well as transmitted to cinemas, and '[a]s the cinema audience consider their portrayal of the performance as "live", the theatre audience are effectively immersed within a double live, through the living bodies on-stage and the technological or digital "live" of NT Live's screening'.[28] The analyses of live theatre broadcast thus agree that it constitutes a para-performance, an action that coincides with and in relation to the main text as discussed by Taylor, and at the same time it is capable of evoking the performance anew as a performing document, if it is not exactly the same thing itself.

The same term of 'para-performance' employed by Edward Nye in his discussion on eighteenth-century ballet pantomime wordbooks resonates with these views on live theatre broadcast. While Taylor's 'para-performance' offers room for elements which are not necessarily contained within the scope of the performance to become a part of the audience's experience, Nye's idea of para-performance is more closely attached to the performance itself. Nye argues that if 'every text is surrounded by a web of paratexts, then likewise every theatrical

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[26] Janice Wardle, '"Outside Broadcast": Looking Backwards and Forwards, Live Theatre in the Cinema – NT Live and RSC Live', *Adaptation*, 7.2 (2014), 134–53 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/adaptation/apu017>.

[27] Claire Read, '"Live, or *almost* live …": The Politics of Performance and Documentation', *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*, 10.1 (2014), 67–76 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14794713.2014.912502> (p. 70).

[28] Read, '"Live, or Almost Live …"', p. 71.

performance spawns its own network of "para-performances"', such as the wordbooks that accompanied the ballet pantomime or programmes.[29] Para-performances for Nye are thus those documents produced for or resulting from the performance and those which support the audience's mapping and navigation of the text. Nye continues to define the function of para-performances as to 'lead spectators to attend performances, heighten awareness during performance, remind them of them afterwards, and provide a link to them for others who cannot attend the performance'.[30] This brings us back to the ephemerality of theatrical performance and the idea of 'performing documents'. More recent research with an interest in performance documentation has argued that the documents can sometimes constitute a form of performance in themselves. Auslander discusses that the impact of documentation on its viewers is not dependent on whether the viewers have experienced the original events, and suggests that it is derived from 'perceiving the document itself *as a performance* that directly reflects an artist's aesthetic project or sensibility and for which we are the present audience' (italics in original).[31] Documentation is essentially a paratext, or more specifically an epitext which exists physically separate from the main body of the text. Both preliminary documents produced as an aid for the audience's interpretation and post-production documentation resulting from the performance enable access to the performance retrospectively 'for others who cannot attend the performance' as Nye argues.[32] However, as Genette maintains 'the paratext is itself a text: if it is still not *the* text, it is already *some* text', documentation is in itself a text.[33] Ephemeral, or 'perishable' in Michael Kirby's word, as theatrical performances are, once completed they leave documentation, or paratexts, without text as a reference point to the preceding original performance, then the documentation becomes a sort of text in itself.[34] Acknowledging the textual value in documentation that is primarily paratextual also can be considered as an extension of the concept of 'para' in scholarly work in contemporary theatre and performance practice.

Distinct from these studies which explore the variants of 'para' in theatrical performance, this thesis deals with the manifestation of paratextual elements which play

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[29] Edward Nye, 'Dancing Words: Eighteenth-Century *ballet pantomime* wordbooks as paratexts', *Word & Image*, 24.4 (2008), 403–12 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02666286.2008.10406265> (p. 406).
[30] Nye, 'Dancing Words', p. 406.
[31] Philip Auslander, 'The Performativity of Performance Documentation', *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, 28.3 (2006), 1–10 <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/202546> [accessed 2 December 2020].
[32] Nye, 'Dancing Words', p. 406.
[33] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 7.
[34] Read, '"Live, or Almost Live …"', p. 67.

important roles in the meaning-making processes of theatre performance. Paratexts in theatre in the sense I employ the term may partially overlap with Taylor's conceptualisation of 'para-performance'. Nevertheless, while a live screening of the theatrical performance and a documentation of a performance work both hold paratextual relationships to the text they are connected to and derived from, these 'para-performance' acquire their own textual value, to be appreciated as an event or a work in their own right. The paratextual approach this thesis proposes concerns paratexts within the context of a performance in question, not those which stand on their own. Paratexts are essentially 'a zone between text and off-text' to be crossed by the reader; therefore, they fully convey their meanings in relation to the text, supplementing it, enhancing it and giving it nuances, when the reader passes that zone.[35] This thesis proposes that focusing on the varieties of paratexts and the ways they manifest in performance works enables us to appreciate the performance piece in its entirety and to elucidate the current of contemporary theatre practice in which performance increasingly embraces elements that are seemingly peripheral and external to the 'piece proper', by exploiting, whether explicitly or implicitly, the permeable nature of paratexts.

Postdramatic theatre and paratext

Hans-Thies Lehmann furthers the idea of 'text' of performance as a texture created by interrelations between multiple elements in his influential book *Postdramatic Theatre*. The development of performance analysis, according to Lehmann, has illuminated that the 'whole situation of the performance' must be considered in interpreting a theatrical performance, and the performance text has been understood to involve '[t]he mode of relationship of the performance to the spectators, the temporal and spatial situation, and the place and function of the theatrical process within the social field'.[36] Therefore, as Lehmann succinctly puts, '[t]he theatre performance turns behaviour onstage and in the auditorium into a *joint text*' that is to be interpreted as a whole.[37] The theatrical analysis needs to be conducted through close reading of this 'total text', which indeed supports the validity of a paratextual approach as I propose in this thesis treating a performance piece as a text.[38] Lehmann explains that postdramatic theatre, as opposed to dramatic theatre, radically changed the concept of text in performance as a result of

[35] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2.
[36] Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. by Karen Jürs-Munby (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 85.
[37] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, p. 17. Italics in original.
[38] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, p. 17.

the shift in how semiotic signs are used. The differences between the dramatic and the postdramatic are thus explained by Lehmann as:

> [T]he postdramatic theatre is *not simply a new kind of text of staging* — and even less a new type of theatre text, but rather a type of sign usage in the theatre that turns both of these levels of theatre upside down through the structurally changed quality of the performance text: it becomes more presence than representation, more shared than communicated experience, more process than product, more manifestation than signification, more energetic impulse than information.[39]

Under the term postdramatic theatre, Lehmann thus draws attention to performance practice which makes elements central that were previously considered as marginal or peripheral. The characteristics of postdramatic theatre include the non-hierarchical use of disparate elements (*parataxis*), which is associated with the overload of sign presented in one instance (*simultaneity*) to the extent the spectators cannot process them all.[40] This means that postdramatic theatre avoids highlighting a particular element as consisting a central significance at a time, and instead presents the central and the peripheral simultaneously on the same plane in abundance. Contemporary performance works that are usefully read through a postdramatic lens, therefore, allow a possibility for the peripheral (paratextual) to be foregrounded at the same level as the central (textual). I argue that it is such performance works that are particularly fruitful to discuss through a paratextual model.

The self-reflexive use of the real in performative situations (*irruption of the real*) is another principle of postdramatic theatre that is relevant to case studies conducted in this thesis. Semiotic reading of theatrical performance argues that performances can only be understood appropriately with a theatrical competence, or an ability to recognise a performance as such.[41] The audience need to be able to acknowledge the framing of performance in order to identify what belongs to theatrical sign-system, that is, what needs interpreting as different level of actions from those happen in reality. However, Lehmann explains that postdramatic theatre practically 'turn[s] the level of the real explicitly into a "co-player"'.[42] In non-mimetic postdramatic theatre that emphasises presence over representation, the real operates not as opposed to the performed, but as part of the performance along with the fictive. '[T]he unsettling that occurs through the *indecidability* whether one is dealing with reality or fiction' is

[39] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, p. 85. Italics in original.
[40] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, pp. 86–88.
[41] Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p. 87.
[42] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, p. 100.

constantly evoked in Forced Entertainment's work that I discuss in the following section, and is also a characteristic of the performance works in non-theatre space that embrace the interference of the real into the performance text, such as the works discussed in later chapters.[43] Playing with the real, performance works of postdramatic theatre make the audience constantly re-examine where the threshold lies, or what is part of the performance and what is not. A paratextual model, I argue, enables us to capture such manifestation of the real in the context of performance that complicates the audience's interpretation of the work.

In relation to the real which has become a theatrical sign in postdramatic theatre, Lehmann states that the emphasis in the postdramatic is not the theatre as a product resulting from representation, but the theatre as a process, saying, 'it is a matter of the execution of acts that are real in the here and now and find their fulfilment in the very moment they happen, without necessarily leaving any traces of meaning or a cultural monument.'[44] All performance works discussed in case studies respectively emphasise the audience's role in the theatrical process to complete the execution of acts. Those performance works which situate themselves in what Lehmann calls '*shared space*' typically push each audience member to become a participant and heighten an 'awareness for *one's own presence*'.[45] In the '*shared space*', the space is inhabited equally by the performer and the audience, inviting the audience to become an active participant in the theatrical situation and to accept a responsibility to enable the performance text to operate.[46] As seen in *Walking:Holding* discussed in Chapter 4, such performance may also involve '*direct contact* […] and experiencing a peculiarly "underdefined" sphere — neither completely public nor completely private.'[47] Non-mimetic performance of postdramatic theatre challenges the audience's perception by rendering '[t]he body of the spectator […] a constitutive part of the staging'.[48] The audience is at the same time a performing participant actively producing a meaning as part of performance text and an interpreter of the meaning of the text to which they are contributing.

Taking a variety of examples of contemporary practitioners such as Heiner Müller, Robert Wilson and Pina Bausch among many others, Lehmann offers a theoretical tool to understand and appreciate the multiplicity of the newly emerging theatre practice and its

[43] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre,* p. 101.
[44] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre,* p. 104.
[45] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre,* pp. 122–23. Italics in original.
[46] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, p. 122. Italics in original.
[47] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, p. 123. Italics in original.
[48] Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre,* p. 124.

genealogies. The postdramatic provides a discourse which supports discussion of a myriad of contemporary performance works which have departed from dramatic theatre, where more or less linear narratives are mimetically represented in a neutral space with an emphasis on the verbal elements. Lehmann names Forced Entertainment as one of the theatre companies whose practice demonstrates the defining aesthetics of postdramatic theatre. In the following section, I conduct a paratexutal reading of five performance works by Forced Entertainment in an attempt to demonstrate not only that the paratextual manifests in their work, but also that the company's postdramatic aesthetics can be usefully captured by the paratextual model.

Forced Entertainment: Performance practice with a paratextual approach

> '[W]e used many official positions to hide behind— centres that bought us the peripheries we were interested in, fronts deployed to simply hold the stage and then crack as the other stuff we wanted took place. Seeming diversions.'
> — Tim Etchells, 'Doing Time'[49]

Forced Entertainment is a performance group based in Sheffield, the UK, founded in 1984 by six drama graduates from the University of Exeter, who have remained the core ensemble to the present day. This company has been acclaimed for their devised performance work, initially more so in continental Europe and then in the UK and internationally. Forced Entertainment's performance works are devised collaboratively by all members of the ensemble, although Tim Etchells, the Artistic Director, is the primary writer and director. The form their work takes ranges from productions for mid-scale theatre and a performance in a tour bus to durational pieces and installations. For example, *Speak Bitterness* (1994), where six performers in formal attire make a series of confessional statements one after another, has had two renditions, a theatre version and a durational version, the latter lasting up to six hours. *Quizoola!* (1996), an improvised Q&A session between two performers in clown make-up, has been similarly performed in different durations and at the maximum lasted 24 hours with online live streaming, where the audience were allowed to come and go, tune in whenever they wished to, or even stay overnight in the auditorium. More recently, Forced Entertainment sought inspiration from literary works in *The Notebook* (2014) and *Complete Works: Table Top Shakespeare* (2015). Both productions are adaptations of existing narratives; however, rather than treating the original text as the primary source on which their performances are based, the company reframed the original verbal text as a curious object along with other components of their work

[49] Tim Etchells, 'Doing Time', *Performance Research*, 14.3 (2009), 71–80 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13528160903519534> (p. 72).

such as the performers' presence and the tasks performers engaged with. *The Notebook*, based on the 1986 novel of the same title by the Hungarian writer Ágota Kristóf, is presented on a minimalistic stage with two performers. The narration of the text is brought to the fore of the storytelling by the limited physical action and by the presence of the notebooks in the performers' hands: the pages are literally present on stage both physically and verbally. *Complete Works: Table Top Shakespeare* is a collective performance event composed of thirty-six one-person recountings of Shakespeare's plays with everyday objects on a table signifying the characters. In this way, thirty-six epic dramas are condensed into a series of forty-five-minute summaries on a table top, where the details and the lines of the original plays are sacrificed in order to emphasise the main arc of each play as a story. In this series, the canonical play texts are treated with the same weight as everyday, non-special objects such as glue sticks and a half-empty bottle of nail polish remover. Developed through improvisation and experiments during rehearsals and repeatedly studying video recording of those rehearsals, devised performance works by Forced Entertainment play with theatrical conventions, questioning the audience's role and complicating the boundary of what is performance and what is outside it.

One of the recurring motifs in Forced Entertainment's work is embedded failures or unfulfilled expectation set at the beginning, which Etchells describes as 'a penchant for unpromising beginnings'.[50] Forced Entertainment's performance is often opened by performers declaring what they aspire to achieve in the show, which is rarely fulfilled, as in *Bloody Mess* (2004), discussed later. Rather than realising what they have promised to the audience at the beginning and providing an answer to the questions with which they open the performance, they leave the audience with even more questions by the end of it. Competitions and games are also often used in Forced Entertainment's work as a force to drive the piece forward. Contests over a microphone for one's turn to speak and attempts to outperform other performers with cleverer answers and better stories build tension on stage to the point where the content of the competition is overshadowed by the competition itself. Such shift of focus is also demonstrated in problematising the audience's perspective by having multiple seemingly disconnected actions taking place at the same time. Engineering this shift of focus challenges the audience's comprehension of what the text is, demanding that the audience be actively engaged with the performance as an agent of the meaning-making processes. Forced Entertainment deliberately

[50] Etchells, 'Doing Time', p. 74.

create ambivalence in their work, exploring the in-between of fiction and reality and hesitating at the edge of the performed and the not-performed.

Forced Entertainment's work constitutes a prime example of the paratextual model I propose in this thesis, for their orientation to fragmentation, peripheries and margins. Etchells discusses the dramaturgical significance of peripheries for Forced Entertainment in his performance lecture on dramaturgy in 2007, 'Doing Time':

> We loved them [peripheries]. We could think of a thousand things to do at the edges of the stage or a thousand more to do in the background at least 'while someone else does something in the middle'. *We were, in a certain way, all edges, all peripheries.* As if the official did not suit us much.[51] (My italics)

Explaining how the company's work has always been drawn to exploring the unofficial and digressions, Etchells says 'the charm and charge of the edges can't quite be dispelled' despite the audience's knowledge of the fictional status of all 'those asides, those upstagings, those wandering off from the point'.[52] Mark Smith summarises such manifestations of the company's interest in somewhere that is 'elsewhere' than the centre, using a specific paratext as a metaphor: footnotes.[53] Smith argues that Etchells' and Forced Entertainment's works, both in written form and in performance, use annotations in performative ways. Indeed, Etchells' annotations in the form of footnotes in his writings enable the reader to encounter multiple voices and manifold perspectives, and to experience a non-linear journey through discursive digressions and contradictions within the text. For example, "A Text on 20 Years with 66 Footnotes", as the title goes, is heavily annotated and at times footnotes occupy more space on a page than the body of text.[54] The authorial footnotes written by Etchells himself constantly expand and supplement the text, while they also digress from, interrupt, question, or in some cases entirely negate what the text above states.[55] These footnotes in dialogue with the text, however, are just as hesitant as the voice of the densely annotated main body of text. The use of dashes, parentheses and insertions of phrases within the aside of the footnotes further fragment

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[51] Etchells, 'Doing Time', p. 73.
[52] Etchells, 'Doing Time' p. 74.
[53] Mark Smith, 'Performances in Footnote Form: *While You Are with Us Here Tonight*', *Performance Research*, 20.6 (2015), 106–13 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2015.1111063>.
[54] Tim Etchells, 'A Text on 20 Years with 66 Footnotes', in *Not Even a Game Anymore*, ed. by Judith Helmer and Florian Malzacher (Berlin: Alexander Verlag, 2004), pp. 269–90.
[55] Some footnotes are supplementary: footnote 6 furthers the discussion by opposing what is said in the text, regarding how a specific action can be reassigned to another performer in the course of rehearsals. Others are more of unhelpful asides: footnote 13 admits the failure of the author's memory and footnote 34 reports the lack of evidence to support the information in the text.

the text. *While You Are With Us Here Tonight*, whose main body of text consists of the monologue delivered by Terry O'Connor at the beginning of *First Night* (2001), is similarly annotated extensively, yet the majority of the footnotes are allographic, that is, written by someone other than the author of the text, Etchells.[56] Allographic footnotes highlight the fact that the meaning is created not solely by text or paratext alone, but by the relation between the two, since they encourage the reader to reimagine the dialogue between the main body of the text and the other voices in the form of footnotes.[57] The footnotes in this piece of writing are, therefore, employed with the same aspiration for their performance making: to release the text from the 'closure' and 'fixity' of 'the homogenised, the pre-packaged' with a beginning, the middle and an end.[58] Framing a performance work with a playful use of theatrical conventions in *First Night* (2001) and commenting upon the city as a text in *Nights in This City* (1995) in Smith's argument, however, would be better understood by taking a wider range of paratextual elements in consideration, rather than limiting the discussion under the label of footnotes, for the footnote is not the only paratextual element with an annotative function.[59] If Forced Entertainment's creative practice is 'all edges, all peripheries' as Etchells says, their work deserves to be analysed from all directions, taking all paratexts into account.[60]

In this section, I demonstrate how the characteristics of performance works by Forced Entertainment can be illuminated by a paratextual model through a series of brief discussions of five pieces from different periods of the company's history. I discuss *Dirty Work* (1998), which explores the imaginative force of language, alongside its recent reboot, *Dirty Work (The Late Shift)* (2017), and *Sight is the Sense that Dying People Tend to Lose First* (2008), which presents a long monologue of disconnected statements 'explaining' the world. These works place a strong emphasis on the capacity of language to conjure up images and to allow the audience's mind to play with free association, while the anticipation built through the accumulation of words is never fulfilled. The discussion of these works that involve little action or visual spectacle is followed by an analysis of two pieces that are arguably at the opposite end of the spectrum in their repertoire: *Bloody Mess* and *The Coming Storm* (2012). These works are both characterised by a physical and metaphorical overload of materials on stage. The ideals that the performers declare at the beginning they aspire to achieve are not realised, while a

[56] Tim Etchells, *While You Are With Us Here Tonight* (London: Live Art Development Agency, 2013).
[57] Smith, 'Performances in Footnote Form: *While You Are with Us Here Tonight*', p. 108.
[58] Etchells, 'A Text on 20 Years with 66 Footnotes', p. 286.
[59] Smith, 'Performances in Footnote Form: *While You Are with Us Here Tonight*', pp. 108–11.
[60] Etchells, 'Doing Time' p. 73.

number of failed attempts to achieve the stated aspirations take the stage by storm and create a physical mess in front of the audience. My discussion of these five works demonstrates that what is at the very core of Forced Entertainment's aesthetics can be effectively illuminated by a paratextual model.

Peter Billingham explains that Forced Entertainment's approach can be characterised by 'a diverse range of "texts"' it encompasses; that is, 'texts of the body in space, texts of images on a video screen, texts of live and recorded music and the found detritus of contemporary pop-trash culture'.[61] However, it is also true that the company's practice places a great importance on the verbal, demonstrating '[f]aith in the evocative power of language, in stories just hinted at, in words and names', as Lehmann discusses.[62] *Dirty Work* exemplifies this approach in Forced Entertainment's theatre-making, since the focus of this piece is the spoken text itself with little accompanying physical or visual action. In *Dirty Work*, conceived as 'an absent show […] that never really takes place', Robin Arthur and Cathy Naden take turn in describing the action on stage, from dark spectacles of atomic explosions and suicidal acts to more familiar theatrical routines of magic and acrobats, only through words.[63] The language at times resembles that of stage directions ('There is a moment of silence and then a drum roll') and introductions of the scenes that should subsequently be enacted ('Act Two begins with a fight staged between a bear and a lion').[64] A series of utterances by the performers in this work take the form of introduction and explanation 'on the subject of the text that follows', anticipating the said actions which do not physically unfold on stage.[65] Throughout the performance, in the margin of the stage at upstage left, is another figure seated at the gramophone, operating sound from time to time. This role in the first *Dirty Work* is taken by Claire Marshall who was heavily pregnant at that time. Her silent and anchoring presence, harbouring a real life within her body, draws a contrast to a series of fragmented stories which are never realised. Marshall's presence at the margin of the stage, both literally and metaphorically 'pregnant', jars with the competitive storytelling between Arthur and Naden,

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[61] Peter Billingham, 'Falling and Floating in Sheffield – Drunks, Dancers and Late-night Bus Rides: Themes and Strategies in the Work of Tim Etchells and Forced Entertainment', *At the Sharp End: Uncovering the Work of Five Leading Dramatists* (London: Methuen Drama, 2007), p. 180.

[62] Hans-Thies Lehmann, 'Shakespeare's Grin. Remarks on Worlds Theatre with Forced Entertainment', in *Not Even a Game Anymore*, ed. by Judith Helmer and Florian Malzacher (Berlin: Alexander Verlag Berlin, 2004), pp. 103–17 (114–15).

[63] Forced Entertainment, 'A Note on Dirty Work', *Dirty Work* (Sheffield: Forced Entertainment, 1998), p. 3.

[64] Forced Entertainment, *Dirty Work* (Sheffield: Forced Entertainment, 1998), pp. 7–8.

[65] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 161.

bringing an extra layer of reality to the work.[66] While the performers' presence on stage with curtain already open precedes the entrance of the audience, the presence of a life that will soon come into the world is implied throughout the performance. Therefore, this work can be compared to a paratextual element of preface without the body of text. It is expectant of forthcoming acts and prepares for them, although they never actually follow, and they only exist in the audience's imagination.

The narration of *Dirty Work* not only evokes the imagery of larger-than-life catastrophes but sometimes swiftly shifts to make reference to the current situation shared by the audience. For example, the following lines delivered by Naden are slightly expanded in the recent reboot of *Dirty Work (The Late Shift)*. In this version, the direct reference to the present situation is more emphasised:

> CATHY There is some extemporising, some adlibbing. The audience become anxious. They start to fidget. Some of them are bored. Two actors on stage get confused. They get into a loop. The scene starts to repeat. And it repeats. And it repeats. And it repeats. And it repeats. Things become strained. The actors remain in the loop. Crisis.[67]

The performance piece, where everything is mediated by language and where the audience are invited to exercise their imagination, suddenly refers back to the here and now, shared by all present in the space. Here, with the use of the performative verb 'to repeat', the performers literally perform what they say: they repeat the scene, being confused in a loop. By drawing the audience into the narrative, the performers remind them that they are very much part of the work. The alternating narration between Arthur and Naden at first seems to be a low-key competition between the two, each quietly seeking to unfold more impressive and starker images than the other. Anchored by this reference to the present moment, the audience of *Dirty Work* are already inscribed in the text while they are engaged in communal daydreaming triggered by a perpetually prolonged preface.

The use of language to evoke imagery is pursued to the extreme in *Sight is the Sense that Dying People Tend to Lose First*. A solo piece written by Etchells and performed by U.S.

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[66] In *Dirty Work (The Late Shift)*, this role is taken by O'Connor and the absence of connotation brought by pregnancy in this rendition shifts the implication of this figure's presence. The presence of O'Connor in *Dirty Work (The Late Shift)* emphasises her continuous yet understated presence, heightening the fictionality of the situation, mirroring the audience.

[67] Forced Entertainment, *Dirty Work (The Late Shift)* (2017). The access to the online resource of this video documentation was kindly offered by the company for the purpose of this research.

actor Jim Fletcher, this work is even more minimalistic than *Dirty Work*, with one performer facing the audience, communicating solely through a series of free-associating statements:

> The phrase 'law of the jungle' is misleading. There is no law in the jungle. The phrase 'he who laughs last laughs the longest' is also misleading. […] They say there are no shortcuts to success. Life goes on pretty much the same even when some people die. The Internet is a network of computers all joined together, mainly using wires. Computers are thinking machines. A soldier is a fighting machine. James Brown was a sex machine.[68]

Statements that seem only superficially connected are too fragmental to form a narrative, yet both accidentally and by design, some statements next to one another effectively produce a sequence. A comical effect is often combined with and supported by the silence or the laughter from the audience between the statements, and the meanings are found not only in the literal message of each statement, but also between the lines and the situation itself. As the performance proceeds, the anticipation of or desire for a meaningful sequence, or better yet, a narrative, gradually builds up, which may or may not be fulfilled. Since the performer's presence and the monologue are the central components of the piece, they would seem to constitute its 'text'; yet as the expectation grows in the audience that a meaningful connection will emerge, it is this anticipation that becomes central. The audience's need for meaning becomes the text; the monologue and its delivery become secondary to it and, therefore, an effective paratext. Thus, despite their primary emphasis on language, the deliberate shift of central focus is observed in the two versions of *Dirty Work* and in *Sight is the Sense*. In all three works, the language is more evocative than descriptive and is employed in a way that their meanings and coherence are constantly interrupted and unsettled. This allows the audience's attention to move between the performance fiction and the reference to the reality of the present moment.

Etchells explains the performer-audience relationship which Forced Entertainment is interested in as '[a] game of drawing them in and pushing them away'.[69] *Bloody Mess* and *The Coming Storm* are performance pieces that strongly emphasise the latter, unlike the two renditions of *Dirty Work* and *Sight is the Sense*, both of which explore the capacity of language

[68] PARC TV, Forced Entertainment, *Sight is the Sense That Dying People Tend to Lose First* trailer (2010) <https://youtu.be/NTjBU_qYdYo> [accessed 2 December 2020].

[69] Tim Etchells, *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 63.

to conjure up imagery 'in provocative, intimate style'.[70] The stage is occupied by more performers — ten in *Bloody Mess* and six in *The Coming Storm* — whose individual ambitions and actions coincide and collide on stage. Rather than drawing the audience into a narrative, the constant competition among the performers and the co-presence of distractingly disparate actions serve to push the audience away from comfortable immersion in the text. Both works are characterised by the prolonged prefatorial sections at the beginning that frame the text and also by the fact that the audience are kept at the edge of fragments of stories which are curiously cohesive, if not coherent. These broken narratives and actions may not particularly display unity in terms of content, yet those fragments create a chaotic disparity in a constant state of flux, which presents a sort of unity that is characterised by the disparity itself.

Bloody Mess effectively includes two prefatorial sections: 'Chairs' and 'Line Up'.[71] Rivalry between two clowns (John Rowley and Bruno Roubicek) over placing chairs on stage develops into a slapstick fight by the time a line of chairs is complete, and both performers become exhausted. 'Line Up' sees the performers seated on the chairs make a series of declaration of what they aspire to achieve in the show. Richard Lowdon who breaks the silence through a microphone remarks that there are a few things they want to say '[b]efore we start'.[72] 'Line Up' is, therefore, clearly marked off from the main body of text. The separation of this part from the performance is articulated again at the end of this section:

> RICHARD That seems like a pretty good note to um end this bit on so I think we'll draw a line underneath this section and I think we're pretty much ready to start. So I think we'll, we'll get going.[73]

With a line drawn before the 'official' beginning of the performance, this section is signalled as a preface by the performers themselves, who wish to communicate the authorial intention in the performance which they are now 'ready to start'.[74] In this preface, the intention of the performers is presented in the form of a series of statements which are characterised by growing competition over who gets to speak through the microphone. It predicts what the audience are going to see: two romantic heroes, someone who is the 'only real "star" in the show', someone enigmatic, someone symbolic and someone who looks real and is 'really, really *living it*' (italics

[70] Forced Entertainment, *Dirty Work* (Sheffield: Forced Entertainment, 1998), p. 3.
[71] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess* (Sheffield: Forced Entertainment, 2004), p. 9.
[72] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess*, p. 9.
[73] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess*, p. 11. RICHARD stands for Richard Lowdon.
[74] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess*, p. 11.

in original).[75] Here, the genre definition, one of the key functions of ' a preface-manifesto', is already in trouble since there is hardly any connection among what individual performers aspire to achieve.[76] Moreover, none of these announcements are fully realised in the following performance. Jerry Killick, who describes himself as a star in the preface, proves to be a performer with a cardboard star, not a star actor. Similarly, Wendy Houstoun, who relates a catalogue of adjectives she aspires to embody, indeed turns out to be 'bubbly and bouncy', but only literally by being engaged in durational attempts at bouncing and doing star jumps.[77] This section assumes the guise of preface to the performance, providing the authorial intentions which presumably are 'the most reliable interpretive key[s]' for the audience; however, this preface does not fulfil the supposed functions explained by Genette of bridging the authorial commentary and the body of the text, because the interpretive clues do not lead to what they promise.[78] What this prefatorial section holds instead is a series of empty predictions, a disconnection from the remainder of the performance and the ambiguous status of being both text and paratext, for the performance has already technically started even before 'Line Up', despite the performers' claim that the performance is yet to begin.

This unhelpful preface-manifesto also raises the question of who the addressees are. 'Line Up' is presented in an arrangement similar to that of a post-show discussion: some performers are in casual clothes and they speak to a microphone taking turns, seated on a line of chairs. This static and nonchalant arrangement strongly suggests that the performers are supposedly in the not-yet-in-performance mode of presence then, as opposed to later on, when they put on costumes and wigs, engaged with their own tasks, only to create a mess. On one level, the addressee of a preface, Genette explains, is the reader —— not any member of public, but the reader who is 'poised for an imminent reading of the text' with the text in hand.[79] On another level, the addressee can be someone specific or imaginary, in which case the reader receives the commentary 'through the third party or over the third party's shoulder'.[80] The narrative beginning of a performance work, as Ryan Claycomb argues, has to be considered as a process, not an event on a singular moment.[81] If the prefatorial section in *Bloody Mess* is indeed

[75] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess,* p. 11.
[76] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 228.
[77] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess,* p. 10.
[78] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 222.
[79] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 194.
[80] Genette, *Paratexts,* p. 195.
[81] Ryan Claycomb, 'Curtain Up? Disrupted, Disguised, and Delayed Beginnings in Theater and Drama', in *Narrative Beginnings: Theories and Practices,* ed. by Brian Richardson (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), pp. 166–78 (167).

outside the performance as claimed by the performers, then the addressees are the individuals who are to be engaged with spectating, being instructed how to be an ideal audience member, equipped with due interpretation. However, the narrative beginning in *Bloody Mess* is complicated by the preceding fight between the clowns over chair arrangement, which has framed the performance as practically 'begun'. The disconnection between prefatorial statement and the following text also disrupts this relationship between the sender of the preface and the addressee. The fact that none of the declared intentions are realised or followed up subsequently leads the audience to question whom the preface is aimed at communicating with. The extensive explanation offered by the performers, who even at times prompt one another to say more as '[i]t's not working', is designed to fail to inform the audience of how to 'fully' appreciate the following text.[82] Here, the prefatorial function is at play: the addressee of the preface is in fact not the individuals they are performing to, but a larger idea of 'an audience'. The audience members receive the authorial intention over the shoulder of 'an audience', which makes them conscious of their act of spectating and question whether they are supposed to assimilate to the role of 'an audience', taking the performers' words. Thus, it can be said that the act of 'pushing them [the audience] away' in *Bloody Mess* is realised by the effective use of paratexts as well as through the overload of materials on stage.

The use of paratexts in *Bloody Mess* is not limited to prefaces that confuse the narrative beginning. The actions and objects concurrently taking up space on stage constitutes an 'incoherent' spectacle. This overload of fragmented materials confuses the audience's focus, making it unclear which is the main text. Etchells explains the dramaturgical significance of 'the official', or the central, as:

> The official for us then, might be […] not much more than a place to hide behind […] a place to stand or a tree to stand under, a thing that buys one the right to be there — the clearing of the way, or the opening of the space.[83]

The 'official' or central position to be occupied by a performer in Forced Entertainment's work, therefore, is a device to create a hierarchy of information on stage in which the central is not necessarily more important than the peripheral. 'Born to be Wild', a section that follows immediately after 'Line Up', starts with Naden lying downstage centre, while Terry O'Connor weeps and screams over her body, Houstoun cheerleading and Arthur and Lowdon headbanging

[82] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess*, p. 10.
[83] Etchells, 'Doing Time', p. 72.

to the music. Here, Naden constitutes 'the official', a grounding presence that occupies a central position to free up the peripheries. The central in Forced Entertainment's work is in service for the margins, allowing the audience's eyes to wander off. This spatial configuration of hierarchy also constantly changes throughout the performance. After Naden's multiple attempts to protest, exclaiming accusations that things have totally gone wrong, she recedes to the edges herself to have 'a rest', assuring the audience of her later return.[84] As she moves to the margin, giving up the official place to occupy, it is Rowley who takes up downstage right, claiming the prominent position in the dramaturgical hierarchy. Again, this only gives an excuse for the others to fill the surrounding space. Interrupted by Lowdon with a microphone, Claire Marshall in a gorilla suit and O'Connor with a glass, Rowley's attempt at story-telling is not fully realised, and the audience's eyes are again led away from the centre to the peripheries. In *Bloody Mess*, where the central is there for the sake of the margins, the 'main text' remains elusive at any given moment of the work, challenging the audience where to rest their focus. Left with abundant paratexts that fill the stage, the audience faces a challenging task of figuring out how they are supposed to appreciate the text, or if there is one at all.

If *Bloody Mess* emphasises the spatial use of paratexts, *The Coming Storm* displays temporal use of the same device. *The Coming Storm* similarly opens with a preliminary speech which frames the performance to follow. For the first ten minutes of the performance, O'Connor gives an account of what makes 'a good story' while the fellow performers standing in line gradually start to display their discomfort by shuffling around, with their arms crossed or hands in their pockets. Performers standing around, seemingly doing nothing of particular significance, draws a parallel to 'Line Up' in *Bloody Mess* where all the performers are actively engaged with identifying their *raison d'être* in the performance, except that in *The Coming Storm* it is not explicitly stated whether the performance has started or not:

> TERRY A good story needs a clear beginning. Something strong or dynamic. A good story needs a charismatic central character, a role model, or… or a likable villain. […] A good story needs surprise, a silence that gets broken unexpectedly. Or a relationship that seems good but gets into trouble.[85]

This general definition of ingredients for a good story, however, suggests implicit reference to the very situation the performers and the audience are in:

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[84] Forced Entertainment, *Bloody Mess*, p. 14.

[85] Forced Entertainment, *The Coming Storm* Performance DVD (2012). The access to the online resource of this video documentation was kindly offered by the company for the purpose of this research.

> TERRY […] A good story needs points of stillness. Spaces for reflection and contemplation. Parts of the story where at first it might seem like… nothing is happening at all. But later, when you look back at it, you realise that it is there, at that point, the story is at its fullest and its most… intense.[86]

Here, the speech refers to what is happening at the present moment in the theatre and anticipates how this moment might be reflected upon later. Indeed, 'it might seem like nothing is happening at all' during this monologue by O'Connor, but this line in itself functions as a commentary on the audience's expectation of what a performance is supposed to present. This statement in a way undermines the main text that follows by predicting that this very moment would be reflected upon as when 'the story is at its fullest and its most intense', emphasising the textual importance of the paratext of preface over the main text to follow. The prefatorial monologue, therefore, occupies the hesitant status of being both text and paratext. While it has technically opened the performance as part of the text, it prefaces the following stories by framing what makes a good story. It is also a gesture to hint that a story is given its shape retrospectively: this preliminary speech on storytelling may not be immediately recognisable as a story while it is being told, yet it certainly constitutes part of the larger 'story' of *The Coming Storm*.

In *The Coming Storm*, the fragments of half-told stories constitute the embedded failures of spinning a 'good' narrative, which accumulate into a story about telling a story. Storytelling is an art which is always partly constituted by its diversions, and in *The Coming Storm* the progress of telling is likewise characterised by interruption. Fellow performers undermine previous stories by pointing out an error in geographical details, offering unhelpful props for a supposedly visual aid for the scene related, and stationing themselves as close to the narrator as possible to physically claim their place in someone else's story, all of which distract the attention of both the narrator and the audience. The focus of the audience is also kept pulled back on the storytelling itself, not on the content of the story. The audience is told to keep their attention on Lowdon, who tells a story, while others are 'getting ready for the next bit', or to keep looking at O'Connor as she does a dance routine that she has forgotten to do earlier in the show. Arthur, rather than telling a story himself, inserts his questions into others' stories, asking whether a character called 'killer' would appear in their stories or requesting the change of characters to make a story sound 'right'. Both the act of guiding the audience's attention and revisiting previous stories for clarification detract the audience's focus from the specific content of a narrative and direct it to a more abstract level of storytelling in general. As a result, the

[86] Forced Entertainment, *The Coming Storm* Performance DVD.

colourful and at times fantastical stories of pirates, a memory of innocent love during a coach holiday and a relative who took over the family home all finally fail to be the main text and only become supportive examples of storytelling. Here again, the stories being told which occupy the centre space are at the service of the periphery; the stories that are seemingly offered as the main text are overshadowed by that which paratextually frames the performance, that is, the question of what makes a good story, introduced by O'Connor at the beginning.

Following Genette's schematisation, the preface in *The Coming Storm*, delivered by one of the narrator-heroes, is categorised as fictive actorial preface, where the sender of the preface is both narrator and protagonist of the narrative.[87] Genette argues that prefaces are underpinned by the text's self-consciousness of speaking of itself, and that fictional ones in particular 'play[ing] on its discomfort', uncomfortably and playfully mimicking the behaviour and functions of authorial prefaces of autobiography. Genette uses a theatrical metaphor in describing the endlessly receding images in the mirror of one writing a preface, which is seen by oneself, described by oneself and so on, saying, '[t]his endless reflecting, this self-describing in a mirror, this staging, this playacting of the prefatorial activity'.[88] This uncomfortable staging of a prefatorial statement takes even more immediate and forceful effect in performance than in written text, because of the fact that the audience members have no other choice but to experience the preface prior to the text, unlike the reader who may choose to skip the pages to the main text. Genette also notes a disadvantage of having a preface, saying that 'it constitutes an unbalanced and even shaky situation of communication: its author is offering the reader an advance commentary on a text the reader has not yet become familiar with.'[89] Therefore, in *The Coming Storm* the audience members are not sure if they can trust O'Connor's prefatorial statement, as the audience members are aware of its fictiveness and are unaware of what follows. This unsettling of the audience, again, can exercise more effect in performance form than in the form of book, since the audience do not have a physical cue of feeling the number of pages that awaits them or a concrete guidance of page indications when the preface ends and the main text starts. Indeed, in *The Coming Storm*, O'Connor's statement thematically bleeds into the following parts without a clear indication of its ending except for a microphone being snatched by Phil Hayes who starts telling his story. In *Bloody Mess*, though it is clearly marked off from the 'proper' performance as the performers claim, the trustworthiness of the prefatorial

[87] Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 291–92.
[88] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 292.
[89] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 237.

statements is not known until the rest of the performance unfolds. The works by Forced Entertainment, therefore, utilise prefatorial elements in order to deliberately summon 'an unbalanced and even shaky situation of communication' that unsettles the audience and destabilises any expectation of what a 'good' story is — or what a performance is.[90]

Conclusion

An awareness of the potency of the peripheral in theatre and experimentation around it have been present in theatre practice since well before the advent of Genette's paratextuality. Experimental performance in the 1960s initiated by Grotowski, Kaprow and Schechner respectively attempted to be inclusive and aspired to holistic approaches to theatre and performance that transcended conventional dichotomies of stage and auditorium, performer and audience, and representation and reality. In short, all these endeavours by practitioners ventured to dismantle the barrier between the central and the marginal, hence, the boundary between text and paratext. The concept of 'para' in recent theatre studies has seen an expansion, appearing as the term 'para-performance'. While Taylor and Nye use this term in different senses, what their conceptualisations share is that 'para-performances' can exist independently as physically separate events or objects as a result of a performance, though they are coinciding with and derivative of the said performance. 'Para' in their sense has an emphasis on being distinct and separable from the text, while conceptually related to it. Foregrounding paratext in a theatrical performance practice and studies, therefore, is not in itself a new approach in theatre; however, the paratextual model this thesis proposes intends to analyse the interaction between text and paratext as an integral part of the performance meaning-making process, not merely to describe a relationship between the two. This paratextual model is therefore innovative and distinctive from previous consideration of the principle in the way that it gives a vocabulary with which to discuss peripheral aspects of a performance work in relation to the text. In the same way that Taylor sees a significant impact of the coinciding storm during the outdoor performance, this paratextual model is capable of capturing the impact of the marginal elements in the audience's perception of the work, however subtle or happenstance they might be.

Finally, the interaction between text and paratext captured by the paratextual model is exemplified in the analysis of five performance pieces by Forced Entertainment. In works such

[90] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 237.

as the two versions of *Dirty Work* and *Sight is the Sense*, the central focus is deliberately shifted from the verbal 'text' to the present moment shared by the audience in which what is uppermost is anticipation of action and for meaning to emerge. *Bloody Mess* and *The Coming Storm* on the other hand make explicit use of the paratextual element of preface to build expectations that are largely destined to be unfulfilled. In this strand of Forced Entertainment's work, in shows that are characterised by abundance and overload of materials, the seeming 'main text' is kept elusive at any given moment, always interrupted by activity at the margins that constantly diverts the audience's attention. As Etchells says that, what is central in their work is something which creates 'the clearing of the way, or the opening of the space': what is initially posited as the main text does not remain the focus of the show.[91] Rather, the 'main text' becomes just one of the theatrical apparatuses at play, and in this case one that enables the paratextual to be increasingly foregrounded. It is just such a shift of focus, resulting from the interaction between text and paratext, that this model can elucidate.

[91] Etchells, 'Doing Time', p. 72.

Chapter 3: Paratexts and Performance Space I — the hotel

Prolific use of non-theatre space constitutes one of the major characteristics of contemporary theatre practice. An increasing number of artists choose to use a space which is not a purpose-built theatre in order to exploit alternative architectures, histories, associations and expectations that are pertinent to the work, and thus enrich the audience experience. Whether it is a space enclosed within walls such as a disused building or a functioning hotel, or an outdoor space such as a park or streets that directly intersect with adjacent spaces, the physical structures of non-theatre space cannot be approached and understood according to the tacit agreement of a purpose-built theatre, precisely because its primary purpose is not to accommodate a performative act. Conventional theatre buildings present certain spatial configurations, indicating what practices they are designed to house: an area, often raised, dedicated to stage a spectacle; the auditorium for the spectators to be seated; and a foyer equipped with a bar, a café or a bookshop as a social space, which functions as a junction for the traffic of the audience entering and exiting the fictional world of the spectacle as well as for spending time between the acts, during the intervals.[1] The spatial configurations are developed for manifold reasons; theatre houses hold aesthetic, practical, economic and social functions. However, now that they are taken as the norm, they, in turn, suggest certain relationships and create expectations, as Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* argues of social spaces in general:

> *(Social) space is a (social) product.* […] [T]he space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action; […] in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power. (Italics in original) [2]

The clear separation between the stage and the auditorium implies differences in roles for both parties, performers and spectators; while performers present a spectacle, spectators are usually expected to remain seated, physically inactive, in silence. The silence falls in the auditorium with the opening of the performance, which may be marked by the rise of curtain, the change of lighting, or the arrival of the performers on stage. As the tacit consensus among the audience that the show has begun pervades the auditorium, the relationship between those who see and those who are seen is established, and the gaze converges on the stage where the ‘performance

[1] Gay McAuley, *Space in Performance: Making Meaning in the Theatre* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

[2] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nichoson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), p. 26. Originally published in French as La Production de l’espace (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1974).

text' is situated. Once the performance starts, the audience are only free to roam around when they temporarily step out of the silent spectatorship during intermissions. These conventions, dominant as they remain, can be subverted, for example by scenic or spectatorial experimentation that does not take the existing arrangement of space, and its implied divisions, for granted. By contrast, non-theatre spaces do not share those conventions or instil the same expectations, although it is possible to transpose the conventions of the spatial configurations of theatre buildings into a non-theatre space. Yet, the use of non-theatre spaces arguably opens up the possibility of disrupting the existing framework of performance and established conventions of theatre institutions. In performance using non-theatre spaces, therefore, the accepted relationship in theatre between the central and the marginal — or text and paratext — is destabilised, and this can be harnessed to allow initially marginal elements in a performance to be admitted into a performance text, sometimes even becoming the central feature of the work.

As I noted in Chapter 1 of the thesis, paratexts are classified into two categories: *peritext* and *epitext*. Genette explains that the distinction between the two is 'purely spatial'; peritext exists within the physical body of a book, adjacent to the text, while epitext exists outside of the book, separately from the text, 'circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually limitless physical and social space'.[3] Epitext, described as 'a fringe of the fringe', consists of a variety of discourses and is not necessarily restricted to its paratextual function, 'to present and comment on the text'.[4] When a performance piece is considered as the text itself, as I have argued thus far, it is impossible to determine the clear distinction between text and paratext, for a performance is a less tangible and ephemeral art form than a physical volume of literary work. It becomes an even more challenging task to postulate the division between text and paratext in a performance work which occupies a non-theatrical environment free from the implicit conventions of theatre. The chief distinction between peritext and epitext is basically spatial; this distinction too can be challenged when a performance text is situated in a space that is already ingrained with the functionality of the given environment and that has other pre-existing activities taking place, and when it is no longer encompassed by the walls of the theatre building that physically marks, even tentatively, where the text itself starts and ends.

Following the previous chapter which established the value of a paratextual model with the analysis of Forced Entertainment's work as its support, the next three chapters conduct case studies of a range of contemporary performance works to examine different ways paratexts may

[3] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 344.
[4] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 345.

manifest in the performance meaning-making process. All three of these chapters, therefore, address one of the key research questions: What paratextual force can be observed in contemporary performance works? Chapters 3 and 4 turn attention to performance beyond the theatre space. My discussion focuses on performance made in urban, public and semi-public space: the 'indoor' site of the hotel, and the 'outdoor' site of the city. While manifestly different in kind, hotels and the city have in common that they are sites for the constant traffic of people, spaces of connection, transitions and the intersection of multiple narratives. Considering these contrasting yet connected sites make it possible to examine how paratextuality may function in non-theatre space, both indoors and outdoors respectively, where the boundary between text and paratext, and peritext and epitext, becomes further elusive and transient. Another key research question that is explored through these case studies of performance works in the hotel and in the city is: What does application of a paratextual model reveal about the relationship between the space and the performance that occupies it? The examples used to build my argument in these chapters do not only unfold within a distinctive space outside theatre, they also present their texts 'on the move' — that is, the performance takes the form of a physical journey amid the hotel building or across the expansion of the city. I analyse the way paratexts emerge in a constant movement of the performance text and how they contribute to the audience's experience in the works from which the spatial configuration of theatre is removed. I argue that in such works the performance text illuminates specific aspects of the space as paratexts, creating significant, though sometimes accidental and unexpected, connections and layers of meaning in the text, shaping the audience's experience and perception in fundamental ways.

Chapter 3 examines performance works which take place in functioning hotels. While hotels primarily offer shelter for travellers, as I will show they also provide less palpable qualities and promises. Here I focus on three performance works from the last decade: *The Magical Number Seven* (2011) by David Rosenberg with Hannah Ringham, *The Reservation* (2012) by Ellie Harrison and Jaye Kearney, and *The Armour* (2015) by Defibrillator Theatre. The hotel space, especially a functioning one, is encoded with specific rules, functions, significances, and activities already inhabiting it. Through examining these performance pieces, I show how the hotel space interacts with and paratextually informs this performance practice. My analyses of *The Reservation* and *The Armour* are concerned with how the hotel as a space contributes to the meaning-making processes of the audiences, functioning as paratextual elements. In comparison, my analysis of *The Magical Number Seven*, a performance presented in a pseudo-hotel space specially created for the event, proposes that in this piece, particular

qualities of a hotel stay — isolation and anonymity — are exploited as paratextual information to heighten the audience's experience.

In Chapter 4, I examine the interaction between text and paratext with specific focus on interactive performances in a public space not limited by walls: the city. In such spaces as a city, in which the delineation of where the fictional realm of the performance starts and ends is not physically boundaried and thus the distinction between the life of the city and the life of the performance becomes even more ambiguous. This latter chapter discusses the interaction between a performance work and the urban surrounding, revealing how the city creatively interferes with performance borders. An analysis of *Walking:Holding* (2011) by Rosana Cade is followed by the discussion on *Night Walk for Edinburgh* (2019) by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller. While both take the form of a guided tour of a city for an audience of one, each offers a distinctive audience experience and exhibits contrasting manifestation of paratextual elements within the work.

The two chapters together thus scrutinise how paratextual elements may emerge and become part of the text, as the text moves across non-theatre spaces, and how a paratextual approach enables us to see the meaning-making processes of performance works which situate themselves in an open environment amongst extra-textual materials. My discussion in both chapters is informed by Lefebvre's concept of 'space' being both a product and a means of production and Michel de Certeau's semiotic reading of space as guidance. The two chapters — Paratexts and Performance Space I and II — examine how the openness to the external materials of these performance works in non-theatre spaces may embrace extra-textual materials as paratexts, how those paratexts interact with text of performance, and ultimately the different ways in which this openness matters.

Performance space as a framing paratext

Reflecting on the differences between 'place' and 'space', de Certeau compares these to Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic concepts of *langue* and *parole*. While 'place' is static and governed by rules and systems to make sense as in *langue*, according to de Certeau, '[s]pace occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make

it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities' as in *parole*.[5] De Certeau summarises:

> […] *space is a practiced place*. Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers. In the same way, an act of reading is the space produced by the practice of a particular place: a written text; i.e., a place constituted by a system of signs.[6]

In *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation*, Nick Kaye elaborates this point further, saying '[s]pace, as *a practiced place*, admits of unpredictability. […] [S]pace might be subject not only to transformation, but ambiguity'.[7] This leads us to one explanation which underpins the productivity of functioning hotels as performance space. A hotel building is a structured 'place' with a system and a set of rules that becomes a 'space' as it is practised — as the traffic of people flows and as the hotel guests inhabit the building. Therefore, the hotel is inherently a space that emphasises transience, anticipating departure as soon as people arrive. When a performative act — another form of 'practice' of the place — takes place, this transient nature the hotel space essentially displays is even more clearly highlighted. The hotel, like the city, has its own set of attributes, shaping already a 'practice' distinctive to that place. Likewise, these spaces in turn imply 'rules' for use and expectations of habitation and behaviours. It would require a far longer discussion to unpick all the possibilities these two spaces — hotels and cities — could allow as a performance space. Rather, the purpose of the following two chapters is to examine what opportunity those spaces provide to the examples of works I discuss and how the spaces operates paratextually.

A key characteristic of such works taking place in non-theatre space is the difficulty in identifying the boundary of performance texts and the parameters of the audience experience. I argue that the slippage of the functions and the existing activities within the space into the fictional performance can embellish the audience's experience, and that a paratextual approach is a useful analytical tool to discuss this permeability. The case studies I discuss below demonstrate that the functions and attributes of the two sites — the hotel space and the city respectively — inevitably permeate into the performance, when the space is inhabited by a performative act. The originally existing activities happening at the periphery of the

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[5] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Rendall, Paperback (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of Calfornia Press, 1988), p. 117. Originally published in 1984.
[6] De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 117. Italics in original.
[7] Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 5.

performance, generated by the daily function of the site, may complicate the audience's reading of the performance text as paratextual elements. As there is no clear physical boundary that marks where a performance begins and ends, or any markers of stage lighting, production and reception of performance text in non-theatre spaces may unlock and exploit an imaginative capacity of the space, not merely using it as an 'authentic' environmental setting. Indeed, since 'the paratext is a transitional zone between text and beyond-text', Genette warns against 'the temptation to enlarge this zone in whittling away in both directions'.[8] However, expanding the application of the concept of paratextuality to the space that hosts the performance text would provide the vocabulary to analyse the subtle influences of marginal, subordinate and even originally external elements of the text in the interpretation of the work. An application of a paratextual reading is particularly productive in discussing performance works whose narratives and presentation are inevitably permeated by another layer of meanings brought about by the locale.

Theatre's turn towards 'event'

The use of non-theatre spaces for theatrical performance has become less of a novelty in recent years for the theatre audience, as an increasing number of productions invite their audiences to unconventional venues outside of purpose-built theatres. It is no longer a specialty of the productions that advertise themselves as site-specific or promenade performance to take the audience to the spaces which serve or have previously served specific purposes. Nineteen; Twenty Nine's production of *Blasted* (2008) by Sarah Kane took place in a hotel room at the Queen's Hotel in Leeds, which is believed to be the place the playwright had in mind when she set the play in '[a] very expensive hotel room in Leeds';[9] a production of *Macbeth* (2013) at Manchester International Festival was staged in a deconsecrated church. Such productions taking place in non-traditional settings arguably emphasise themselves more as innovative *events* than theatre in a traditional sense, indicating their potential appeal to a broader demographic than regular theatregoers. James Hiller, the Artistic Director of Defibrillator Theatre, succinctly describes such wider spectatorship as an activity of 'cultural nomads' who take interest in 'festivals and gigs, and who want adventure and discovery'.[10] This expression

[8] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 407.
[9] Sarah Kane, *Blasted* (London: Methuen Drama, 2002), p. 3.
[10] Becky Brewis, 'James Hillier on Directing Site-Specific Theatre', *Ideas Tap*, 2014 <http://www.ideastap.com/ideasmag/the-knowledge/james-hillier-directing-site-specific-theatre> [accessed 1 April 2016].

hints that they are not necessarily drawn by the theatrical art form *per se* but by the unique and unusual offering of the cultural experience, of an event. As well as exploiting a space as peritexts, or paratexts that are directly adjacent to the body of text, choosing non-traditional space as a performance venue self-consciously situates the text amid the ambiance and characteristics unique to the space, increasing the allure of the event by inciting spectator curiosity, instilling a pleasurable uncertainty as to the nature, expectations and boundary lines of the experience.

One potential explanation of the theatre's tendency towards event can be sought in the discussion of 'event landscape', a critical framework conceived by Gavin Kroeber. Kroeber points out that since the 1970s art and the city have both 'turned towards *events*'[11] and the event landscape, or an urban landscape which supports events as both a 'mode of cultural production and a concept of cultural-political rupture', has emerged.[12] Explaining the rise of project-based event production and the transformation of the city to accommodate it, Kroeber says:

> One could fruitfully interpret the rise of event production as an affirmation of the performing arts as a model for culture in general, analyzing visual art's turn towards project work as theatricalization of the museum and the event landscape as the theatricalization of the city. If it can seem, however, that the theatre has gone triumphantly viral in the expanded field of event production, this situation hints in equal measure that theatre's traditional institutions, genres, and architectures have become obsolete and been superseded.[13]

The turn towards 'event' or theatricalisation, therefore, is a phenomenon observed outside the theatre which in turn self-reflexively feeds back to the theatre itself. Unconventional spaces can be chosen for the authenticity that the space can render to the performance or for the enhancement of a multi-sensory experience for the audience. Indeed, the theatre practice is increasingly adopting a model which aspires to be a holistic *event* that is experienced, rather than simply a spectacle to be observed. Those productions claim, implicitly or explicitly, that being exposed to the real environment and not only watching but directly inhabiting the performance space make a positive difference to the audience's experience that cannot be derived from a production in purpose-built theatre buildings.

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[11] Gavin Kroeber, 'The Event Landscape: The Contemporary Encounter of Art and the City', *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, 37.2 (2015), 30–41 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/PAJJ_a_00257> (p. 30). Italics in original.

[12] Kroeber, 'The Event Landscape', p. 39.

[13] Kroeber, 'The Event Landscape', p. 35.

An event, characterised by its temporal and performative nature and the fast speed of consumption, offers an experience, and in that process 'the body of the consumer […] becomes a means of experience production'.[14] It is unsurprising that in the climate in which art in general seems inclined towards event production, the theatre has also increased its emphasis as an event that aspires to offer an intense, if inevitably ephemeral, experience. Whether it is the rollercoaster journey through a series of ever-shifting scenarios of *You Me Bum Bum Train* (devised in 2006, with many renditions since), or the three-hour expedition into a disused warehouse transformed into the 1960s film studio of *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* (2013) by Punchdrunk, the offerings of these productions are a fast-paced exploration (on a fixed route or self-guided one) in an elaborately created environment, loaded with the exuberance of texts. In these productions, an array of scenes presented in front of or on all sides of the audience, an intriguing narrative to follow and dramatic choreography performed by the actors are not presented to be simply observed. They are delivered to heighten and support the audience's sensation and experience as a result of observation and participation. Kroeber's idea of the consumer's body as 'a means of experience production'[15] underpins what Maurya Wickstrom warns us about the theatrical seductions of global and capitalistic consumerism today in *Performing Consumers*.[16] Wickstrom suggests that global brands exploit consumers' mimetic capacity 'to hold the real and the not real as a simultaneous instance of embodied experience, an ability to live the truth of the make-believe' and provide an experiential environment in order to promote their products.[17] The ephemeral impact of experience urges the consumers to crave for more, often without realising that they are made to be engaged in the imaginative labour of producing experience with their own body and senses on behalf of the brands. This holds a certain truth for 'immersive' productions in which audience members are asked to freely roam around the space in search of the experience. While such productions seemingly promise a freedom and autonomy for an audience member, it is implicitly suggested that the responsibility for enriching the audience experience largely lies in the audience members themselves, as much as in the productions.

The capitalistic exchange of an 'experience' as a fleeting product is thus already at play in theatrical events. *You Me Bum Bum Train* and Secret Cinema's Tell No One events, for

[14] Kroeber, 'The Event Landscape', p. 37.
[15] Kroeber, 'The Event Landscape', p. 37.
[16] Maurya Wickstrom, *Performing Consumers: Global Capital and Its Theatrical Seductions* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006).
[17] Wickstrom, *Performing Consumers*, p. 2.

example, are known for their main rules to which the audience is asked to adhere: not to reveal the contents to anyone else.[18] This arguably creates a distinction between those who are 'in the know' and those who are not, and arouses people's appetite to experience it themselves. Highly participatory events where the audience's instantaneous response against — and inside — a series of scenes is tested, such as *You Me Bum Bum Train*, are considered to be a work one can enjoy the most as a first-timer. On the other hand, the productions which present too abundant texts for the audience to access at one time, such as large-scale promenade theatre by Punchdrunk, appeal to returning audience members who may repeatedly attend the show to achieve a better and fuller experience. Punchdrunk's production of *The Drowned Man* even offered premium tickets that would allow those ticket holders to access extra content, such as an additional prologue which helps them to unlock the hidden elements in a maze-like space in a limited amount of time (see Chapter 5).[19] Here, the paratextual information of an additional prologue is considered significant enough to make a difference to the experience and is given a measurable monetary value. In experiential theatrical events, despite their apparent openness, the texts are not simply on offer for every audience member; they are dependent upon the audience's ability to generate their reading of the text and, on occasions, even dependent on the aid of exclusive paratexts that come with a price tag.[20]

Theatrical events in non-theatre space, such as the hotel and the city, can be considered as an attempt to enhance the audience's experience by placing the performance in an environment that bears different organisational rules and associations than does the theatre

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[18] In *You Me Bum Bum Train,* the audience are asked to sign the consent form by which they agree that they will not disclose the content. Secret Cinema's Tell No One events do not reveal which film is featured to the audience until the evening unfolds. This is fundamentally different from the productions of Whodunnit stories, such as Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap,* since it is not only the revelation of the truth at the end but it is the entire content that the audience is forbidden to give away.

[19] Lyn Gardner, 'Theatre Blog: Does Punchdrunk's The Drowned Man Live up to the Hype?', *The Guardian,* 19 July 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2013/jul/19/punchrunk-hype-drowned-man-lyn-gardner> [accessed 3 December 2020].

Siobhan Murphey, 'Punchdrunk's Ambitious The Drowned Man Takes Their Immersive Theatre to a New Level', *Metro,* 20 June 2013 <http://metro.co.uk/2013/06/20/punchdrunks-hugely-ambitious-the-drowned-man-takes-their-immersive-theatre-to-a-new-level-3847739/> [accessed 3 December 2020].

Poly Gianniba, 'Punchdrunk Is Back in Town. But The Drowned Man Comes at a (Steep) Price', *The Other Bridge Project,* (2013) <https://theotherbridgeproject.wordpress.com/2013/03/25/punchdrunk-is-back-in-town-but-the-drowned-man-comes-at-a-steep-price/> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[20] To some extent, the premium ticket system in some of Punchdrunk's productions may draw a parallel with the scaled ticket prices based on seating area in conventional theatres. As McAuley notes, '[p]rivileged (wealthy) theatregoers can approach this [the spectacle] more closely: the most expensive seats in most theatres are those closest to the stage' (*Space in Performance,* p. 51), and a closer look at the action potentially discloses deeper insight into the presented text. Extra details which are not present in what standard ticket holders can access, however, can be problematic, since while it may be enriching for the premium ticket holders, it also potentially undermines what is considered the main invitation of the work, that is, the act of deciphering the complex text.

space, and by letting the audience inhabit the space creatively. In such works, the audience are invited to contribute to the meaning-making processes and therefore to the production of text by their participation, although this can also be framed as surrendering themselves to the imaginative labour as 'a means of experience production'.[21] The opportunity brought by opening up the performance text, by placing it in non-theatre space and by allowing the audience to inhabit both simultaneously can at the same time present challenging questions to the practitioners and the audience alike. How a performance text can remain open to and be capable of adapting itself to the dynamic of the space, while maintaining its integrity and structure? In the following sections, I discuss the physical and imaginative potential of the hotel space and consider how it has been explored in fictional narratives, especially in performance practice in recent years. This paves the way for an analysis of individual performance examples which I examine to demonstrate the critical value of a paratextual model.

Hotels as an imaginative topos[22]

> 'Hotels are for those who understand performance: ghosts, actors, women...
> […] All hotels invite decoding and every hotel is a "concept hotel".'
> — Joanna Walsh, *Hotel* [23]

Hotels have long stimulated the imagination across diverse genres of art as an imaginative topos. They have a variety of attributes engrained in their spaces: they can be a space for temporary sojourn, offering a momentary escape from the everyday life of home, a space where the interplay between ever-changing faces and mundane routines are repeated, and a space with the potential for momentary encounters with 'others'. In contrast, the highly structured space of hotels, marked by repetitive patterns of often identical rooms and staircases across the building, dictates the movement of people and retains the anonymity of the faces and activities within its walls. In *Hotel Life: The Story of a Place Where Anything Can Happen*, an interdisciplinary analysis of the hotel as a modern institution in the U.S., Caroline Field Levander and Matthew Pratt Guterl argue that hotels have played an important role in modern life, not only as physical

[21] Kroeber, 'The Event Landscape', p. 37.
[22] The discussion on the performance in the hotel space is largely based on my research paper submitted and accepted for publication. Moe Shoji, 'Hotel Plays: (Sub)liminal paratexts of performance in functioning hotels', *Track Changes*, Issue 9 (2016).
[23] Joanna Walsh, 'Hotel Haunting', *Hotel* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), p. 6.

sites but also as 'imaginative location and shelter[s]'.[24] Levander and Guterl suggest that the hotel is:

> […] an institution that utilizes space to amplify and refine an explicitly mobile, cosmopolitan self — a self that imagines the hotel as a site for fantastic, ever-shifting expressions of living and dying, fortune and failure, beginnings and endings — in short, of a little bigger, bolder, wilder, cleaner, and more therapeutic than "real life".[25]

They argue that it is the hotel's malleability that makes it 'an imaginative place "where anything can happen" and where people's stories unfold with marked urgency and meaning'.[26] Holly Prescott, in her analysis of contemporary British hotel fictions, furthers the point by showing that although the hotel space enables the co-presence of diverse personalities and viewpoints and the momentary re-imagination of identities within it, the encounter brought by the space is not limited to social encounters between human subjects but also between human subjects and the hotel space itself.[27] Prescott maintains that 'the hotel space does not act as a benign stage for the performance and re-negotiation of new identities' and that 'the hotel space itself […] possesses the agency'.[28] When the hotel space is used or evoked in performance, it would not do justice to the hotels as an imaginative space if they are only seen as a backdrop for a real or fictional incident; it is the space of the hotel which enables an event and story to happen. Hotels have thus inspired creative imagination both by providing a space for the writers to be 'free' from the quotidian and by being a transient and imaginative space which teases out extraordinary narratives beyond everyday life.

The hotel space in fictional narratives — fiction, films and theatre

Hotels have inspired a variety of fictional narratives: they offer themselves as a setting for a number of novels across the world. *The Hotel New Hampshire* (1981) by John Irving presents a family-run hotel as a place where a coming-of-age narrative unfolds; Haruki Murakami's *Dance Dance Dance* (1988 in Japanese; 1994 translation in English) depicts the Dolphin Hotel as a

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[24] Caroline Field Levander and Matthew Pratt Guterl, *Hotel Life: The Story of a Place Where Anything Can Happen* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), p. 3.
[25] Levander and Guterl, *Hotel Life*, p. 6.
[26] Levander and Guterl, *Hotel Life*, p. 14.
[27] Holly Prescott, 'Rethinking Urban Space in Contemporary British Writing' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 2011), p. 238, in Databese of University of Birmingham eTheses Repository <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/3011/> [accessed 3 December 2020].
[28] Prescott, 'Rethinking Urban Space in Contemporary British Writing', p. 223.

symbolic space for the protagonist to experience a confrontation with the self; and Ali Smith's *Hotel World* (2001) depicts the hotel as a claustrophobic place haunted by a tragic death, even as it remains an ordinary workplace. Films also have found inspiration in the hotel space: the psychological horror *The Shining* (1980) presents the hotel as a claustrophobic and alienating; *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (2011) epitomises the hotel as signalling a new beginning and an opportunity to re-construct identities; in *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2015), the hotel is portrayed as a hub of idiosyncratic personalities, larger-than-life adventures and narratives, where two different worlds in the institution, those of the hotel guests and hotel workers, intersect.

Theatre likewise has been inspired by the hotel space, within and without the frame of the drama. Firstly, numerous plays make the hotel a place where drama unfolds. Noël Coward's *Private Lives* (1930) presents a serendipitous reunion of previously married couple Elyot and Amanda at adjacent balconies of hotel rooms. The hotel space as a meeting place for a diverse range of personalities allows this most unlikely encounter of 'sheer raving madness' to be believable, within the convention of the drama, sparking 'the inspiration of the moment' of the formerly married couple to recklessly abandon their newly-wed partners and reunite.[29] *Separate Tables* (1954) by Terence Rattigan, by contrast, presents the hotel as a space in which guests can re-imagine their identities, concealing their real lives underneath their newly created personae; the quiet lives and routines of the Beauregard Private Hotel are stirred up, when the personal secrets of the residents are revealed and create uncomfortable tensions in the small community. More recently, *Blasted* (1995) by Sarah Kane displays the hotel space as the epitome of urban bourgeoisie by placing harrowing violence and graphic scenes in a space which evokes contrasting qualities of comfort and cleanliness, a 'very expensive hotel room in Leeds — the kind that is so expensive it could be anywhere in the world'.[30] A secluded corner of this bourgeois space is then exploded and transformed into a battleground later in the play.

A very different kind of intersection between hotels and theatre occurs when hotels welcome theatre as entertainment for their guests; indeed, some hotels incorporate a purpose-built auditorium within their premises. 'Hotel theatre' also takes the form of Murder Mystery nights with a spectacle, a dinner and a weekend away combined; it is an entertainment tuned to the occasion where strangers, as well as family or other parties, can be brought together.

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[29] Noël Coward, *Private Lives: An Intimate Comedy in Three Acts* (London: Samuel French, 1947), p. 21.

[30] Sarah Kane, *Blasted* (London: Methuen Drama, 2002), p. 3.

Additionally, in recent years, and of especial interest for this chapter, the hotel as a site constitutes a unique example among the non-theatre spaces that have been exploited in theatre and performance practice. The creative opportunities it offers as a locus are derived from a series of ambivalent attributes that hotel spaces possess and from the theatricality resulting from these seemingly contradictory characteristics. While the hotel offers a public space for people and strangers to meet, it also provides privacy for its clientele in their hotel rooms. Such privacy implies the homeliness and intimacy the hotel affords to the guests, although the assumed identity as one of the many hotel guests allows them to remain essentially anonymous within the premises of the hotel for the length of their temporary stay. It is these seemingly conflicting qualities — public and private, homely and generic, intimate and anonymous — that makes the hotel space a creatively productive topos to explore.

Hotels are listed among other sites — including airports, train stations and supermarkets — as examples of 'non-places' by Marc Augé, in *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*. The concept of 'non-places' is defined by Augé as 'spaces of circulation, conception and communication', and it constitutes a spectrum together with the concept of anthropological places, enabling us to measure 'the degree of sociality and symbolization of a given space'.[31] While anthropological places display clear connection with social ties and history, non-places are characterised by their transient occupation they imply and by the fact that 'the words and texts' or 'instructions for use' offered to their users play a central role.[32] In other words, non-places are heavily loaded with signifiers of meanings that need interpreting and practising by the users. Hotel visitors are given 'the shared identity' of hotel guests and instructed about the use of the space implicitly and explicitly by the vocabulary that is specific to hotels.[33] Hotels have both written and unwritten rules that guests are expected to adhere to, delineating the areas in the building and behaviours that are and are not allowed to them. Augé also describes the users of a non-places as having 'contractual relations with it (or with the powers that govern it)'.[34] The users are deemed to have signed a contract as they willingly checked in their identities on arrival. In the case of hotels, users are temporarily granted 'the passive joys of identity-loss, and the more active pleasure of role-playing' in exchange for their

[31] Marc Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*, Second English-language edition (London and New York: Verso, 2008), p.VIII. Originally published in French in 1992 and in English in 1995.
[32] Augé, *Non-Places*, p. 77.
[33] Augé, *Non-Places*, p. 81.
[34] Augé, *Non-Places*, p. 82.

identities, relinquishing their everyday selves and assuming their role as hotel guests.[35] Whether the identity given on check-in is a genuine one or a pseudonym for disguise like a standard 'Mr and Mrs Smith', the hoteliers act as an accomplice in provisionally suspending the guests' identities during the stay.

Augé explains the relationship between the two concepts of place and non-place, saying: 'Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten.'[36] Thus, places and non-places are not exclusive to each other but the characteristics of both can reside in one site at the same time. Reflecting on the context of theatre, the experience of participating in a performance work as an audience member can be considered as an experience straddling both place and non-place. The contractual agreement on entrance (tickets, coat and luggage check) and during the show (the audience are implicitly or explicitly advised as to how to appreciate the work by the practitioner, not least through an accompanying programme), temporarily relinquishing the identity as an individual by blending into a group of audience, and surrendering to the fleeting and ephemeral experience are what characterise the experience of non-places. Performance works taking place in hotel space, therefore, are productive varieties of performance work to analyse. These works are subject to two-fold non-placeness; while they allow the audience to be physically exposed to the sensory experience of the actual hotel space that offers at times conflicting qualities, they also present the audience with ephemeral experience of a fictional narrative. As we have seen, hotel spaces are the space for both public and private life, promising anonymity and potential intimacy, and the homelike hospitality they offer is accompanied by a prospect of departure after the temporary stay. Thus, as an audience member arrives, ready to step inside of the fictional narrative of the performance, the site is already equipped with the embedded meanings and rules which are significantly distinct from those of theatre houses.

Performance works in the hotel space

Productions which use functioning hotels vary greatly in their interpretation of what the hotel space can offer. Some productions focus on privacy and intimacy implied by hotel rooms, while others draw attention to hotels' luxury and extraordinary feel. *The Reservation* (2012) by Ellie

[35] Augé, *Non-Places*, p. 83.
[36] Augé, *Non-Places*, p. 64.

Harrison and Jaye Kearney, which I discuss in detail later in this chapter, invites an audience of one for an hour-long encounter with a performer in a hotel room. This piece sees a hotel room as a metaphor of grief and loss, where one arrives with heavy luggage and yet acknowledges the prospect of leaving at a certain point.[37] *Above and Beyond* (2013) by Look Left Look Right similarly offers a one-to-one experience,[38] yet it invites the audience member to become the protagonist of a narrative of 'disguise, old-world romance and a wartime escapade' in a five-star grand hotel in London.[39] It plays with the comparison between a grand hotel and a theatre; as Lyn Gardner describes, both have 'on-stage and backstage worlds', a public space for 'people's personal drama to unfold' and private spaces 'where unseen spectacles take place behind closed doors'.[40] A production by Almeida Theatre, *The Fever* (2015), staged in an opulent hotel suite, invites a small group of audience members (maximum twenty-five) at a time to witness Wallace Shawn's monologue performed by Tobias Menzies. The speech presents the dilemma of the protagonist, who finds himself 'in a strange hotel room, in a poor country where [his] language is not spoken'.[41] He describes his life as 'irredeemably corrupt' and unjustifiable, not being able to change the life of the poor, possessing no power over capitalism and injustice in the world.[42] The soliloquy immediately refers back to the luxury of the hotel room where the audience members are comfortably seated, which arouses unnerving discomfort among them.[43] *Black Tonic* (2008 and 2015) by a Birmingham-based company, The Other Way Works, takes the

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[37] Ellie Harrison and Jaye Kearney, 'The Reservation', *The Grief Series*, premiered in 2012 at the Queen's Hotel, Leeds <https://www.griefseries.co.uk/projects/the-reservation> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[38] As Rachel Zerihan explains in her *Live Art Development Agency Study Room Guide on One to One Performance*, '"One to One" or "One on One" or "Audience of One" are all terms to describe a performance that invites one audience member to experience the piece on their own.' Hereafter, I use the term 'One-to-One' to refer to the type of performance that corresponds to Zerihan's definition, although the preferred term depends on practitioners.
Rachel Zerihan and others, *Live Art Development Agency Study Room Guide on One to One Performance, Live Art Development Agency Study Room* (Live Art Development Agency, 2009) <https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/one-to-one-performance-2009/> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[39] Dominic Cavendish, 'Above and Beyond, Corinthia Hotel, London, Review', *Telegraph*, 22 March 2013 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/9948887/Above-and-Beyond-Corinthia-Hotel-London-review.html> [accessed 3 December 2020]. *Above and Beyond* by Look Left Look Right is premiered in 2013 at the Corinthia Hotel, London.

[40] Lyn Gardner, 'Above and Beyond – Review', *The Guardian*, 24 March 2013 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2013/mar/24/above-and-beyond-review> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[41] Wallace Shawn, *The Fever*, [n.d.] <http://www.wischik.com/lu/senses/fever.html> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[42] Wallace Shawn, *The Fever*.

[43] Lyn Gardner, 'The Fever Review – Grappling with Privilege and Guilt in a Mayfair Hotel', *The Guardian*, 18 January 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/jan/18/the-fever-review-grappling-with-privilege-and-guilt-in-a-mayfair-hotel> [accessed 3 December 2020].

audience across the hotel building where it is set, exploring both public and private sides of the hotel, following a thriller story. Describing this production, Rosemary Waugh observes that 'the beauty of this staging is reliant on hotels being the true owners of the phrase, "the truth is always stranger than fiction"'.[44] Indeed, it is the ambivalent attributes that the hotel space inherently possesses — public and private, anonymity and intimacy, homeliness and temporariness, hospitality and restlessness — that impregnates the hotel space with the distinctive potential of evoking a multitude of narratives. The hotel space is indeed 'a powerfully imaginative place both real and invented, evoking alternative realities and possibilities for modern selves', as Levander and Guterl summarise, referring to an example of the McKittrick Hotel re-imagined through an environmental theatre production of *Sleep No More* (2003 in UK, 2009 in Boston, since 2011 in New York, and since 2016 in Shanghai) by Punchdrunk.[45] I argue that functioning hotels as sites lend these inherent attributes to the performative acts inhabiting their space and in so doing usefully complicate the performance text. Furthermore, these attributes may also be borrowed and exploited by theatrical events which create a pseudo-hotel space. A series of gestures that evoke the hotel space, such as a set of procedures involved on arrival, necessitated movements from one space to another, and the seclusion of a room, can suffice in re-creating the hotel-like experience, although a full illusion like in an example I draw on later would certainly enhance the experience.

The intriguing rise in the popularity of hotels as performance venues in recent years has been observed by reviewers, yet the unique allure and evocative qualities which the environment of a functioning hotel lends to a performance have not been analysed in detail.[46]

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[44] Rosemary Waugh, 'Black Tonic (Review)', *Exeunt Magazine*, 5 October 2015 <http://exeuntmagazine.com/reviews/black-tonic/> [accessed 3 Dcember 2020].

[45] Levander and Guterl, *Hotel Life*, p. 189.

[46] Susannah Clapp opens her review for *The Armour* (2015) for *The Observer* by saying, 'Hotels are having a theatrical moment'; while Fiona Mountford noted that there is 'a growing sub-genre of site-specific plays set in hotels'. Dominic Cavendish states in his review of *The Hotel Plays* (2014), which sets in the Langham Hotel, that 'if you want to get a good measure of plush London hotels without staying in them, theatre is proving almost a better bet than a site like TripAdvisor'. In response to the opening of *The Hotel Plays*, *The Guardian* collated photographic images from theatre productions which took inspiration from 'the limbo of a hotel room'.

Susannah Clapp, 'The Armour Review – No Linking Narrative, Too Much Corridor Carpet', *The Observer,* 15 March 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/mar/15/the-armour-review-hannah-spearritt-ben-ellis-langam-hotel-london> [accessed 3 December 2020].

Fiona Mountford, 'The Armour, Langham Hotel - Theatre Review', *Evening Standard*, 11 March 2015 <http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/the-armour-langham-hotel-theatre-review-10101107.html> [accessed 3 December 2020].

Dominic Cavendish, 'The Hotel Plays, The Langham, Review', *The Telegraph*, 21 February 2014 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/10653655/The-Hotel-Plays-The-Langham-review.html> [accessed 3 December 2020].

This case study examines how the evocative implications that a hotel building inherently possesses may be illuminated by a performative act within the space through three performance works from the last decade: *The Armour* (2015) by Defibrillator Theatre, *The Reservation* (2012) by Ellie Harrison and Jaye Kearney as Part Two of *The Grief Series*, and *The Magical Number Seven* (2011) by David Rosenberg with Hannah Ringham.[47] The analysis is conducted through the lens of a paratextual model, with particular focus on the creative potential and contrasting attributes that the hotel space possesses. Firstly, my discussion of *The Armour* shows how the boundary between the performed hotel space and the actual hotel space may become permeable and that external elements to the performance text, or epitext, in the hotel space can significantly inform the audience's experience. Secondly, with *The Reservation*, I argue that although the focus of this performance work hinges on a close encounter in a private hotel room, it is the public hotel space and its ongoing activities that influentially frame the performance as paratext, facilitating the way in to the carefully constructed intimate audience experience. Finally, I discuss *The Magical Number Seven* as an example in which the hotel space, even in a fabricated environment, can convey its distinctive attributes and paratextually inform the audience member by creating anticipation. The discussion in each case is enhanced, although not directed, by my personal experience of the work as an audience member; that experience is used to support my argument that the hotel space and the lives residing in it become a meaningful part of the performance. My audience experience may not have necessarily been shared by fellow audience members and thus it is referred to here as one possible example of potential audience's responses, which only helps us to see the abundant force of paratexts against the text in these performance examples. The hotel space, particularly one that is inhabited by the ongoing life of the hotel, exerts agency towards the performance taking place within it, functioning as a 'paratextual' element to the 'text' of the performance.

'Hotel Plays, from Noël Coward to Sarah Kane – in Pictures', *The Guardian*, 19 February 2014 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/gallery/2014/feb/19/hotel-plays-noel-coward-sarah-kane-tennessee-williams-pictures> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[47] Defibrillator Theatre, *The Armour* at the Langham Hotel, London. Attended on 7 March 2015.
David Rosenberg with Hannah Ringham, *The Magical Number Seven*, presented as part of One-on-One Festival at Battersea Arts Centre. Attended on 2 April 2011.
Ellie Harrison and Jaye Kearney, *The Reservation* (Part 2 of *The Grief Series*), presented at Hampton by Hilton Hotel in Sheffield, as part of WROUGHT Festival 2016. Attended on 15 April 2016.

Intersection between the imagined hotel and the physical hotel: *The Armour*

The Armour (2015) by Defibrillator Theatre is a triptych of playlets set in the Langham Hotel in London, 'Europe's first "Grand Hotel"'.[48] Written by Ben Ellis as an actual writer-in-residence at the hotel, this play takes the audience to three separate rooms in the hotel building, tracing back the hotel's hundred-and-fifty years of history through three scenes that are set in three different time periods, the present, 1973 and 1871. A small audience group is firstly invited to the private bar in the basement to witness a young pop diva hesitating to make a comeback and her manager coaxing her back to the stage. The second part takes place in a hotel room several flights up, where a young American couple wait to be interviewed by BBC which actually used the Langham Hotel in the 1970s as 'recording studios, storage and the BBC Club'.[49] In the final act, the audience find themselves in a heavily transformed hotel room inhabited by Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie, where the sense of time has drifted away, dissolving the present and the memory of the now gone empire all together. All three playlets capture a critical moment between two people during a transient sojourn at this very hotel. A jacket, which appears in all three scenes, operates as a thread to unite three narratives together, representing a potential way out from the situation in which the characters find themselves. The jacket is 'the armour' for the characters to exit from the hesitant moment they experience within the seclusion of the hotel.

The hotel space as a site for *The Armour* is a natural choice since this production was produced to commemorate the hotel's anniversary. A grand hotel like the Langham is indeed a 'theatre in itself, a marbled set with a large cast' as Libby Purves observes.[50] Defibrillator Theatre previously took over three rooms in this very hotel to perform three playlets by Tennessee Williams as collectively termed *The Hotel Plays* (2014). In addition to being a source of inspiration for the work, the choice of the venue may also have functioned as a magnet to attract a wider range of spectators — 'cultural nomads' in Hiller's words. *The Armour* takes the audience members through the hotel building of the Langham, while everyday business takes place, with each of the three scenes contained in the seclusion of a private bar and hotel rooms, concealed from the eyes of non-audience. Though the journey does not take the audience to the staff-only areas, spectators are invited to normally excluded corners of the building through staircases and corridors. Some reviewers, however, were unconvinced by the use of the space of

[48] 'The Armour', *Defibrillator Theatre Website*, 2014.
[49] 'The Armour', *Defibrillator Theatre Website*, 2014.
[50] Libby Purves, 'THE ARMOUR Langham Hotel, W1: One Hotel, 150 Years, Three Plays', *Theatre Cat: Libby Purves Reviews*, 6 March 2015 <https://theatrecat.com/2015/03/06/the-armour-langham-hotel-w1/> [accessed 3 December 2020].

this production. Susannah Clapp, in her review for *the Guardian*, states that '[t]he Langham seems to have occasioned rather than inspired *The Armour*', while Tom Wicker writing for *The Stage*, points to the lack of a 'wider attempt to draw you into the hotels' interconnected space'.[51] These criticisms suggest that the production did not take full advantage of the site it had chosen. For these reviewers, the use of the hotel space was not creatively productive or integrated well with the dramatic content of the production, perhaps a justifiable criticism since the performance only uses three separate rooms without a narrative uniting the three parts between each act. Such opinions, however, may have been derived from the recent popularity of hotels as performance venues; the choice of site is not in itself innovative, meaning that a production is also required to utilise that space creatively. Despite the validity of the criticisms, I argue that because of the very fact that this production leaves space for the hotel life to seep through the fictional narratives, *The Armour* exemplifies what performance in functioning hotels may draw out from the site itself. In other words, the absence of prefatorial performance or interconnectivity between the acts enable the elements that belong to the hotel space to permeate the performance and influence the audience's reception.[52] The complexity of the site functions as a paratextual element, informing the performance text and colouring the audience's experience.

Grand hotels such as the Langham have their own character and history, and their luxurious offerings will be beyond the reach of many audience members who visit it when attending the show. In her review of the Almeida Theatre's production of *The Fever*, Gardner ensures that '[y]ou [as audience members] have a right to be here', at the May Fair Hotel, which in turn implies the audience members perhaps do not belong in the luxurious hotel otherwise.[53] Such alienation from the space resonates with one of the contradictory dichotomies hotels inherently possess. That is, they welcome arriving customers with an ideally 'homelike' hospitality, whilst anticipating that the stay will only be temporary. The relationship between the space and the ephemeral performative act which resides within the space of site-specific performance has been described using the terms 'host' and 'ghost'. Cathy Turner, referring to the practitioners who rationalise this idea, such as Mike Pearson and Cliff McLucas,

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[51] Clapp, 'The Armour Review – No Linking Narrative, Too Much Corridor Carpet'.
Tom Wicker, 'The Armour, Review', *The Stage*, 9 March 2015 <https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2015/armour/> [accessed 18 December 2019].

[52] In *The Hotel Plays*, the three playlets are prefaced by a visit to a cloak room where the audience see a prefatorial act by a bell boy, who later appears in the third playlet, answering an extension phone call, while they are being invited to leave their belongings.

[53] Gardner, 'The Fever Review – Grappling with Privilege and Guilt in a Mayfair Hotel'.

summarises that in site-specific performance '[t]he "ghost" of the superimposed structure occupies the "host" site'.[54] The term 'ghost', Turner states, embraces not only a physical structure occupying a given space, but also 'the events, narratives, and performances arising from these structures and the spaces they present'.[55] The performance as 'ghost' haunts the space as 'host', which is then witnessed by the audience members. An analogy akin to this is drawn by writer Joanna Walsh in her meditative essay on hotels, titled 'Hotel Haunting'. The ever-changing faces of guests are compared to 'ghosts' who temporarily haunt the building.[56] The chambermaids are described as '[o]ther ghosts with passkeys' who make an entry to the rooms unannounced, leaving subtle traces of their existence by smoothing away the clutter of the rooms. When functioning hotels where everyday business is continued as normal are taken as venues of theatrical performance, they become doubly haunted: the transient relationship between hotels ('host') and their temporary visitors who reside within ('ghost') is further highlighted by the presence of another set of 'ghosts' of the performance and the audience brought by it. Spectators are indeed the witnesses of the hotel guests and the performance acts ('ghosts') that are haunting the site ('host'), but at the same time, they become the ghostly haunting themselves, only temporarily occupying the hotel space and treated as unseen by the performers. Walsh subsequently continues that '[a] ghost must be seen […] in order to exist (if we are all dead, a ghost is nothing but a neighbour)'.[57] In the heavily haunted hotel space, the ongoing business of the hotel is juxtaposed with the performance temporarily occupying the site, both of which equally disturbs the audience's experience in that moment.

In the production of *The Armour*, the performance has effectively already started from the point where the audience embarked on the journey to the hotel. Spectators' expectations of the show are aroused as they approach the Langham Hotel, since it is not only an unusual destination for a theatrical performance but also unlikely to be a regular place to call at in their daily lives. The idea of going to an expensive hotel itself, operates as a paratextual element, feeding into the sense of an evening of spectacle but with a difference. On their arrival at the Langham, the audience members are asked to wait in the foyer for the show to start. A signboard which carries the title of the show, a member of staff who does 'check in' for the audience, an usher smartly dressed as a server and the audience members who stand around at corners all

[54] Cathy Turner, 'Palimpsest or Potential Space? Finding a Vocabulary for Site-Specific Performance', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 20.04 (2004), 373–90 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0266464X04000259> (p. 374).
[55] Turner, 'Palimpsest or Potential Space? Finding a Vocabulary for Site-Specific Performance', p. 374.
[56] Walsh, 'Hotel Haunting', *Hotel*, p. 12.
[57] Walsh, 'Hotel Haunting', *Hotel*, p. 12.

blend into the hubbub which already fills the hotel foyer. The main entrance which connects the inside to the outside also functions as a hub for any traffic of people within the hotel. It leads to the reception, the restaurants, the lounge, the function rooms and the numerous guest rooms via lifts and staircases. As they wait, the audience soon notices the everyday businesses of the hotels going on around them, almost oblivious of the theatre spectators' presence. The everyday acts at the hotel themselves are highly performative as they follow the code of conduct and routines at the hotel, which already contributes to blurring the boundary between reality and fiction. It prepares the audience for the show which is about to start, making them hyper-aware of the premises where the performance unfolds and enhancing their anticipation.

With the senses heightened, the audience members start to notice subtle behaviours of people in the hotel, paying attention to minor incidents they happen to witness. On the evening I attended the performance, there was a wedding, perhaps Indian, happening in the hotel. At one point, a well-dressed man, raising his voice in anger, was dragged across the foyer by a couple of formally dressed men. This was followed by a woman in a decorative dress, which I imagined to be an Indian wedding garment, sobbing and walking out from the same place as the angry man did, accompanied by another woman. This brief incident drew attention of some people, yet it did not exceed the general noise of the hotel foyer and went mostly unnoticed. It was surely happenstance, never repeated on any other night and not related at all to the performance that followed. Nevertheless, however minor or irrelevant an incident might be, it can contribute as a paratext to a meaning-making process within an audience experience which has effectively already begun. The production of *The Armour* welcomes extra layers of external narratives to complicate the audience's experience of the evening, by leaving the audience exposed to the ongoing business of the hotel. As the theatre audiences are introduced to the hotel space, they are given an opportunity to observe the environment and perhaps to have an insight into the distinctive quality of the hotel where public and private intersect.

The production's conscious effort to complicate the relations between reality and fiction is also evident at the beginning of the first act, when a chambermaid with a vacuum cleaner briefly enters the performance space 'by mistake', shortly after the entrance of an actor in the role of the manager, Franky. The sequence was seemingly staged and embedded deliberately in the performance text, given that it was in the evening when cleaning would not normally take place. This impression is also supported by the fact that the actor interacts with the chambermaid whilst treating the audience members as if they were unseen. This fleeting,

superficially unimportant, interaction between the manager and the chambermaid implicitly reminds the audience of the two separate worlds of the hotel guests and the hotel workers, where a neat and relaxing environment desirably manifests itself without guests confronting the labour that has gone into producing the impression. It reiterates the fact that the door separates the two worlds of public and private as well as physically separating two spaces, reinforcing a voyeuristic intimacy within the space. It also emphasises that while the narrative is fictional, it belongs to the contemporary present, as a continuation of what is going on outside.

Coincidental occurrences observed in the hotel lobby can be described as epitexts in Genette's terms, existing outside of the performance text and only assuming the status of paratexts for the witnessing spectators. The staged action of the chambermaid to complicate the reality and fiction, on the other hand, is peritext, embedded within the performance text and highlighting the continuity of the performance and the actual hotel space. Although they belong to different levels of discourse, external and internal to the text respectively, there is not a clear spatial boundary between the Langham as the fictional hotel space and as the actual hotel space. Their paratextual effects on the audience's experience, destabilising the boundary between fiction and the reality, defy absolute distinctions between what belongs to the text and what does not. Here, epitext with 'no precise limits' and 'endlessly diffused in a biographical, critical, or other discourse whose relation to the work may be at best indirect and at worst indiscernible' may exert influence as important as peritextual layers of meaning.[58]

Being a grand hotel with a large capacity, the building of the Langham possesses identical sets of guest rooms across many floors. Such repetitive physical structures, along with the actions and figures present in the hotel space which themselves reinforce routines and behavioural patterns, render a particular characteristic to the hotel space, which in turn adds an extra layer of meaning to the performative act within. The size of the site seems to have worked against the production some of the critics, as Clapp says that the audience 'sees all too much corridor carpet' and, criticises the lack of 'linking narrative' except for a piece of garment as a symbol of departure and freedom which repeatedly appears in all three scenes.[59] What the audience sees while travelling up and down through the corridors, staircases and the lift for the next scene is a quiet part of the hotel, in contrast to the foyer where the constant traffic of people is observed. The reality of the life in the actual hotel which punctuates every scene break might seem disillusioning, considering the interconnectivity of the three different narratives. However,

[58] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 346.
[59] Clapp, 'The Armour Review – No Linking Narrative, Too Much Corridor Carpet'.

the seemingly tedious intermissions are inseparable from the hotel building, and they offer their own meaning to the event. Corridors with a series of closed doors, repeated floor after floor, and which are disorientating to the extent where even residents might get lost without referring to the floor number, hint at the anonymity of hotel rooms. The view of identical hotel corridors and carpets implies the multiplicity of the drama unfolding behind all those doors, quietly lining the corridor. Such repetitive physical structure suggests that each room potentially contains equally intense drama as the ones the audience members are witnessing throughout the evening. By physically superimposing three narratives that are set in the very hotel over the actual hotel building, *The Armour* is not only left open for the slippage of real life into the audience's experience, but also intriguingly highlights the potential of the hotel space as a locus of fictional narratives.

Hotel as a metaphor of the state of grief: *The Reservation*

The Reservation is Part Two of Ellie Harrison's *The Grief Series*, a series of performance and installation works, using a seven stage Grief Model from psychology as a starting point to 'create a space where notions of bereavement or grief can be discussed openly'.[60] Developed and performed in collaboration with performance artist Jaye Kearney, the one-to-one encounter of *The Reservation* explores the second stage of the Grief Model, pain and guilt, and was premiered at the Queen's Hotel in Leeds in 2012.[61] *The Reservation* invites an audience member to three stages of an encounter in a hotel building. In the iteration of the production in Hampton by Hilton Hotel in Sheffield in April 2016, the initial encounter took place in the bar area on the ground floor, open and visible from the hotel entrance.[62] Welcomed by a facilitator, the spectator was handed a handwritten and personally addressed letter of invitation to the experience. When the spectator was ready to proceed, Kearney appeared, dressed in an elephant suit and beckoned the audience member to follow her from distance. Kearney took the audience member through a quiet staircase at the back of the building, while delivering the text. Harrison, in the same human-size elephant attire, came across the audience just before reaching the room.

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[60] Ellie Harrison, 'About', *The Grief Series* <http://griefseries.co.uk/about> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[61] Lyn Gardner, in her review of *The Reservation*, quotes the website (http://www.recover-from-grief.com/7-stages-of-grief.html) for the seven stages of Grief Model. Seven stages are: shock and denial; pain and guilt; anger and bargaining; depression, reflection, loneliness; upward turn; reconstruction and working through; acceptance and hope.

[62] Ellie Harrison and Jaye Kearney, *The Reservation*, premiered in 2012. Sheffield production took place as part of WROUGHT Festival 2016, at Hampton by Hilton Hotel, Sheffield. Attended on 15 April 2016.

On entering the hotel room, the audience member was handed a suitcase and given about 10 minutes to explore the hotel room on her own. The room was reimagined as, in Gardner's words, 'a space for grief':[63] a washbasin in the bathroom had an invitation to make artificial tears with salt and warm water; a DVD player was on stand-by to play a documentary about the elephants that never forget and that mourn for the deceased; an array of magazines paying tribute to late celebrities were spread on the shelf and a drawer revealed their portraits; sprigs of rosemary for remembrance were laid on the bed. After time spent on her own, the audience member was joined in the room by Harrison to share and exchange stories about the photographs 'of someone you have lost or are afraid of losing', which the audience had been asked to bring prior to the performance.[64] Harrison created an environment in which the spectator could feel able to share stories of bereavement; their consent was renewed on multiple occasions without sounding 'administrative' and an 'elephant card' was given with which to cover their face as a signal for time-out if needed. When the performance concluded, after an exchange of anecdotes and sharing of shots of port, the audience member was asked to write or draw the summary of her experience on a handkerchief as a record of the shared time and the conversation; the handkerchief might or might not become a part of the installation, as the spectator chose. The audience member departed, this time on her own, leaving the hotel with 'a Grief Party bag' containing a slice of rosemary cake.

In *The Reservation,* the hotel space, specifically a hotel room, functions as a metaphor for grief from bereavement; it is a space for one to stay for a certain amount of time, yet, hopefully, not to live in for good. The invitation of this work is for an audience of one to visit grief of their own, perhaps suppressed in the deep in the mind. However, I argue that it is the contrast between private and public aspects of the hotel space that frames and consolidates the solitary audience experience, and therefore, the hotel space paratextually informs the audience's experience. In this piece, an audience member travels from the entrance to the hotel building, through the public area of lobby, to a hotel room as a compartment nested in the larger whole. This physical journey embodies a visitation to a difficult part of one's memory, signalling the invitation of this work and facilitating the audience member's participation.

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[63] Lyn Gardner, 'The Reservation – Review', *The Guardian,* 5 November 2012 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2012/nov/05/the-reservation-review> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[64] An email invitation to the performance. Received on 14 April 2016.

The Reservation places great emphasis on the experience being completely tailored to each audience member. They welcome only one person with reservation at a time and allow an hour slot for each to arrive at the hotel, meet the facilitator, be taken to the room and return to the foyer to reflect on their experience before going back to everyday life. The handwritten letter is personally addressed, and the usher and both performers already know each audience member's name, signalling that they are expected. Unlike the collective audience experience of *The Armour,* the audience member in *The Reservation* finds herself as the only participant during the entire experience in the hotel. Any discomfort and awkwardness from being in a hotel alone, not as a hotel guest, is gradually removed in the course of the event which sees 'a quality of the relation between participant and site' as equally important as the interaction between performer and participant.[65] Helen Iball, in her discussion of two site-specific intimate theatre pieces, Adrian Howells's *The Garden of Adrian* (2009) in especially designed indoor garden and Silvia Mercuriali's *Wondermart* (2009) in a large supermarket, states that the site hints to the audience the role which they are invited to adopt, supported by 'instructions and role play'.[66] In *The Reservation*, the participant initially adopts the role of regular hotel guest as they arrive at the building, which is then slowly transformed into something more specific. A walk up to one of the many rooms in a building simulates a visit to a pocket of one's mind which is filled with a number of experience and emotions. By the time the audience member finds herself alone in a hotel room, reception by the facilitator and a short and surreal journey into the inside of the hotel accompanied by a chaperone in an elephant suit have functioned as a decompression zone, a term that Punchdrunk use for an in-between space for preparing the audience. This process functions as a prefatorial apparatus, gently inviting the audience member to enter the space of her personal grief and memory and readying them to share their vulnerable self.

The private exploration of the room before the interaction with Harrison also helps the audience to familiarise themselves with the space, which is what Iball describes as a common strategy of *Wondermart* and *The Garden of Adrian* to 'orientate their participants with an overview of the site early in the proceedings'.[67] Through the time the audience member spends on her own without being disturbed, the audience member starts to inhabit a neutral and comforting hotel room. The sheltered safety of the hotel room becomes what Harrison calls 'the

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[65] Helen Iball, 'My Sites Set on You: Site-Specificity and Subjectivity in "Intimate Theatre"', in *Performing Site-Specific Theatre: Politics, Place, Practice*, ed. by Anna Birch and Joanne Tompkins (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 201–15 (205).
[66] Iball, 'My Sites Set on You', pp. 207–08.
[67] Iball, 'My Sites Set on You', p. 207.

safe place for the risk to happen', a place in which the audience can open herself up to sharing personal memories and anecdotes.[68] Now prepared, the audience member is ready to share her answers and stories in response to playing cards drawn from a pile. The invitation to talk about the person in the photograph is simply facilitated in the form of instructions on the cards, yet reminiscing about the late loved one (or about the person dear to you whom you are afraid of losing) is inevitably emotionally charged. The answer of the audience member, including any diversion from the given topic, is carefully reciprocated by the performer with her own story and washed down with shots of port. Combined with welcoming and disarming interactions already offered by the facilitator and Kearney, the central aspect of this performance takes place in the safety and seclusion of the hotel space.

This carefully constructed personal experience is consolidated by the audience member's return to the public area of the hotel space. The series of events which take place in this performance work are so distant from the usual experience of a hotel guest, from an encounter with performers in elephant suits to the exploration into the installation in the hotel room. After an extraordinary experience, however, the audience member comes back to the foyer where the hotel reception and the bar keep functioning as normal, staff and members of the public unaware that a rich hour-long experience has just taken place in one of their rooms. The hotel lobby, a threshold the audience member already passed on entrance, initially had less impact as a preparatory preface, compared to an accompanied walk up to the room or the time spent alone, exploring the installation. However, the public area of the hotel space in which the routine is steadily executed shows a stark contrast to the seclusion of the hotel room on the audience's return. It is this contrast between the private and the public presented in the form of postface, or a recurring preface as an epilogue, that seals the audience's experience of being within the private space of hotel room. *The Reservation* epitomises the hotel as the space of seclusion and routine, exploiting the tension of public and private, highlighting the intimacy and care which take place behind the door.

Pseudo-hotel space: *The Magical Number Seven*

The Magical Number Seven by David Rosenberg with Hannah Ringham was presented as part of the second One-on-One Festival at Battersea Arts Centre in 2011. The festival offered ten

[68] Ellie Harrison, Workshop as part of Emerging Artists' Scheme for WROUGHT Festival 2016, which took place on 17 February 2016 at the Hawley Building, the University of Sheffield.

types of ‘menus’ or tickets, each of which took an audience member on a journey of three different One-to-One performances taking place across the building. *The Magical Number Seven* invites an audience member to the basement where an usher awaits at a make-shift reception area. The audience member is asked to leave their belongings and handed a card key for the room. It soon becomes clear that the card key is a mere prop without the actual function of opening the door, as the audience member attempts to insert it to the door. The already unlocked door opens inside a room which is immaculately designed as a spacious double room of the kind you might find in any quality hotel in any city. The mise-en-scène is understated, providing a room that is recognisably a hotel room yet without any particular character. As the audience member steps further into the room, she finds a performer, Ringham, next to the bed at a blind spot from the doorway. Ringham, with a meaningful half-smile, leaves the room shortly, with the unsettling piece of advice to lock the door behind her. As she leaves, the audience notices that there are more bolts on the door than are usual for a hotel room. The ten minutes that follow are full of dreamlike surreal events: the audience member may explore the room to find a chest of drawers filled with sand or encounter a series of blackouts and sudden appearances of the performer despite the tightly locked door. At the end, the audience member is gently ushered out of the room by Ringham without a word. The audience member is always aware that the room is artificially constructed in the manner of a hotel room, and there is no genuine everyday business of a hotel surrounding the performance space. Nevertheless, *The Magical Number Seven* skilfully captures the unique quality of hotel rooms: potentially claustrophobic isolation and the unsettling quality of being in an anonymous room as a stranger.

Solitary audience experience plays a key role as a paratextual element in the quality of hotel space captured by *The Magical Number Seven*. The collective audience experience offered by *The Armour* implicitly arouses within each spectator the awareness of being a part of a group. The audience members of *The Armour* travel across the hotel building as a group of about thirty, guided by an usher, either through carpeted staircases or by lift. The usher asks the audience to leave no space in the seats in each of the three rooms and ensures that the audience is not interfering with a performing area in the room. The huddled together audience may feel absorbed in the narrative; yet there is certainly a hint of solidarity, being a part of a group, accepting the role of silent viewers. In *The Magical Number Seven*, in contrast, the audience member is well aware of their isolation. This is partly because this work is presented in the context of the One-on-One Festival, but also because the blurb on the brochure underlines such anticipation:

> Kindly fill out your particulars in this register and sign. Here is the key, you must lock the room when going out. This porter will carry your luggage to your room. If you need any private services please ring the bell phone and the bearer will attend to your needs.
>
> Welcome. Do not stay longer than 10 minutes.[69]

The blurb, which resembles the generic instructions given at a hotel reception when checking in, clearly informs the audience that the title, *The Magical Number Seven*, indicates the room number of a hotel. A series of gestures — checking in luggage, receiving a key — which take place before the entrance to the room also reinforces the expectation of the audience member of being on her own in a hotel room. A hotel room is supposed to be a private space in which one can unwind, with one's privacy maintained. Here, the blurb and the series of gestures function as paratextual elements, gradually building up the impression that the audience member should be the only person in the room as a hotel guest. It is this preconception slowly built up beforehand that makes the subversion of the promised security and privacy particularly vivid. Once the audience member enters the room, unexpectedly finding another visitor and then being left alone, the audience finds herself in a heavily bolted 'hotel room that takes on a life of its own' in unease.[70] In this piece, the isolation of the audience engenders within them the expectation for a hotel room experience; however, this paratextual information is then overthrown upon the audience member's entering the performance space. When the implied privacy and seclusion in the room is disrupted by the intimate and unnerving presence of the performer, that is, when the anticipation supported by a series of paratextual pieces of information is subverted, the insecurity prevails. There exists no boundary between the real life and the fictional narrative in the case of the performance in the pseudo-hotel space; however, the anticipation set up through the paratextual information given before the performance and the close resemblance of the performance space to an actual hotel room replicate the hotel experience within the ten-minute performative act, leaving the audience member in the midst of the unsettling anonymity of a faceless hotel room.

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[69] Battersea Arts Centre, 'One-on-One Festival: What's Your Taste?', 2011 <https://issuu.com/battersea_arts_centre/docs/1on1_finalx_web> [accessed 3 December 2020].

[70] Lyn Gardner, 'One-on-One Festival – Review', *The Guardian*, 1 April 2011 <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2011/apr/01/one-on-one-festival-review> [accessed 3 December 2020].

Conclusion: Hotel plays itself out

The use of non-theatre space in performance brings different dynamics between the performance and the audience, between the central and the marginal, and between texts and paratexts. Selection of performance space functions paratextually as a framing device, causing a slippage of the functions and activities unique to the space into the performance inhabiting it. Experiential theatrical events invite the audience to contribute to the production of the text, giving them agency to admit what they perceive at the edge of, or even beyond, the text, into the meaning-making processes.

Site-specific performances in hotels — whether in functioning hotels or in carefully constructed pseudo-hotel spaces — have almost grown into a sub-genre of contemporary theatre practice. This is in a sense unsurprising, given the wider context in which site-specific theatre productions find their inspiration from genuine locations in an attempt to enrich and extend the audience's experience. Non-theatre spaces as a performance location complement and reinforce the performance taking place within, although the relationship between the site and the performance will greatly vary. Some performances may mimic the pre-existing activities and the themes in the place, embracing them within the performance, whilst others may highlight the contrast between the site and the performance, exploiting the dissonance between them. As seen in the example of *The Armour*, a functioning hotel as a performance venue encourages a different kind of engagement with the performance experience and it arguably complicates the performance text with the existing life of the hotel. When the performance set in a hotel is enacted in the very hotel space amidst ongoing everyday business, the audience experience becomes still more complex, with the performed hotel and the actual hotel endlessly reflecting one another as if they were two mirrors facing one another. The epitexts of life in the hotel and what the special configuration of the hotel offers can become as significant as peritexts that are designed to complement the audience's reading of the text.

In *The Reservation*, in contrast, the spatial arrangement of the hotel building and the ambivalent nature of the hotel as institution function as a threshold of the experience; they offer the preface to the audience member, preparing them for the encounter in a hotel room as well as consolidating the experience upon their exit from the performance as postface. The impact the hotel foyer gives to the audience member may be subtle, or even appear negligible, both on entrance and on exit. However, the ongoing business in the public space of the functioning hotel creates a striking contrast to the intimate moments taking place in the hotel room of confiding

their vulnerable sentiments in relation to the difficult subject of grief. In this example, it is this effective use of the conflicting opportunities that the hotel space possesses which paratextually informs the audience's experience. Pseudo-hotel space can also work to draw out a series of ambivalent attributes that actual hotels possess. *The Magical Number Seven* meaningfully plays with the anticipated privacy, security and homeliness, which is later destabilised by the performance. In this work, what is evoked by the concept of the hotel is paratextually utilised to build up an anticipation that is only to be subverted later.

In these examples, the hotel is not only exploited as a site that provides a certain ambience such as glamour or anonymity, let alone as an authentic backdrop that is merely thematically suited to the performance work. Rather, the life in the hotel, the structure of the hotel building, and its contradictory attributes paratextually inform the audience's reading of the performance text. When a performance work inhabits the functioning hotel space, one already encoded with routines, rules and its ongoing life within, the performance work inevitably opens up itself to the significance that the hotel space offers. The space, then, paratextually interact with the performance work, enriching the performance text and the audience's experience. In such interactions, the differences between peritext and epitext is greatly blurred as they spatially coincide with one another, yet both creatively trouble the boundary between the reality of the hotel and the fictional narrative that temporarily inhabits it.

Chapter 4: Paratexts and Performance Space II — the city

'In the street, a form of spontaneous theatre, I become spectacle and spectator, and sometimes an actor.'
— Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* [1]

The city, or the urban space, has profoundly attracted the interests of practitioners as an imaginative topos, inspiring performance works in a variety of forms. For example, amongst many city-based shows, the past two decades have seen *YOU – The City* (1988) by Fiona Templeton, which invites an audience of one (called the 'client') to have 'appointments' with a series of individuals 'all of whom seemed to know something about "you"'.[2] The original iteration in New York took an audience member to a two-hour long journey visiting both the public and private places across mid-town Manhattan. *Nights in This City* (1995 in Sheffield, 1997 in Rotterdam) by Forced Entertainment offers a collective audience experience of a guided city tour in a coach; the highly fictionalised commentaries creates a dissonance between what is heard and seen. The route of the tour reveals non-touristic side of the city, which self-reflexively makes the audience aware of their one-directional gaze of the tourists through the bus window. More recently, *Lookout* by Andy Field (premiered in 2015 in Glasgow) and *The Desire Paths* by Third Angel (premiered in 2016 in Sheffield) invite the audience to envisage the future of the city. *Lookout* offers an opportunity to see the coming years of the city imagined by a child performer with whom an audience of one has a one-to-one encounter at a particular vantage point of the city. *The Desire Paths* asks the audience to engage with the task of 'commemorat[ing] the future' by renaming the streets, looking at the map hand-drawn on the public square in the city.[3] In both cases, these projects ask the audience to be actively involved in symbolic acts of re-shaping the future city: while the invitation of the former asks the audience to picture a potential change to the city below their eyes, the latter invites them to witness new names of the streets they give directly scripted on the surface of the city.

Joanne 'Bob' Whalley and Lee Miller propose, in an article on site-specific performance work in relation to the concept of home, that performance works which 'depart

[1] Henri Lefevbre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. by Robert Bononno (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. 18.
[2] Fiona Templeton, 'YOU - The City', *Fiona Templeton* <http://www.fionatempleton.org/you-the city.htm> [accessed 4 December 2020].
[3] Third Angel, 'The Desire Paths', *Third Angel Blog* (2016) <http://thirdangeluk.blogspot.co.uk/2016/09/the-desire-paths-in-sheffield.html> [accessed 4 December 2020].

from the codified boundaries of the theatre space implicitly engage with the issues and concepts of travel.'[4] In the previous chapter, I discussed works that depart from the purpose-built theatre space and locate themselves in functioning hotels. The movement to, from and within the hotel space does give the audience a sense of journey through the highly codified space, and the hotel is also strongly associated with the concept of travel as a place to stay, en route, for rest. Performance works in the city space, especially those which require the audience to engage in a literal journey across the city, likewise engage with the concept of travel, yet in a distinctive way from that of the hotel. Placed in the streets and invited to be 'in a perpetual state of transit', the audience in the city physically embody the journey across the city and over time, moving from one place to another.[5] Both the use of hotel space and city space in performance mark a departure from purpose-built theatre buildings and a paratextual approach enables us to see the dramatic potential of the space where rules and codes are highly intertwined, and also how the pre-existing meanings embedded in such spaces contribute to the meaning-making processes of the work as paratexts.

Henri Lefebvre in 'The Specificity of the City' (in *Le droit à la ville* [*Right to the City*], 1968) compares the city to a semiological system of a book in the sense that it is not separable from 'what it contains nor from what contains it, by isolating it as a complete system'.[6] Like a volume of literature, the city is both material and conceptual reality, a complex entity composed of an intertwined web of 'sub-wholes', in Lefebvre's words. For Lefebvre, the city is a text 'situated at an interface' between what he calls the near order (relations of individuals contained in the city) and the far order (the order of a higher level of society, such as institutions, legal codes and culture which support the city while it is being supported by it mutually).[7] Mediating these two orders of different levels, the city is '[a] text in a context so vast and ungraspable' that the text of the city can only be comprehended by the way it reflects the reality of these two different orders.[8] Lefebvre further explains the function of the near order and the far order as follows:

> The whole is not immediately present in this written text, the city. There are other levels of reality which do not become *transparent* by definition. The city *writes*

[4] Joanne 'Bob' Whalley and Lee Miller, 'Away from Home: The Curious Domain of Passage', Performance Research, 12.2 (2007), 66–74 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13528160701554709> (p. 69).
[5] Whalley and Miller, 'Away from Home', p.69.
[6] Lefebvre, '7. The Specificity of the City', Writings on Cities, trans. and ed. by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 102.
[7] Lefebvre, '7. The Specificity of the City', p. 101.
[8] Lefebvre, '7. The Specificity of the City', p. 101.

> and *assigns*, that is, signifies, orders, stipulates. What? That is to be discovered by reflection. This text has passed through ideologies, as it also 'reflects' them. The *far order* projects itself in/on the *near order*. However, the *near order* does not reflect transparently the *far order*. The later [sic] subordinates the immediate through mediations.[9] (italics in original)

The far order, or the social and cultural ideas and codes that conceptualise the city, is reflected in the near order, or the immediate and tangible reality. It is through this reflection that the city takes its form. In the case of performance in the city, what the audience see is not only the performance work itself but also a reflection of what the performance work projects onto the urban landscape. The city and its ongoing life at an interface reveal some of their aspects, responding to the projection, which then meaningfully, or at times haphazardly, complicates the interpretation of the performance work. A paratextual approach enables us to see how such reflections from the city function as paratext in the performance work and destabilise the boundary which separates what is performance and what is beyond performance.

The previous chapter argued that the ongoing life and drama within the walls of the hotel space can be illuminated and enhanced by a performative act within. This chapter provides a useful comparison to the last chapter by discussing how the paratext plays out in an open space without any physical walls containing the work. Firstly, the very decision to design a performance work for the city space is an act of embracing the permeability of external materials to the text, since the boundaries of performance are immediately less palpable in an outdoor environment. Compared to the hotel, which is contained within the limit of a building and its periphery, the city presents much more open space for the practitioners and participants to explore both physically and figuratively. The work and its auzdience are exposed to the unpredictability of the city; therefore, performance works created to be performed in the streets provide meaningful examples for exploring the research question: What paratextual force can be observed in the contemporary performance works? Performance in the openness of the city inevitably gives more opportunity for urban life to 'interfere' with the performance text. Secondly, examination of performance in the city contrasts with that of the hotel, since the city space implies its quotidian nature, while the hotel space epitomises the extra-daily. Some hotels strive to achieve home-like hospitality and for some people hotels may be a place they regularly stay for business reasons; yet the hotel space nonetheless implies the temporary sojourn out of a

[9] Lefebvre, '7. The Specificity of the City', p. 102.

daily routine. In contrast, the city space, being a large geographical unit, contains both the daily and the extra-daily. To highlight this contrast, the case studies examined in this chapter show the city as they are; both performance pieces incorporate the city and the daily lives unfolding in it as part of the work. Although participating in a performance itself will be a non-daily occasion for the audience members, the performance in the city streets where day-to-day activities take place as usual hints at its contiguity to daily lives. Looking into the case study examples designed for the city, this chapter continue to examine the relationship between the space and performance that occupies it through a paratextual model.

In this chapter, the paratext in the city space is discussed with reference to two performance works, *Walking:Holding* (2011) by Rosana Cade and *Night Walk for Edinburgh* (2019) by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller. Both works take the audience members on a walk through the city, with their routes specifically responding to the cities where the productions take place, while diverging in some aspects of the experience they offer. I begin with an analysis of *Walking:Holding*, a performance work for an audience of one, which places each audience member, or 'audience-participant', in a series of one-to-one encounters, inviting them to make a physical connection with the performer-participant by holding their hands. The verbal text of *Walking:Holding* may follow some pre-planned patterns but is never fixed: an interaction between an audience-participant and a performer-participant is developed anew on each encounter as they share the walk and keep their physical connection. *Night Walk for Edinburgh* is also a guided walk for an audience of one, yet here using a video rather than a performer as a guide. The audience member travels the route equipped with a smartphone and a headset, experiencing the narrative performed and recorded in the exact locations in the recent past. Recorded sounds and voices that are only heard to the ears of the audience create a kind of intimacy distinct from that of *Walking:Holding*, without a physical presence of the guide. The audio-visual narrative provided to the audience is the same for all audience members and is experienced by the audience on their own. In both works, 'the viewer's privileged position as reader "outside" the work is challenged', as the audience are incorporated in the performance text and their perspectives and ideas inform their experience self-reflexively.[10] This implication of the spectator as participant in the piece is especially evident in performance walks where the act of practising the walk itself contributes to meaning-making, that is, the performance does not occur unless an audience member walks the route. The audience interpret their experience as

[10] Nick Kaye, *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 25.

reader at the very moment they play the role as performing audience. In *Night Walk for Edinburgh*, the ambivalent position of the audience member as both a reader and a participant is further complicated by an intentional confusion of perception: binaurally recorded soundscape is blended to real street noises so seamlessly that the boundary between what is recorded and what is not is often indiscernible.

This chapter examines the paratextual encounters generated through the audience experience of these performance works situated in the city, and assess the opportunities that the city space opens up for the paratextual reading of such works. The analysis of performances in this chapter is thus guided by a set of two research questions, the first of which is: How might the city, which itself a text incessantly overwritten by the activities within, paratextually inform performance works that are situated in this space? Without a physical boundary delineating where the performance begins and ends, the limits of the text remain open to the possibility for found external materials to be admitted into it. The second research question asks: How do paratexts function in these city performances, particularly in performance walks predicated upon continuous movement of the text and the audience? The case studies considered in this chapter are both performance walks, which means that the audience member is constantly in transit across the city. The outdoor urban space is always shifting in its containment of the diverse activities it hosts; indeed, the two pieces I examine here specifically highlight this transient quality of the city space by their insistence on the audience's perpetual movement. My analysis of *Walking:Holding* and *Night Walk for Edinburgh* focuses on three aspects of the work in particular: the route of the journey, the audience as participants and the invitation to the work. Through these case studies, I argue that the interaction between the performance and the city as a text allows the audience to redefine the city as they know it, achieved by inviting the audience to find subtle drama and textures in its liminal spaces and enabling these paratextual interactions to unsettle daily and extra-daily contexts and narratives.

Meeting the gazes and (re)discovering the quotidian: *Walking:Holding* (2011) by Rosana Cade

Walking:Holding by Rosana Cade is a performance piece for an audience of one who walks in the city while holding hands with a series of performer-participants local to that place. The work premiered in 2011 in Glasgow, and has toured nationally and internationally since, usually presented in the context of a performance festival, similarly to other performance works for an

audience of one.[11] Although such a short walk may not sound like a theatrical performance, *Walking:Holding* brings performer-participants and audience-participants together, connects them by literally linking their hands and invites them to see themselves as the site of performance.[12] From the moment at which the audience member is welcomed by her first walking partner to the point where she is safely brought back to where the journey started, she is physically connected to a performer-participant, who is also referred to as a 'hand-holder' by the artist. By creating physical proximity between the performer-participants and the audience member, *Walking:Holding* foregrounds the spectator's awareness of the way they engage with the performer-participants they encounter. An instantly forged physical connection between the performer-participants and the audience is further highlighted in the audience's experience precisely because the pair is exposed to the public gaze of the city. This discussion of *Walking:Holding* is based on two iterations: one in London in 2013 as part of SPILL Festival which I attended as an audience member, and the other in Sheffield as part of WROUGHT Festival 2014, which I commissioned as a co-producer of the festival.[13]

This performance is, in formal terms, very simple: an audience member walks in the city, holding the hands of a series of people they do not know. The walk typically lasts for half an hour, during which time the audience of one encounters six strangers, waiting for her along the route. On arrival at the venue, the audience is given a piece of information as to when and where to meet the usher, or more precisely the facilitator, who then meets the audience member and brings them to the starting point of the performance.[14] Prior to embarking on the journey,

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[11] Performance works for an audience of one, or One-to-One performance, often take place in the context of a festival environment. This is partly because of the relatively short durations of One-to-One performance works, and because of the very limited capacity, namely one person at a time. These characteristics of this art form prove to be challenging for programming a One-to-One performance work on its own in a venue. One-to-One performance works typically last ten minutes to half an hour with a short break and turnaround time for the practitioner inserted between the slots.

[12] Adrian Howells, who mentored Cade in developing this performance work, preferred to call the audience member attending his performance work an 'audience-participant', emphasising the mutual contribution to the work between the performer and audience member. In this work by Cade which involves the participants as performer as well as audience members, the artist calls both parties 'performer-participants' and 'audience-participants'.
Deirdre Heddon and Dominic Johnson, 'Introducing the Work of Adrian Howells', in *It's All Allowed: The Performances of Adrian Howells*, ed. by Deirdre Heddon and Dominic Johnson (London and Bristol: Live Art Development Agency and Intellect Live, 2016), pp. 10–41 (10).

[13] Rosana Cade, *Walking:Holding*, premiered in Glasgow in 2011. I attended the London production which took place as part of SPILL Festival on 6 April 2013. The Sheffield production took place as part of WROUGHT: A One-to-One Performance Festival on 11 and 12 October 2014. On this latter occasion, I worked closely with the artist as a co-producer of the festival, attended the preliminary workshop with the participants and ushered the performance on one performance day.

[14] The role of the usher for performance works for an audience of one is diverse: it ranges from keeping the list of audience members and inviting the audience in the performance space, to donning an

having confirmed the performance is ready to begin, the facilitator delivers an instruction, which paratextually prefaces the audience's experience:

> In a minute I am going to leave you. When I leave you, close your eyes. Take 3 deep breaths, then open your eyes and the performance will begin. Once you've opened your eyes, everything you see will be part of the performance.[15] (Original emphasis)

This simple instruction asks the audience member to prepare herself for the experience. By temporarily silencing the sense of sight, the audience becomes more aware of the sense of hearing as they take deep breaths. Their attention is directed to the sound of the surroundings and their breaths, which were already there probably without drawing much of the audience's attention. These sounds accompany the momentary darkness as a short overture to the performance. Following a moment of darkness brought by this gesture, the curtain rises as the spectator opens her eyes. The audience member is therefore asked to embody the theatrical convention of opening the curtain following a blackout in a subtle manner, which allows her to naturally cross the threshold, stepping into the performance. This understated gesture frames what the audience experiences as performance and enables the audience to see the familiar city filled with everyday life as a performance space. The audience experience of *Walking:Holding* is, therefore, already informed by the use of the paratextual from the very beginning.

I argue that *Walking:Holding* highlights the elusive drama found in the city and encourages the audience to seek out the text in the paratext in just as understated a manner as its beginning. The margins of the city, the audience's preconception and embedded cultural meanings in the act of holding hands seem at first to lie at the periphery of the work, thus as paratexts, yet they gradually prove to be the focus of the work. The paratexts of *Walking:Holding* operate accumulatively: as the linear line of the walk eventually comes full circle, numerous paratextual elements scattered across the route engender a meaning collectively. Examining the shift in textual significance of those paratextual elements enables us to see the fluidity of the theatrical signs demonstrated in this performance work, which is

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appropriate garment suited to the nature of the show, providing an instruction or delivering a preparatory text. In *Walking:Holding*, the one who functions as an usher delivers a brief instruction to the audience member and communicates with the artist and the performer-participants during the show for the smooth running of the performance. Therefore, the usher would be perhaps described more precisely as the facilitator, although their facilitation would not be visible to the audience's eyes except for at the beginning.

[15] This is a transcription of a handwritten note given by Cade to myself as an usher for the Sheffield production. The underline is original and is to emphasise the importance of making sure the audience members have their eyes open to see the first hand-holder approaching.

arguably encouraged further by the lack of physical boundaries where the performance ends in the open space of the city.

Route: (Re)discovering the everyday

For Cade, '[t]he route itself is a text within the work' and is 'a political statement' that constitutes the artist's interpretation of the city.[16] The route, constructed by the artist on each new iteration of the work for different cities, is structured to reflect the social and cultural diversity of the city, taking an audience member to its underside as well as to major landmarks of the area. The journey and the series of hand-holders are the same for all audience members during the whole duration of a production; however, the existing everyday life in the streets constantly changes throughout the day. During the performance, the walking audience is in a transitive state, not just by virtue of their movement but by their position in a city which also subtly shifts every moment.

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau sets out a theoretical framework of urban space in which he draws from speech act theory and argues that walking in the city is an enunciative act.[17] For de Certeau, walking is an act of actualising the place, which cannot 'be reduced to their graphic trail', of a simple representation in the form of map.[18] The enunciation of a place is a complex process which develops with every step and the enunciation of the same place can vary depending on the time of the day, the route taken and the person who walks.[19] Natalie Collie summarises in her reading of de Certeau that '[w]alking is framed as an elementary and embodied form of experiencing urban spaces — a productive, yet relatively unconscious, speaking/writing of the city.'[20] The route of *Walking:Holding*, based on Cade's own exploration of the city, becomes her 'city-text', which in turn becomes the text of the performance and is mediated through an audience member's embodiment of the walk. The artist's reading becomes a text to be read in turn by the audience, one that emphasises certain aspects of the city, 'distorting it, fragmenting it, and diverting it from its immobile order.'[21] The

[16] Rosana Cade and Moe Shoji, an interview about *Walking:Holding* via email. Cade's email was received on 10 May 2013.
[17] Michel de Certeau, 'Walking in the City', *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp. 91–110 (97).
[18] De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 99.
[19] De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 99.
[20] Natalie Collie, 'Walking in the City: Urban Space, Stories, and Gender', *Gender Forum: An Internet Journal for Gender Studies*, 42.1 (2013), 3–14 <http://genderforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2013_UrbanSpace_Complete.pdf> [accessed 4 December 2020] (p. 3, paragraph 3).
[21] De Certeau, 'Walking in the City', *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 102.

act of walking, therefore, enables the audience member not only to trace the text offered by the artist but to remake it by practising the route themselves, contributing to the meaning-making processes of the text. The dynamics of the route as it is actualised by the audience offers an encounter with the margins of the city, which is initially paratextual yet accumulates to become actively 'textual'.

In the production in London as part of SPILL Festival 2013, the walk started from Toynbee Studios in the East End of London next to the main road, then entered quieter Wentworth Street with a variety of shops mostly closed on that day. As the walk proceeded, the artist explained that this was a Jewish quarter of the town and happened to be empty on the day because it was Saturday, the Sabbath. After a temporary stop at a bench in a courtyard near some apartment blocks, the journey continued through a narrow, cobbled alleyway to the busy high street, then across Spitalfields market. A short visit to the Ten Bells Pub was followed by a walk next to the Christ Church Spitalfields and a detour to a quiet car park behind the buildings. Finally, the walk took the audience member through Brick Lane, which has a South Asian community and to the back of Toynbee Studios, where the performance ended. The route involved both a quiet and residential neighbourhood of the city and a busy commercial area populated with passers-by. The path was at times so narrow that the pair — the performer-participant and the audience member holding hands — occupied the whole width of the alleyway. In contrast, when the route took the pair to an open space, such as a square adjacent to Spitalfields market, the pair is stripped of the sheltering walls of alleyway, exposed to a vast space among other people. The route also showed the audience the cultural, historic and economic diversity of the area by including a former Jewish quarter, a British pub, a street with a South Asian community and non-culturally specific urban streets.

The route for the Sheffield production had similar dynamics in its design, taking the audience to a variety of places in the city, from well-recognised landmarks to those places that are not necessarily within the scope of activities of residents, let alone destinations for visitors. The journey in Sheffield started from the Hide on the lower end of Scotland Street, a former factory building converted into an event space that was the main venue of WROUGHT Festival 2014, at which *Walking:Holding* was presented. From this starting point, slightly outside the city centre, the route took the audience uphill to the heart of the city, to the Peace Gardens, a busy public park. With the old landmark building of Sheffield Town Hall in sight, the pair continued through the narrow shopping passageway of Chapel Walk, then onto Fargate, a

shopping high street with a wide walkway that has constant pedestrian traffic during the day. At its north end, the walk continued past Sheffield Cathedral and down the hill. The journey took the audience to the less populated backstreets between houses and concluded on Furnace Hill, a quiet road with apartment blocks and car parks. The journey concluded at the top of Scotland Street, a vantage point looking down towards both the Hide and Kelham Island, the latter a former industrial quarter and now a mixture of redevelopment projects and disused factory buildings. Different corners of the city visited on this journey prompt the audience to reflect on their assumptions about Sheffield and to rediscover its periphery, to which they previously may not have paid particular attention.

The diverse places visited en route challenge the audience's preconception of where 'the drama' happens. Certain elements are always incorporated by Cade, such as churches, benches, pubs and reflective surfaces.[22] In addition to these ubiquitous cultural markers in any given British city, street signs and graffiti are often included as part of the journey. While churches and pubs are sites frequented by the public, street signs and graffiti, along with narrow alleyways and backstreets in residential areas, are more likely to be what people either walk past without taking notice or deliberately avoid entering. These are certainly a part of the city, yet they are not necessarily recognisable destinations even for the inhabitants of the city. *Walking:Holding* thus subtly destabilises a set of knowledge and ideas of the city and of drama that the audience members bring with them. By exploring the drama — namely, noteworthy events that convey some significance — found on the margins of the city, the audience member, as a result, starts to read meanings in foregrounded margins, which would inform the overall meaning making processes of this performance work. In the London production I experienced myself, for example, the first changeover from one walking-partner to the next took place in front of the sign on the entrance of the disused public toilet which read 'LADIES'. Holding hands with the artist and standing facing the sign in silence, the sign in capital letters seemed as if it were a caption given to us, two women hand in hand. It functioned, for me, as an invitation to reflect on my own gender and on the act of holding hands with a stranger of the same sex. A similar sign which read 'WOMEN' appeared later along the route. The third hand-holder, a cross-dressed person in female drag, was waiting on a street corner, near the door of a building

[22] At the time of the interview by email in 2013, Cade had not yet toured this performance piece outside of the UK, and noted her interest in seeing how these key markers in a town would change in a setting with completely different cultures.

with an old sign, 'WOMEN'.[23] The relic of the former purpose of this building was used to offer a reference to the rigidity of the concept of gender in the past, juxtaposed with the hand-holder who transcends binary ways of viewing. These street signs were a part of the route, but were not particularly mentioned or signalled by the walking partners. The signs remained on the edge of the audience's sight and on the periphery of the experience, implicitly offering a way to discuss or reflect on the issues raised by them.

The artist later told me that the old public toilet sign had particularly caught her interest, because it was surrounded by fences.[24] This 'LADIES' sign 'inside the cage', for the artist, appeared symbolic, implying the past when men and women and constructions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' were more separated. How these marginal elements along the route might function in each audience member's experience must vary, and similarly some elements may go unnoticed and others may be merely perceived without consciously processed. Nevertheless, the route of *Walking:Holding* foregrounds the peripheral aspects and offers an opportunity to audience members to reflect on their assumptions of the city and the preconceptions they bring. The fact that different sets of experience, knowledge and background brought by the audience contribute to their individual meaning-making processes is true of any type of performance and not limited to this type of spectatorship. What is distinctive here, compared to the collective audience experience of a play in the theatre auditorium, is that such initially marginal and potentially coincidental aspects are in fact consciously included by Cade as a 'paratext' that intrudes on the 'text', and that the interpretation of that text is influenced by the initially paratextual element to the point that it fundamentally shapes the meaning of the experience and becomes a text. As the route seemingly meanders through 'pockets of different cultures' in the city, in the artist's words, such paratext affects our reading and enables us to see the marginal and unexplored aspects of the town afresh.[25] The walk of *Walking:Holding* therefore implies an alternative and marginal trajectory through the artist's reading of the city-text. The route makes both the mainstream and the marginal exist on the same map with equal significance, as the audience member unites them by their act of walking.

[23] This building located on Crispin Street was formerly Providence Row Night Refuge which sheltered homeless women and children until 1999 and the sign is to indicate the entrance for women. It is currently a student accommodation for London School of Economics, called Lilian Knowles House.
[24] Cade and Shoji, an email interview with Rosana Cade.
[25] Cade and Shoji, an email interview with Rosana Cade.

Participants: Performer-participants and audience-participants

Presented alongside the route as the 'text' of *Walking:Holding* is the people who are involved, that is, the performer-participants, a series of strangers the audience member encounters. For each production, the artist invites local residents of a variety of ages, genders, ethnicities, sexualities and abilities to take part through an open call for participants.[26] These walking partners, usually six of them, in some way reflect the diversity of the city. For example, the performer-participants in the London production, aside from the artist herself, included a casually-dressed woman with an Asian background, a cross-dressed white man, a white woman with red lipstick in vintage attire, a non-white man with dreadlocks, and a white woman dressed in a man's suit.[27] They all looked relatively young, in their twenties or thirties. The Sheffield production had a broader age range amongst the participants and the walking partners for the two-day production included the artist herself, three middle-aged women and three men, two of whom were in their twenties and one middle-aged. In terms of the way they were dressed, this production had two cross-dressed participants, a woman in a man's suit and a man in drag. While the majority were white, native English speakers, it also had one woman with an Eastern European background. The diversity of walking partners, therefore, subtly implies the limited range of people the audience may interact with in their daily lives. Meeting, holding hands with and talking to a range of strangers offers an opportunity for the audience to realise their unconsciously created views of what they consider to be their 'social circle'.[28]

Walking:Holding was inspired by the artist's frustration with the awkwardness and risk she experiences from holding hands in public as a same-sex couple, and the work challenges the heteronormative ideas still prevalent in society today.[29] During the journey with performer-participants, the conversations often reveal their sexuality, their perception of love and what the act of holding hands represents in their expression of love. The simplicity of the structure,

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[26] Most recently in the call for participants for the performances taking place between July and November 2016 across the UK, the artist explicitly extends the invitation to 'everyone', noting that despite the title being *Walking:Holding*, for those who have 'any problems with either walking or holding hands, that's completely fine as well'. See Rosana Cade, *Walking:Holding Call Out for Participants*, online video recording, Vimeo, 2016, <https://vimeo.com/173463811> [accessed 4 December 2020].

[27] This sixth hand holder turns out to be Cade's ex-partner and the relationship with her inspired the artist to contextualise and explore the act of holding hands through a performative experiment which later became this performance work.

[28] This is equally true for the performer-participants who repeat the back and forth journey of the same section of the circular route, meeting a range of audience-participants across the performance day. As they are encouraged to not develop a character to enact, their personal preconceptions are presumably at play, exposed to the opportunities of meeting others. Although the performer-participant perspective is worth analysing in its own right, it is not the focus of this argument.

[29] Cade and Shoji, an email interview with Rosana Cade.

however, does not limit it to being a work about gender and sexuality; rather it speaks to an audience member's perception about differences and appearances, and judgements unwittingly made on that basis. *Walking:Holding*, therefore, is an invitation for the audience to become aware of the fact that their understanding of the text, or the people they encounter, is initially informed by paratext, or a set of prejudgements they make.

This invitation is realised by staging a dramatic moment within the route, combining the common preconceptions about the way people dressed and the impressions a certain area may invoke. The performer-participants are asked to respond to each audience member they meet, not to develop a set text to repeat, or be in character, yet a staged encounter sometimes serves to reinforce commonly accepted stereotypes which are then subverted. In a past production in Dublin, Cade placed a sturdily-built man in a hoody who might have been perceived as 'intimidating' directly after a cross-dressed performer-participant, to hint at a potential conflict between these 'types' of people. The potentially threatening feeling was emphasised by the fact that the man was stationed in a dark alley. As the audience member and the hand-holder walked past, the man would approach them from behind and grab both of them by the shoulders. The man would then offer his hand to the audience, smiling, as the next walking partner, which betrays the initial impression.[30] At the same time, although the threatening feeling aroused on the spot proved to be otherwise immediately after, this situation seems designed to provide a mixture of feelings from being intimidated, alarmed and prompted to protect the hand-holder who may be potentially targeted. Situating this happening in the context of performance enables the audience to reflect on and analyse the event and their feelings objectively. Any fear for the cross-dressed walking-partner turns out to be unfounded, yet that fear can be real and a part of life for the walking-partner. In the process of this realisation, the audience's experience of this piece becomes about being aware of the way they perceive people and the surroundings as much as who and what they meet along the route. The paratextual information brought by the audience themselves becomes one of the central focuses of the experience as they proceed on the journey.

Reflection is a literal as well as a metaphorical dimension of the audience experience of this work. Reflective surfaces, which are always incorporated in the route, further this realisation and function to reveal a set of preconceptions the audience members may bring with them to their experience. The route of the London production visited a large mirror in the Ten

[30] Cade and Shoji, an email interview with Rosana Cade.

Bells Pub and a one-way mirror in a quiet car park behind the buildings. On both occasions, the performer-participants quietly guided me to stop for a moment, face the mirror and look at the two of us holding hands. The differences between myself and the walking partners, both of whom happened to be white women, were immediately apparent: the differences in our height, the way we were dressed, our complexions and ethnicities. This momentary silence in front of our reflection gave me as an audience member the time and space to observe the dissimilarity between the two of us and to reflect on how we might look as a pair in public eyes. Mirrored images of myself standing next to different walking partners also revealed how differently one might look, when associated with different people. To see the reflection in the mirror is to know how you are seen: the reflective surfaces heighten the awareness of the audience member that the two of them are exposed to the public gaze which may give a certain label to the relationship of the pair. The audience member is prompted to think about how she might be associated with the walking partner by others, and whether the assumed relationship is romantic, friendly, familial, or caring. The reflective surfaces along the route allow the audience member to be aware of being seen by the city, reflecting on how the experience of being seen and associated with that particular person makes her feels and why. It is an invitation to the audience to be aware of the paratextual information they bring along with them, not least, the set of prejudices they may hold.

Invitation: An act of holding hands

The final element which makes up the text of *Walking:Holding* is act of holding hands. What is unique about this work is that in each section of the journey, the audience member is given a one-to-one encounter; hence, it can be described as a chain of one-to-one performances, which then creates a full circle as the route concludes. Here, the relationships between performer-participants and audience-participants are certainly one-to-one; however, the fact that the work is designed to take place in the city and be exposed to public eyes makes the audience members aware of being in a series of moments where they are in multiple-people-to-two situations, seen as a pair. An audience-participant in the Sheffield production aptly described this:

> You might look at each other and you might look really different to me and once you walk together you are suddenly one, like you are actually a part of the same

> thing suddenly and you are not just two people, you are together somehow which then makes you see the world from a different perspective.[31]

This account demonstrates that the invitation to engage with the task of holding hands with someone you just met, despite its simplicity and relative ease, is charged with the complexity of implications. Firstly, instantly forged physical connection gives a sense of intimacy to the other. Whether it creates discomfort or not, the bodily contact brings the audience member and the performer-participant together as a unit, a pair or a couple. This proximity, then, allows the audience member to have 'a different perspective', seeing from the point of view of the walking-partner and as a pair associated with one another. Finally, the togetherness itself sends a symbolic and potentially political message to the world.

While holding hands is a concrete and simple task for audience members to perform in a public space, this gesture is both an intimate and symbolic act at the same time. Everyday gestures like walking, Harvie states, may seem to have less performative force compared to highly performed acts because they appear so normal; however, they arguably have more performative force 'because they are not normal but normalising, actively establishing certain behaviours as normal and others as strange, though neither is essentially given.'[32] Commonly observed behaviours in everyday life create a norm, though highly dependent on the cultural and social context, which evokes assumptions around the behaviours. The gesture of holding hands in public is no exception: commonly accepted ideas of holding hands naturally creates a speculation that it is practised by two people who are already close to each other. The relationship between the two can be romantic (two individuals on a date or partners), familial (a parent and a child), supportive (an elderly person cared for by a carer who is not necessarily a relation of theirs). In this performance work, this deeply held assumption is used to establish an 'accelerated friendship', in Adrian Howells's words, between a performer-participant and an audience-participant.[33] Holding hands enables two people who have just met to become physically close to one another, as a physical touch accelerates a sort of relationship to be formed between the strangers. This physical proximity brought by the connected hands makes an audience member enter a stranger's personal space within the safety of the performance

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[31] Gemma Thorpe, *Walking:Holding*, online video recording, YouTube, 27 November 2014, <https://youtu.be/6z_BjZRXujI> [accessed 4 December 2020].

[32] Harvie, *Theatre & The City*, p. 46.

[33] Howells, the mentor to Cade, uses the term 'an accelerated friendship/relationship between two initial strangers' to describe his one-to-one work in an interview on his work *Foot-washing for the sole*. See Adrian Howells, 'The Burning Question #3: What's It like Washing Feet Every Day?', *Fest Magazine*, 16 August 2009 <http://www.theskinny.co.uk/festivals/edinburgh-fringe/fest-magazine/the-burning-question-adrian-howells> [accessed 4 December 2020].

work. While this instantly created proximity may be experienced as welcoming and disarming, it might equally be discomforting, or even risks, since the gesture of holding hands with a stranger infringes on the boundaries between self and other.

The potential discomfort or risk of holding hands with strangers in public derives from breaking one's usual code of behaviour in public space as well as an infringement of the physical boundary. Indeed, Cade reports that one audience member in the production in Cork refused to hold hands with her, out of fear of being seen by someone she knew while she was linking hands with a person of same gender.[34] This audience member could not risk being witnessed during the performance and seen by her acquaintances in a way she would not voluntarily identify herself with. Although the experience is clearly framed as performance to the audience members who sign up for it, the fact that it is situated in the audience-participant's hometown, in this instance a small town where many of the residents knew one another, allowed the possibility that being inadvertently caught by the uninformed public gaze could have consequence in 'real life'. Performance text situated in the openness of the city space can on the one hand produce meaningful insight by enabling the audience to see the city afresh through the frame of the performance. On the other hand, however, being a part of a performance text that allows the everyday reality of the city to permeate through the (physically invisible) boundary between the performed and the not-performed, meant, for this audience member, a risk of being undesirably and riskily exposed. The seemingly quotidian and uncomplicated task of holding hands with another person can thus be perceived by the audience member as a bold act which requires them to step out of their comfort zone. The task, combined with the route and people involved, functions to reveal to the audience member the limit of their own code of behaviour in public and their fears which are deeply connected to the prejudices held by them and the biases prevalent in the city. Performing the essentially intimate gesture of holding hands in the city space, particularly because an audience member is asked to perform this gesture with a stranger, challenges the audience's idea of public self and private self.

The act of linking hands is also a symbolic gesture to signal one's support for the person whom he or she is holding hands with, while the gesture can both highlight a physical boundary and tease out prejudices. Holding hands seems to represent togetherness, signalling the message: 'I'm with you.' The invitation to hold hands with a series of strangers itself can be understood as a form of activist gesture, bringing the solidarity of two individuals hand in hand

[34] Cade and Shoji, an email interview with Rosana Cade about *Walking:Holding*.

to the street. It can be said that a group of two people makes the smallest unit of a community. The artist's intention at the early stage of development of this work, to make queer identities visible in the real world outside the safety of performance studios, left its legacy in making the marginal visible. By inviting an audience-participant to momentarily join hands with that of a performer-participant, this work asks an audience-participant to literally and metaphorically stand by the side of those who were initially 'strangers'.

As the title, *Walking:Holding*, signals, the act of holding hands is one of the main invitations in the work. It is an act to be achieved for the work to maintain it premise, hence the textual device. As the journey proceeds into different corners of the city, its connotation is gradually revealed, triggering responses. Stopping at reflective surfaces reinforces the togetherness by mirroring back the linked hands; being exposed to others' eyes raises the awareness that some sort of connection (more than physical) may be assumed; and finally emotional responses may follow whether they are affirmative (accelerated friendship and support) or negative (discomfort and threat). Although the act of holding hands is initially presented to the audience member as the text, an invitation, and a challenge, the act itself becomes less of a main purpose of the piece, and more of, literally, a node which functions to reveal paratexts, or the embedded cultural meanings in holding hands. By the end of the walk, it is these embedded cultural meanings, illuminated by the act of holding hands with strangers, that have largely informed the audience's experience.

The main body of the performance text in *Walking:Holding* consists of the route, the people who are involved, and the act of holding hands. The fact that the work is located in the public city space, however, makes the boundary between the performance and the real life surrounding it permeable, which allows marginal elements to be highlighted and become part of the text. This performance work, therefore, offers to its audience member the artist's reading of the city-text (the route) through a diverse range of performer-participants (people who are involved) and the physical connection (the act of holding hands). De Certeau's theoretical framework proposes walking in the city as an enunciative and productive act of *bricolage*, though performed unconsciously. With each textual element teasing out paratexts, the journey of *Walking:Holding* enables this unconscious process of a pedestrian subject's reading and writing of the city-text to become a conscious process. That is, an audience member as a pedestrian subject at the centre of the performance becomes conscious of the fact that they are participating in producing a text through the performance, not merely receiving it. The three

textual elements of *Walking:Holding* draw out the paratextual along the journey, which then allows the audience member to weave their own city-text as they travel across the local city to re-evaluate the quotidian afresh.

Multiplicity of potential narratives of the city: *Night Walk for Edinburgh* (2019) by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller

Night Walk for Edinburgh by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller takes the audience on an hour-long circular walk of the city of Edinburgh, equipped with a smartphone and a headset. Cardiff and Miller have created audio walks and video walks since 1991, and this video walk is the latest work in this vein by the artists. Although multiple audience members depart during the same time slot that starts every 15 minutes from early evening into the night, *Night Walk for Edinburgh* is essentially a work for an audience of one, inviting the audience to have an individual journey guided by the soundtrack with Cardiff's voice which, through the intimacy created by the headset, is felt as if she was confiding only into your ears. The visual input from the video and the binaurally recorded sounds have equal importance in this experience in leading the way and they seamlessly envelop the audience's senses such that the distinction between 'real' and recorded sounds is indiscernible at times. The narration of this work moves through a mixture of stories and events, following the route which meanders through the backstreets of the centre of the city. Guided by Cardiff, 'or rather "Janet", the semi-fictional persona created by Cardiff and Miller together to tell the tales, weave the narratives and call the shots', the audience in the dusk encounter a series of unusual scenes, find hidden details and get transported to the surreal world of fiction and history that is set in the very streets they are in.[35]

On collecting a smartphone and a headset from a hub based at a café, The Milkman, on Cockburn Street, the audience is directed to the bottom of the staircase opposite the hub.

> You should be at the bottom of Advocate's Close looking out at Cockburn Street with your back to the steps. There's a dumpster in front of me right now or as they call it here a skip.
>
> I'm just having fun with you. That should have been at your right ear. And this is your left. If not switch the headphones.[36]

[35] Fiona Bradley, 'Present Histories: The Video Walks of Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller', in *Night Walk for Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: The Fruitmarket Gallery, 2019).
[36] Bradley, 'Present Histories: The Video Walks of Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller'.

Janet's calm whisper asks you to check if the headphones are worn correctly and to 'sync up' what you are seeing in real life with what is seen on the screen. The audience then follows Janet's voice, footsteps and visual cues from the video while walking, stopping and looking in the same way as the narrator. A whirl of scenes and events quietly unfold one after another as you follow the artist: eavesdropping on a sinister conversation between two men at the side of the restaurant, stepping into a residential quarter to witness a man and a woman lyrically dance among the fluttering washing hanging on the line, and walking through alleyways with many openings of back doors to the businesses. The video filmed at the exact locations in the recent past has compelling liveness to the audience members who are immersed in the soundscape, and despite the knowledge that they are tracing the footsteps of the artists that are already trodden, the images that do not match with the surrounding reality sometimes hit the audience as surprising glitches in their experience.

A disclaimer is given at the outset of the walk that it is not 'going to give out any history of Edinburgh or Scotland', yet the work is deeply concerned about stories that are seldom mentioned in the mainstream narratives of city tours and about a history in making at the present moment.[37] Janet says, '[w]alking is like the flow of history. One footstep after another, one event after another. Every time we choose an action or direction we change everything that might have been.'[38] Here, the act of walking is considered as an act of writing on the surface of the city. The audience's tracing Janet's footsteps filmed in the recent past is an act of practising her walk, reinforcing a small piece of history created by the artists. Because this walk invites the audience to the margins of the city to piece together the fragments of impression, history and geographical pattern that make up the city, this reinforcement functions as bringing the marginal, unnoticed details of the city to the fore.

In this sense, the route of *Night Walk for Edinburgh* functions in a similar way to that of *Walking:Holding*, allowing the audience to encounter the margins of the city. However, significant differences in structures — the physical absence of the performer, constantly overlaying images on the city and the audio-visual stimuli that are the audience's own — make *Night Walk for Edinburgh* paratextually meaningful in a distinctive manner. I argue that in *Night Walk for Edinburgh*, the city, which initially has a major textual significance, repeatedly

[37] Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, *Night Walk for Edinburgh*, 2019. Attended on 25 July 2019, Edinburgh.
[38] Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, *Night Walk for Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: The Fruitmarket Gallery, 2019).

recedes to the periphery then is brought back to the fore. The constant shift of the textual status of the city, both actual and fictional, is realised by the embodied experience of the audience who negotiates the navigation of the city, looking back and forth between the screen and the immediate reality surrounding them. Although the route, the video and the narration that guide the audience's journey are pre-determined, the physical absence of the performer and the personal nature of this audience experience highlight the fact that the audience themselves are the site where these shifts take place. With the sensory stimuli from the devices that can get hardly distinguishable from the actual surroundings at times, the boundary where the performance ends becomes increasingly blurred. As the journey proceeds, this performance walk destabilises the audience's perception, allowing them to rediscover the city of Edinburgh anew and redefine their views and relationship to it.

Route: Juxtaposition of fiction, past and present

As the title of the work — *Night Walk for Edinburgh* — shows, the city of Edinburgh plays a central role in this performance walk as a text along with the narrative provided by the artists. The textual status of the city, however, shifts as the audience goes deeper into the walk, and this change is arguably linked together with the physical movement of ascending and descending of the slopes and staircases. As the audience climbs up to a higher level geographically, the audio-visual guide invites the audience's focus to narrow into the narrative, and the city as a text recedes to the periphery. The narrowed focus is then released with a descent: the city again becomes the central text to be deciphered, challenging the audience to grasp to what extent their experience is fictional and prepared by the artists. This shift is repeated twice during the walk, and the audience's reading of the performance text is supported by paratextual information accumulated along the way.

The walk begins at the bottom of the staircase of Advocate's Close, facing the Cockburn Street, looking down at Waverley Station, Scott's Monument, and the centre of the city where the New Town and the Old Town meet. A small square of the moving image filmed at the exact location where the audience stands is superimposed on the city as the audience holds up the smartphone playing the footage. At the outset of the walk, the video is an additional layer of reality laid on top of the city the audience member is directly experiencing. Here, the cityscape in the video is comparable to a long quotation, an external piece of text inserted in the main body of text. The video is clearly demarcated from the body of text — the

actual city and its life unfolding then and there — with the square boundary of a screen and the small size of the handheld device, just as a long quotation would be separated from the flow of text with extra space, indentation or typeface of a different size. The textual status of the city begins to shift with the following ascent of the staircase leading to the Royal Mile. As the audience member climbs the stairs, the narrator-guide stops multiple times at vents on the walls, at a hotel window, at the restaurant and at the landing. While the details of the city the narrator-guide draws the audience's attention to, such as a vent and the pattern of lattice work on the wall, are still there as described, subtle and more radical differences between the images and the immediate reality begin to appear. Surreal events start to unfold, drawing the audience into the narrative, such as a small figurine of a pram shown in the hotel window later materialising as a life-size pram falling down the stairs towards the audience. By the time the ascent completes, leading the audience to the grand surface of the Royal Mile, they find themselves following Janet's footsteps partly propelled by an urge to make sense of their journey, in search for a connection between the fragmented scenes and dreamlike events they witness. The focus of the audience to navigate the city with the video narrative as a guide, spotting differences between the inside and the outside the screen, is now shifted to collecting fragments of what might add up to a larger narrative and deciphering them. The real city that is central to the work at the beginning recedes to the background at this point, as a spatially element of their experience. In return, the alternative reality of the city shown by Janet incites the audience's curiosity, becoming the central focus of the audience.

After exploring the Royal Mile and Parliament Square, the route leaves the open space of the High Street, continues onto Old Assembly Close and begins to descend. The audience soon find themselves in Tron Square, a residential quarter hidden between the main streets of the Old Town of Edinburgh. The empty and quiet square surrounded by old apartment blocks makes a striking contrast to the main street they just left, suddenly bringing the private side of the city up close. With the descent, helped by the narrow alleyway that increases the proximity to the architecture of the city and passers-by, the city as a text gradually regains its prominence in the experience. An empty neighbourhood in front of the audience is animated by the overlaid imagery hinting at possible stories and life inhabiting behind the walls, such as an expressive dance amongst the hanging washing. By this time, the audience is adjusted to the range of events possibly occur in Janet's alternative reality that the actions they witness are seen as amplified version of life than an unusual incident. '[S]o many windows [indicating] everybody

having a separate life' direct the audience's attention to the windows lit up in the dusk, suggesting the multiplicity of hidden narratives that make up a city text.[39]

Through the gateway to private residences in Tron Square, the audience further climbs down the stairs to the street with backdoors to businesses. On completing the descent, the video experiences a (planned) glitch and the screen turns blank. This makes Janet's voice and the sound of her footsteps only hints to which the audience may turn as they proceed. Losing the visual cues from the video heighten the audience's awareness to what they hear in order to effectively follow the route. At this moment, the city as they experience is the most highlighted, since it is no longer a juxtaposition of two texts — the video and the immediate surrounding of the city — but an unbalanced fusion of two texts. The audience never knows if the mentioned elements, such as a black shoe left on the street and a worker smoking outside the fire exit to the business, are fictive or real. The puzzlement lingers in the audience's mind until the video is turned back on as the route begins an ascent to the Royal Mile. The route with ascents and descents makes the audience physically step into the depth of hidden back streets and rise to the populated surface of the main streets. The audience by following Janet's footsteps embodies the act of weaving the official history of the main street and the hidden stories of the darker corners of the town together to make up a textile of the city, or the city text.

Participants and Invitation: Navigating the city on your own

What enables the invitation to the walk and the shift of the audience's focus is the technological aspects of this work. In the keynote lecture at the Edinburgh Art Festival in 2019, Cardiff and Miller discussed their work, revisiting audio and video walks made by them in the past, leading up to *Night Walk for Edinburgh*.[40] As Cardiff described the development of their work over time, she acknowledged the ease brought by the advancement of technology. She noted that art changes along with the change of culture, adding that the popularisation of smartphones made the video walks more familiar and approacheable to the audience. Now that people are so accustomed to looking back and forth between the screen and the surroundings, using map and navigation applications, it is not uncommon for a city that attracts tourists like Edinburgh to have people stopping in the middle of pedestrian walks, consulting their phones. Similarly, holding a smartphone as one walks around has become so embedded in our daily lives that

[39] Cardiff and Miller, *Night Walk for Edinburgh*.
[40] The keynote lecture with Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller for Edinburgh Art Festival took place on 26 July 2019 at Scottish National Gallery in Edinburgh.

taking up the invitation to navigate their journey using a device comes naturally to the audience today. This arguably allows the audience to be immersed in the video walk experience more easily without being conscious of standing out in the city attracting the attention of passers-by. Having said that, on the day I attended the performance, several audience members who were individually engaging with the performance scattered across the nearby streets at the same time, creating a distinctly out of ordinary scene. This impression, however, may be lessened when the route of the work is within the festival environment, such as during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, when performative acts and events pop up throughout the city. The use of a device, so embedded in the audience's everyday life, together with the binaurally recorded sounds, contributes to the seamless perception of reality and the recording.

The smooth entry into *Night Walk for Edinburgh*'s fictional narrative, however, is deliberately shaken by the artists from time to time throughout the walk, which makes the audience member questions their perception. Shortly after Janet begins her narration, her finger emerges on the screen and playfully flicks the screen to flip over a woman walking down the street in the footage. The narrator-guide, who at first seems to exist on the separate tempo-spatial dimension to guide us through the pre-recorded materials, subtly claims her presence outside of screen, as if she was on the same dimension as the audience. This brief manifestation of the paratextual is equivalent to the author adding a note on the margin to declare the control over the fictional narrative, stirring up its coherence. Here, Janet as narrator-author leaves the audience's senses slightly jarred by stepping across the dimension she is supposedly situated. Like Beckett who corrects the statement by his own character in a note, Janet subtly distabilises the fictive status of her position as a narrator.[41] She also appears physically within the screen footage from time to time during the walk as a fellow explorer and observer of the city to the audience member, leaving a note, pushing open the locked door and finally as an interlocutor to a person sleeping rough on the streets. This momentary confusion of where Janet might exist prepares the audience for the experience in which a layer of fiction gradually seeps into the immediate reality.

The audience's journey is punctuated by occasional stops at vents on the walls. Janet produces a piece of paper with poetry quotes of local poets, such as Sir Walter Scott and Norman MacCaig, and drops them off into the vents as if to post brief letters to the city itself. Although the reasoning behind the selection of quotes is not explained, its connection to the city

[41] See Chapter 1, Footnote 70.

and history is evident. One of the quotes, 'Into a future that is now where these / Long buried things are present histories',[42] taken from MacCaig's poem 'Brackloch' for example, echoes the artists' own statement comparing an act of walking to 'the flow of history.'[43] It also alludes to the invitation to the audience to participate in making the 'present' city text, interweaving the 'buried' history in the underbelly of the city. Fragments of texts of local authors inspired by the very city are literally inserted in the narrow marginal space within the city. It is a symbolic act of annotating the city text with the text about the city itself. This palimpsestic action self-reflexively speaks about the nature of this performance walk too. The text about the city contributes to overwriting the city itself as text; hence, *Night Walk for Edinburgh*, despite the fixed narrative provided by the narrator, invites the audience to chip in by their participation in walking, seeing and listening to the city.

Conclusion: Paratexts as reflections on/from the city

Both *Walking:Holding* and *Night Walk for Edinburgh* draw a circular journey in the city, yet the manners in which these works portray the city is dissimilar from the outset. This distinction succinctly implies how differently paratexts are used in these two performances. The prefatorial instruction in *Walking:Holding* claims 'everything you see *is* a part of performance',[44] indicating the entire experience is explicitly included in the performance situation, whereas *Night Walk for Edinburgh* plays with the dissimilarity as much as equivalence of the city portrayed in footage and the real city. *Walking:Holding* situates individuals — an audience-participant and a performer-participant — at an interface of the city. The journey of *Walking:Holding* is a series of dots, drawn by the intersection among the city, audience-participant, and performer-participant, which is epitomised in the knot of joined hands. This series of dots then draws a circular route as each journey completes. *Night Walk for Edinburgh*, on the other hand, has fragmented fictional narratives laid over the city. The route asks the audience to trace meaningful ascents and descents, taking them to the main streets as well as hidden corners tucked from the tourists' eyes. Along with the route, the real city is repeatedly foregrounded in and retracted from the audience's perception and the movement made by practising the walk itself in the end functions as weaving the narrative of the city afresh.

[42] Norman MacCaig, 'Brackloch', *Poetry*, 100.2 (1962), 91 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20588799> [accessed 5 December 2020].
[43] Cardiff and Miller, *Night Walk for Edinburgh*.
[44] A note given by the artist to the usher. See footnote 38. My italics.

Therefore, *Walking:Holding* offers a series of intersections with the paratexts, or the drama found in the city, which accumulate into the text as the journey proceeds. In *Night Walk for Edinburgh*, textual status of the city changes over time, between central and marginal, and it is in the marginal parts of the city where the city presents itself as a central text. The urban space of the city in the two performance works functions paratextually in distinctive ways, reflecting what is projected onto the city-text.

The use of non-theatre space in performance brings different dynamics between the performance and the audience, between the central and the marginal, and between texts and paratexts. Non-theatre space may function paratextually, causing a slippage of the functions and activities unique to the space into the performance inhabiting the space. Experiential theatrical events invite the audience to contribute to the production of the text, giving them agency to admit what they perceive at the edge of, or even beyond, the text, into the meaning-making processes. In the city, where the boundary of the performance work is even less palpable, the audience's privilege of being the outside eyes is challenged, and the audience are tasked with seeking out the text themselves. The route of *Night Walk for Edinburgh* takes the audience to the underbelly of the city, revealing marginal histories and opening up the city text to suggest its alternative. It also presents a literal manifestation of paratexts in the form of the author's annotation to the city. *Walking:Holding* takes a literal step further and its text, or the initially central features of the work, is presented to unleash the paratexts along the journey. The route which meanders through both populated parts and the underside of the city allows the audience to notice 'margins' of the city which are now made its foreground. A series of encounter with diverse walking partners brings the audience's preconception to the fore, which becomes one of the focuses of the work. An invitation to hold hands with strangers soon ceases to be a purpose of the work and becomes a device to expose embedded cultural meanings behind the act of holding hands. Because this work is centred around the participation of the audience-participant, the ideas, biases and prejudices that the audience bring with them will paratextually inform both their experience and their perception of the piece. When the performance is opened up within and to the city space, with all the implications that the city space holds, the performance text as perceived begins to take on resonance — and even urgency — in its pertinence to the audience member's lived reality.

With no physical structure to demarcate the performance, texts and paratexts are at times fluidly interchangeable and the distinction between peritext and epitext is inherently ambiguous. Non-theatre space enables epitexts, which are either embedded by the practitioners or found outside the performance by the audience, to fluidly to approximate peritexts, then potentially to become the text itself, the very centre of the performance work. Such fluidity is a reflection of the openness of the parameters of performance and the constant movement in the form of the journey taken, both of which are characteristics of case studies discussed here. By positioning themselves to an environment that is already charged with meanings and activities, these performance works actively invite the extra layers of meaning to be added, superimposed, and at times to supersede the text, leaving open by design the possibility of the work reinventing itself and embracing the multiplicity of narratives.

Chapter 5: Paratextual 'notes' in the work of Punchdrunk

'Every spectator is already an actor in her story;
every actor, every man of action, is the spectator of the same story'[1]

— Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*

The two previous chapters explored the manifestation of paratexts at the furthest edges of theatrical practice by examining paratextual elements in productions that take their creative ventures beyond the purpose-built theatre space, the hotel space in Chapter 3 and the city space in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, the focus of the thesis returns to performances in indoor environments where the immediate performance space is contained within the physical walls. The spaces examined in this final chapter, however, are not purpose-built theatre buildings, but non-dedicated spaces that have been heavily transformed into the fictional world of the narrative with meticulous detail for an immersive audience experience. I open this chapter by considering the currently prevalent genre of 'immersive theatre' and its unique offering in shaping audience experience. This is followed by an overview of the company Punchdrunk's take on 'immersive' performance productions, whose practice I argue specifically manifests the paratextual element of 'notes'. This chapter case study deepens the address to my research question: What does the application of a paratextual model to contemporary performance works reveal about the relationship between the space and the performance that occupies it? Immersive theatrical performances by Punchdrunk place great emphasis on encounters with(in) their elaborately created environment, which, as I show, can be seen to provide disparate and fragmental information to the audience in the form of 'notes'. As case studies, I examine two Punchdrunk's productions, *It Felt Like a Kiss* (2009) and *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* (2013), both of which manifest the operation of the paratextual yet in notably distinctive ways. The research question of especial interest to this chapter is: Does the audience's accumulation of fragmented paratexts on their journey indeed allow them to access the 'text' of Punchdrunk's works? I argue that the immersive theatre form prompted by Punchdrunk propels the audience to seek out a text that is always out of reach, hinting at a world greater than the immediate performative act the audience members encounter.

[1] Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, p. 17.

Immersive Theatre

A notable rise in the number of performance productions that aspire to offer immersive audience experience has been observed over the past decade. According to Josephine Machon, the term 'immersive theatre' started to be used in academic and artistic contexts to signify a specific type of live theatre performance from around 2004 and was adopted by theatre critics from around 2007.[2] The claim of a performance work to be 'immersive' is usually synonymous with having a crafted performance space that envelops the audience, allowing the audience mobility, and involving a certain degree of audience participation as part of the experience. The companies that are known for immersive theatre practice are diverse, and so are the types of works they produce. *You Me Bum Bum Train* (devised in 2006, with many renditions since), conceived by Kate Bond and Morgan Lloyd, offers a one-person journey through a series of disjointed scenes that the audience member is expected swiftly to respond to as an impromptu member of the cast.[3] *Wondermart* (2009; ongoing), by Silvia Mercuriali, invites two people at a time to explore a supermarket, guided by audio instruction and narrative. *The Garden of Adrian* (2009) by Adrian Howells offers an intimate exploration of an indoor garden, guided by the artist, one audience member at a time. Indeed, many one-to-one performance works offer an immersive audience experience because of the intimacy and the close proximity between audience and performer, as we also have seen in *The Reservation* and *Magical Number Seven* discussed in previous chapters. Other immersive works offer a collective audience experience with less mobility, as with *The Architects* (2012), by Shunt, which invited the audience to a transformed old factory building to assume the role of guests on a cruise ship. The very different production *Fiction* (2014), by David Rosenburg and Glen Neath, might also be categorised as immersive theatre, despite the fact that the audience are seated in the auditorium, since this work is presented in total darkness and the audience wear headsets through which they are collectively immersed in sensory experiences of sound. As will be clear from the wide variety even among this handful of examples, the term 'immersive' has been used to describe various types and degrees of immersion and, as with the term 'site-specific', the term has been so prevalent that its definition arguably risks becoming unstable.

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[2] Josephine Machon, *Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 67–68.

[3] I attended the 2015 production of *You Me Bum Bum Train* on 24 October 2015, which took place in a building which was previously a bookshop in the central London. The space they use dictates the structure of the work to some extent and the work has been updated on each rendition since it is initially devised in 2006.

Machon categorises the immersion in immersive theatre into three levels, adapting concepts from Game Theory: 'immersion as absorption', 'immersion as transportation' and 'total immersion'.[4] While 'immersion as absorption' is characterised by the audience's total engagement and full concentration during the experience, 'immersion as transportation' is defined as where the audience experience a kind of other-worldliness, imaginatively or physically, in an environment which operates by its own rules. 'Total immersion', potentially the most intense form of all, involves both of the first two experiences combined with the audience-participant's *praesence*, the term Machon coins to signify the visceral responses of one's body to the imaginative physical environment of the performance. Machon argues that all performance which aspires to be immersive can be located somewhere between and across these three modes, determined by the intention and expertise of the practitioners who execute the performance. More importantly, the level of immersion achieved is dependent on the responses and willing engagement of the audience-participants. Therefore, the level of immersion intended for a particular piece may not necessarily accord with what audience members experience. As a theatrical form which places the audience at its heart, immersive theatre is only truly complete when that audience is present in the environment. The audience plays a crucial role in enabling its 'text' to unfold, dependent on the way in which they experience, frame, receive and interpret it. In this sense, the audience of immersive theatre are highly authorial, actively engaged in shaping as well as reading that performance text.

Punchdrunk's Immersive Theatre

As noted, past decade has seen an increasing popularity of 'immersive theatre' as a genre, along with a rise in the number of performance that involve immersive audience experience in a broader sense. Works by companies such as dreamthinkspeak directed by Tristan Sharps, Coney co-directed by Tassos Stevens and Punchdrunk directed by Felix Barrett, have been highly influential over the past decade and represent distinctive styles of immersive theatre that have shaped what an audience expects when attending immersive theatre performance today. In this chapter, I focus on Punchdrunk, as the company's style of production — which features meticulous attention to detail in the performance environment — effectively demonstrates the utility of applying a paratextual approach to the analysis of immersive theatre performance. Other signature characteristics of Punchdrunk's works, such as the masks that the audience are

[4] Machon, *Immersive Theatres,* pp. 62–63.

asked to wear and the highly 'controlled freedom' with which the audience are allowed to explore the space, also support my proposal that the paratextual element of 'notes' is manifested in this work.

Punchdrunk is a London-based company who have led the development of immersive theatre as a genre since the company's beginnings in 2000. Founded by Felix Barrett with his fellow graduates from the University of Exeter, Punchdrunk have been dedicated to producing performance works created for large site-specific environments, such as disused buildings, factories and an old town hall. On occasion, they have intentionally made it hard for audience members to locate the venue, signalling their intention of framing the audience's experience and creating a closed fictional universe from which real life is, as far as possible, carefully excluded.[5] Even after safely arriving in the performance environment, the audience members for a Punchdrunk event experience a dizzying disorientation both physically and textually. Typically taking place in a multiple storey building, the audience members are released in the midst of the fictional world with no solid knowledge of 'where they are'. They have to find a way, constantly making decisions with the risk of missing out on something important happening elsewhere. At the same time, the audience strive instinctively to give a shape to (their encounter with) the narrative on offer. Punchdrunk have regularly taken canonical literary texts, such as the works of Shakespeare, Ionesco, Goethe, and Edgar Allan Poe, as a source of inspiration, but have then adapted them into a non-linear journey in which the audience members have to actively seek the narrative. Since Maxine Doyle joined the company in 2003, Punchdrunk has incorporated dynamic choreography as a principal theatrical language designed to convey the narrative in an embodied form that aims to excite the audience's visceral responses. The verbal text constitutes a much smaller part in Punchdrunk's productions: words or text fragments may be whispered as dialogue between performers, or directed to the audience members only in the rarely encountered one-to-one moments (discussed later in this chapter). As Barrett says, '[t]he essence of Punchdrunk is that you have to *feel* it' (italics in original); their work emphasises the appeal to the visceral, stimulating the sensory, emotional and bodily reactions of audiences.[6]

Punchdrunk's works thus only offer fragmented pieces of text at a time, although simultaneously those fragments are represented as part of a coherent and complete fictional universe which has narratives and secrets to unravel. Punchdrunk's productions typically last

[5] Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 164.
[6] Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 163.

about three hours and the audience members are admitted to the space at designated time with gaps between the entrance of each group. Given a mask to wear, they roam around the space in search for the performance and textual clues. Some may stumble upon a bar inside to have an opportunity to remove the mask and have a break from their expedition. Towards the end of the show, the audience members are guided to gather in a large space where all characters and audience come together for a grand finale. The audience's experience in Punchdrunk's work is analysed by Frances Babbage:

> [S]pectators shape their own unique journeys through the event-text, without the controlling hand of an external author, but also without the knowledge that would give them real autonomy in choosing that route (there is no map or 'guidebook'): they come upon abandoned rooms where nothing is 'happening', in the sense of performed action; they witness scenic fragments, disconnected from a framing narrative and in a random order.[7]

Looped actions by the performers are sparsely located across the space and the characters speedily move away to the next destination. Only a limited number of audience members have the chance to be selected by performers for brief one-to-one encounters. What the audience members encounter is a series of 'scenic fragments' and occasional glimpses of performers' fleeting presence, unless the audience members repeatedly attend the production to reach a deeper understanding of the narrative (as some fans do), or unless they purchased a premium ticket option (which I discuss later in relation to *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable*).[8] Due to this autonomy in deciding their route, the audience's experience of a production greatly varies. Some people may focus on looking for the performers and literally pursuing them as they move about. Others may happen to find themselves primarily spending their time in uninhabited rooms and corridors. At all points, the audience are encouraged to interact with the elaborate installation, touching the objects, turning the pages of a journal and opening the drawers. Therefore, the audience members interpret Punchdrunk's works through their own collection of fragmented information of the scenes (whether action-based or installation-based) through which they make their promenade. It is this format of Punchdrunk's works that makes them a compelling example of the paratextual affordances of 'notes'. Genette describes the fragmented nature of this paratextual element, observing that notes are 'by definition irregular,

[7] Frances Babbage, 'Layered Space: Adaptation, Immersion and Site' in *Adaptation in Contemporary Theatre: Performing Literature* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2018), pp. 115–64 (137–38).

[8] Also briefly mentioned in Chapter 3, "Theatre's turn towards event".

divided up, crumbly, not to say dustlike, and often so closely connected to a given detail of a given text that they have, as it were, no autonomous significance'.[9] Notes, whether they are footnotes, endnotes or marginal notes, appear as a cluster alongside or at the end of the text, with each note referring to a 'partial' section of the main body of text and expanding the meaning that is 'local' to the section.[10] Therefore, while presenting a statement of some kind, notes do not fully convey the intended meaning on their own.

The fragmented nature of encounters with the narrative world of Punchdrunk's work that audience members experience is analogous, I argue, to the act of reading a number of footnotes or endnotes but without the knowledge of which note refers to which part of the main body of text. Genette elaborates on the original notes appearing in discursive texts, admitting their indeterminate nature:

> The original note is a local detour or a momentary fork in the text, and as such it belongs to the text almost as much as a simple parenthesis does. With this kind of note we are in a very undefined fringe between text and paratext.[11]

Genette calls for careful deliberation in deciding whether to allocate a certain note to the category of text or that of paratext, based on his ground rule that such decisions must be made, at a case-by-case basis, in terms of the relevance and effectiveness for doing so. The fragmented information found in Punchdrunk's productions constitutes the major part of the audience's experience, and some may argue that it belongs to the text. However, I argue this information is more so part of the paratext, considering the partial and disconnected nature of its fragments. In Punchdrunk's immersive theatre, that 'main body of text' is elusive and not easily reachable, despite the perpetual promise issued by the production of secrets and stories to uncover. Therefore, in searching of that 'main body of text', the audience members register the fragments as supportive information, even if they cannot grasp its possible significance in relation to text or its importance in unlocking the secrets at times. Reading these fragmented encounters with the fictional universe as 'notes' enables us to analyse how, in Punchdrunk's productions, pieces of information can gradually accumulate to produce meaning, as each 'note' intersects with, adds to, or even contradicts all the others.

[9] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 319.
[10] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 319.
[11] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 328.

In Punchdrunk productions, the audience members are often asked to wear a white carnivalesque mask, which is the very device that contributes to the audience's individual journey into a vast interior with intricate decoration, making their own collage out of the abundant fragmented paratexts. The mask, which has been present in Punchdrunk's works since the beginning, is consciously used as 'a critical device' for their work, both in allowing the audience to become a part of the landscape of the fictional world and promoting the audience's engagement with the environment.[12] The mask keeps the responses of the audience members to themselves, which is described by Keren Zaiontz as creating 'a protected bubble (a fourth wall) between spectators and the theatrical world even as they inhabited it'.[13] Its ominous implication has an affinity with the fictional universe of Punchdrunk, a dimly lit maze-like environment with many rooms and corners. With the mask, the audience members effectively become a part of 'the performance's props'[14] or 'the set, the locus of the action'.[15] Barrett says the mask can 'remove the rest of the audience members *being the audience* from the picture' (italics in original) and 'if they're part of the scenography then they're either excluded from, or a complementary addition to, your reading of the work'.[16] The mask not only fosters a solitary audience experience, despite the co-presence of other audience members, but also adds the ghostly presence of other audience members as annotative notes to the scenes that each individually encounters. Faceless fellow audience members in masks who are engaged with their own journey become a host of ghosts in an audience member's eyes, whose presence and actions can inadvertently add further mood and meanings to the text. The mask also encourages the audience's engagement with the work, albeit that the impact of the mask can vary from person to person. The anonymity the mask endorses can be liberating, implicitly giving audience permission to be adventurous and playful in their explorations. The implicit rule among the performers that they do not see the masked audience — unless the characters are mad, drugged or dead — also allows the 'invisible' audience to be bold enough to come into close proximity with the performers.[17] The mask heightens the sense of vision as it somewhat limits the field of vision of the wearers. Punchdrunk carefully curate sensory stimuli for their

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[12] Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 160.
[13] Keren Zaiontz, 'Narcissistic Spectatorship in Immersive and One-on-One Performance', *Theatre Journal*, 66.3 (2014), 405–25 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/tj.2014.0084> (p. 413).
[14] Meghan O'Hara, 'Experience Economies: Immersion, Disposability, and Punchdrunk Theatre', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 27.4 (2017), 481–96 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2017.1365289> (p. 484).
[15] Zaiontz, 'Narcissistic Spectatorship in Immersive and One-on-One Performance', p. 406.
[16] Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 164.
[17] My own notes from the workshop by Sarah Dowling, who works with Punchdrunk for years, at the Theatre Workshop, University of Sheffield on 21 March 2014.

work, including the sound-design, the texture of the floor, and the scents; however, the visual cues are arguably the most powerful stimulus of all. The audience's eyes, through a pair of openings on the mask, function like a camera which captures the actions sparsely stationed across the space and the environment with its cinematic details, zooming in and out as they choose.[18] This comparison of Punchdrunk's audience with a camera has been made elsewhere; Andrew Eglinton has suggested that in this kind of immersive theatre, audience members 'become their own "director", a roaming camera eye capturing a montage of events, encounters, objects, smells, and other sensory phenomena'.[19] It is the mask that allows the audience members this focused and private perspective and propels them to actively seek out the text. Equipped with a mask, the audience members can 'direct' their own sequence and select the paths they take, enjoying a degree of freedom in choosing what to focus on amongst the abundant 'elusive and receding' fragmented notes.[20]

With the mask as a key device, as noted, Punchdrunk places the audience at the centre of the work. Barrett refers to the company's strategy of sending their audience members, separated from the familiar faces with whom they came along, into the midst of the performance environment as a way to situate 'the audience as *epicentre*' (my italics). Eglinton continues that it is this epicentre 'upon which all elements of the production converge'.[21] Thus it is the journey and interpretation of the audience members as *epi*centre, situated *on* the *centre*, that unlocks the text, even though the event structure as described makes it impossible for any one audience member to experience the whole work during a single visit to a production. At the same time, the audience members are literally the final piece of the puzzle that completes Punchdrunk's shows. In this sense, perceiving the audience as epicentre seems to invite another interpretation from a paratextual perspective. That is, the audience members are paratexts externally brought into the text but also become the *centre* of the work by being inserted *epi*textually. The audience as epitexts may have an ability to contribute to an insightful reading of the text, yet they have no agency over the content or the outcome of the course of events. While aiming to produce an intense, fluid experience in the closed environment of the fictional world, the company clearly defines and controls the relationship between the performance and

[18] Marko Jobst, 'The Play You Direct', *The Architechts' Journal*, 238.14 (2013), 49–52 <https://search-proquest-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/docview/1443102788?accountid=13828> [accessed 5 December 2020].
[19] Andrew Eglinton, 'Reflections on a Decade of Punchdrunk Theatre', *TheatreForum*, 2010, 46–55 (p. 48).
[20] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 342.
[21] Eglinton, 'Reflections on a Decade of Punchdrunk Theatre', p. 48.

the audience members within it: the audience are 'the ethereal beings' that float around the performers, remaining on the margins of the text.[22] One exception to this schema is the one-to-one encounters that some audience members may chance upon. Barrett stresses the importance of a one-to-one encounter for Punchdrunk's works, saying that it is 'the purest form of Punchdrunk; it's distilled Punchdrunk'.[23] One-to-one encounters provide selected audience members with an opportunity to have the mask removed, interacting with a character in close proximity. On such encounters the audience members are momentarily admitted to the fictional universe as part of the text, and the boundary between performers and audience, or text and paratext, becomes somewhat destabilised. Because of the proximity and intensity of the experience, one-to-one encounters with the characters can provide a significant insight into a larger, 'hidden' text which may not be reached merely through ordinary exploration of the space and action, although this insight will still only reveal the text very partially. Punchdrunk consciously play with the distance and proximity between the audience members and a text that is held always beyond out of reach, in the process whetting their appetite to know more.

Among the nearly forty productions in the company's history (including the different renditions of the same work, such as *Sleep No More*), from *The Cherry Orchard* (2000) to their latest work *Kabeiroi* (2017) that involves a six-hour journey across the city of London, I discuss two indoor immersive theatre productions, *It Felt Like a Kiss* (2009) and *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* (2013). The former is an example where the company took their style of immersive installation to its extreme, with almost no performers present; the latter, at that point the largest immersive theatre production in scale in the company's history, demonstrates how fragmented information gained through the installation and other elements of the event are combined in the audience's experience. In *It Felt Like a Kiss*, the fragments suggest historical dislocation as well as contributing to conjuring a nightmarish disarray that haunts the audience. In *The Drowned Man*, the fragmented narrative world is a reflection of the delusional states that the protagonists develop, while simultaneously echoing the incomplete fragmental nature of Georg Büchner's *Woyzeck* (1879) the performance is loosely based on. In both works, the fragmented information, rather than adding up neatly into a bigger and complete picture, complicates the audience's understanding of the fictional universe: 'the textual depth' created by a second-degree discourse of notes, without the main body of text readily available, can make

[22] Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 163.
[23] Machon, *Immersive Theatres*, p. 162.

the text less palpable while informing the audience of more details.[24] Thus the very partiality of the fragments draws attention to one's inability ever to 'know' the whole text.

It Felt Like a Kiss (2009)

It Felt Like a Kiss (2009) was a collaborative production by Punchdrunk, Adam Curtis and Damon Albarn, created for Manchester International Festival in 2009. Taking over a five-storey derelict office block in Manchester city centre, it invited the audience to explore a combination of a meticulously constructed installation of period American suburbia in the 1950s and 1960s, Curtis's thirty-five-minute documentary footage, and further wandering into the rooms and corridors with an element of surprise — even shock — at the end.[25] In this production which involved no masks, Punchdrunk is pushed to the limit of their signature style of immersive installation where the audience are invited to freely roam around an elaborately recreated environment. The installation in this work was almost entirely uninhabited; instead of performers, slightly oversized dummies were stationed in some of the scenes, seemingly frozen in the act of carrying out everyday routines. Answering a question regarding the absence of performers, Barrett rejected the idea that *It Felt Like a Kiss* was an installation rather than a performance, saying: '[t]he constant is that the audience is at the heart — a show with no performers makes it even more about them'.[26] This statement contrasts with what Colin Marsh, then executive director (Strategic Associate since 2011) of the company, has said about Punchdrunk's productions in general that usually invite the masked audience to share the space with the performers: 'the performers are the real people in the situation, and the audience are like ghosts floating through the story'.[27] Here, Marsh makes a clear distinction between the roles of the performers and the audience in Punchdrunk's works, despite the physical co-presence and active decision-making the audience are engaged with. The audience in *It Felt Like a Kiss*, similarly, may not have significant agency to alter the production's course of events; however, with no presence of performers who embody at least a partial text, the audience of this work are truly left to their own devices in piecing a text together through their

[24] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 328.
[25] Tim Mottershead writes that there were seven floors in total for the audience to promenade in the production although the brochure for the production said there would be five floors to explore. Tim Mottershead, 'Manchester International Festival II , July 2009', *Tempo*, 64.251 (2010), 49–51 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40496221> [accessed 5 December 2020].
[26] Rhiannon Harries, 'Close-up: Felix Barrett', *The Independent*, 28 June 2009 <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/features/close-up-felix-barrett-1717610.html> [accessed 5 December 2020].
[27] Eglinton, 'Reflections on a Decade of Punchdrunk Theatre', p. 55.

exploration of the environment. *It Felt Like a Kiss*, therefore, is a work that presents fragmented information in the form of installation and footage, acting as paratextual notes. These fragmented pieces of information supplement, digress from and comment on a 'main' text which initially seems absent or withheld.

Most reviewers of *It Felt Like a Kiss* agreed on the merit of the meticulous environmental details and appreciated the company's ambition, both in tackling a production on this scale and in the imaginatively extending their forms of theatre-making. Some critics expressed disapproval, however, particularly about the ending where the audience are chased by a masked man with a chain-saw in hand. The criticism against this final part of the show dismissed it as 'shock-tactics'[28] and 'melodrama',[29] comparing it (unfavourably) to a fairground ride. The production brochure, however, suggests a conscious embrace of popular entertainment, describing this piece as 'blending music with documentary and the disorientating whirl of the fairground ghost train'.[30] Barrett himself called it 'a fusion of political documentary, haunted house and Japanese ghost train that explores the American dream and the rise of individualism', positively advertising that the audience experience of *It Felt Like a Kiss* might be comparable to that of fairground ride, with a difference that visitors are asked to walk through the space themselves rather than sitting in the safety of a vehicle.[31] Therefore, the form of this production aimed to produce an exhilarating but sometimes frightening journey, in turn lending itself metaphorically to imply the ominous future that awaits America in the fifties and sixties. The dismissive reviews referred to also complained about the crudity and explicitness of the chainsaw metaphor, signalling 'lack of subtlety' and 'an insult to our [the audience's] intelligence'.[32] Contrastingly, Dominic Cavendish for *The Telegraph* and Lyn Gardner for *The Guardian* both used the same metaphor for describing the audience's role in this work, saying they are asked to turn 'sleuth' and 'detective': these terms suggest that the production successfully activated audience members to engage with the environment in order to decipher

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[28] Michael Billington, 'Theatre Review: *It Felt Like a Kiss*', *The Guardian*, 3 July 2009 <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2009/jul/03/manchester-international-festival> [accessed 5 December 2020].

[29] David Chadderton, 'Theare Review: It Felt Like a Kiss', *British Theatre Guide*, 2009 <http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/MIF09feltkiss-rev> [accessed 5 December 2020].

[30] Quoted in Mottershead's 'Manchester International Festival II , July 2009'.

[31] Harries, 'Close-up: Felix Barrett'.

[32] Leo Benedictus, 'What to Say about ... Punchdrunk's *It Felt Like a Kiss*', *The Guardian*, 7 July 2009 <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2009/jul/07/punchdrunk-it-felt-like-a-kiss> [accessed 5 December 2020].

Billington, 'Theatre Review: It Felt Like a Kiss'.

the meanings behind it.[33] With no performers, *It Felt Like a Kiss* has no specific characters, except for the real world figures attached to this era in American history; Curtis's documentary footage shown on sparsely located TV monitors, contributed to 'the sense of fragmentation and/or nightmare'.[34] The overflow of such fragmented information found in the uninhabited installation may seem to present all too plain a metaphor. However, it is the very fragmented manner in which the quasi-documentary is presented that represents the historical dislocation from the period. From a paratextual perspective, this accumulation of fragments also seems to be a preparation for the shift of the audience's role in the final part. The audience members, who have had the role of witness-sleuth collecting fragmented notes on their way, are plunged into the *medias res* of a cinematic scene. Once audience, now immersed participants, they are seemingly obliged to flee for their lives. The abundant paratextual 'notes' in this production contributed to this shift: the information fragments that initially may have seemed to critically refer to the distant historical past of the U.S. are pointedly directed to an immediate, performed 'reality' to which the audience members are now central.

The Drowned Man: Hollywood Fable (2013)

The Drowned Man: Hollywood Fable was the largest-scale promenade theatre production Punchdrunk had thus far undertaken. This three-hour production occupied a four-storey building next to Paddington station, previously a Royal Mail sorting office, and transformed it into the fictional world of Temple Studios, the London branch of Hollywood film studio in the 1950s and 1960s.[35] It followed the established Punchdrunk format whereby the audience are asked to

[33] Lyn Gardner, 'Kiss and Yell: Punchdrunk and the Power of Nightmares', *The Guardian*, 9 July 2009 <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2009/jul/07/kiss-punchdrunk> [accessed 5 December 2020].
Dominic Cavendish, '*It Felt Like a Kiss* in Manchester, Review', *The Telegraph*, 6 July 2009 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/dominic-cavendish/5760122/It-Felt-Like-a-Kiss-in-Manchester-review.html> [accessed 20 December 2019].

[34] Benedict Nightingale, 'Theatre', *The Times* (Review section), London, 6 July 2009, p. 12, *The Times Digital Archive* [accessed 5 December 2020].

[35] Punchdrunk and National Theatre, *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable Programme*, 2013. The programme, which could be purchased after the performance, contains the texts and images that can help the audience's understanding of their experience, including the premise of the narrative world found in p.1:

> The legendary Temple Studios was established in 1942 as the British outpost for major Hollywood studio Republic Pictures. For a brief period during the 1950s it was a prolific powerhouse producing films across a variety of genres including period dramas, musicals, historical epics and intimate thrillers. In the early 1960s the output of the studio waned and employees were sworn to secrecy about the studio's projects. Little is known about the films in development at that time. In October 1962 the studio was closed overnight. The dramatic events that led to the building being condemned have been a closely kept secret ever since.

wear masks, encouraged to explore the elaborately created space individually, and gathered for a finale at the end. In *The Drowned Man*, the audience members fluidly permeate across the pair of symmetrical narratives inside and outside the film studio, which blurs the boundaries between the two parallel stories, and between what is real in the fictional universe, a story within a story, and what is a delusion of the characters. In this production, the effect of a lavish amount of fragmented information gained through the installation, as also practised in *It Felt Like a Kiss*, is amplified by performers' actions and rarely encountered one-to-one interactions. It was also enhanced by an affinity between the production's thematic setting, the film industry, and the camera eye with which the audience members are equipped thanks to the mask. Fragmented performances, functioning as an overload of notes, complicate the audience's grasp of the text: for while a note may enable the reader to engage more deeply with a specific part of the text, the extra details it provides can also drive the reader further away from the gist of the text. Similarly, the fragmented pieces of information the audience encounter in *The Drowned Man* operate to illuminate the textual connections and meanings at certain points, while at other moments their individual depth and complexity push the text further out of reach. I argue that in such moments, these partial or local performance fragments add complexity by introducing a 'momentary fork', and implicitly drawing the audience's attention to the impossibility of grasping the entirety of the text.[36]

On arrival, the audience members are asked to check in all their belongings and are handed a slip of double-sided paper with the synopsis, before entering the performance space. This synopsis explains the two symmetrical plots the audience must understand that *The Drowned Man* will engage with, although it is difficult for them to digest it sufficiently, in this short period of time, to be able to map those plots onto what they see. The synopsis sheet displays both Wendy and Marshall's (black surface) and William and Mary's (white surface) versions of story, the two mirroring couples carrying the same initials as the protagonists in *Woyzeck*, Woyzeck and Marie.[37] The audience members then walk through the dark corridors

[36] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 328.

[37] I quote the text on both sides below, highlighting the key difference with bold letters.
Wendy and **Marshall** struggle to make ends meet **inside** the gates of a film studio. When Marshall meets **Dolores**, **the studio diva**, they strike up an affair and Wendy's fragile world starts to fall apart. Wendy confronts Marshall about the infidelity, but he denies everything. As Wendy's paranoia becomes uncontrollable, she goes to a party and in horror witnesses Marshall and Dolores' affair first-hand. Wendy's state of delusion and panic accelerates until she leads Marshall into the wilderness and murders him. [Black surface]
William and **Mary** struggle to make ends meet **outside** the gates of a film studio. When Mary meets **Dwayne**, **a drugstore cowboy**, they strike up an affair and William's fragile world starts to fall apart.

leading to the lift, what the company call the 'decompression zone', which heightens the audience's senses and signals that they are about to leave the ordinary world behind.[38] Shortly before they are squeezed into the lift in groups, they are given a mask to wear and greeted by the voice of Mr Stanford, the studio boss. The now-masked audience members are met by a performer in the lift, given a brief introduction to the main characters, and asked to remain silent during the show because (they are told) film shooting is going on inside the studio. Remaining silent is not an unusual behaviour in the theatre environment; however, whereas the spectators in the theatre auditorium would naturally fall silent following the tacit rule of theatre audiences, in this Punchdrunk performance the audience members are explicitly asked to be silent when physically entering the fictional world. It signals the contract the audience are supposed to sign up to: if they wish to appreciate the fictional universe, they must play by the rules. The audience, equipped with the mask and some induction, are thus dispatched to begin a three-hour long journey in a vast space, converted into a Hollywood film studio and its surroundings. Acknowledging the individual and subjective nature of Punchdrunk's immersive form, where each audience member chooses their own unique path, the analysis of *The Drowned Man* below is partially based on my own audience participation on two separate occasions I attended the show, 3 August 2013 and 19 September 2013 at Temple Studios in London.

Once stepping out of the lift, the audience members are faced by the fact that there is no correct path to follow. They simply find themselves at the edge of this fictional universe with a stretch of dimly lit space ahead of them. Some might soon arrive in the corner of a town with a drugstore, a barber, a boutique and a cinema. Less important characters can be found with a relative ease: an exhausted middle-aged man making a solo march with a placard asking for more jobs, or a cowboy polishing his gun. Adjacent to the town is the woods with a few camping trailers. Walking towards the ominous landscape of the uninhabited camp site, the ground is suddenly softer, which physically informs the audience of the change of scenes. In one of the trailers with its door open, there is a portrait of John Wayne with an upper-case 'D' added before the surname, signalling that this trailer is connected to the story of William, Mary and Dwayne, unfolding outside the studio. As noted, Punchdrunk frequently take canonical literary texts as a source text for their adaptation: for example, *Sleep No More* (2003 in UK, 2009 in

William confronts Mary about the infidelity, but she denies everything. As William's paranoia becomes uncontrollable, he goes to a party and in horror witnesses Mary and Dwayne's affair first-hand. William's state of delusion and panic accelerates until he leads Mary into the wilderness and murders her. [White surface]

[38] Dowling, at a workshop on 21 March 2014.

Boston, since 2011 in New York, and since 2016 in Shanghai) is based on Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; *Faust* (2006) is inspired by Goethe's tragedy of the same title; and, *The Duchess of Malfi* (2010) re-imagined the play by John Webster. *The Drowned Man* is similarly loosely based on two literary texts: *Woyzeck* (1879) by Georg Büchner and *The Day of the Locust* (1939) by Nathanael West. However, Büchner's nineteenth-century fragmental play about adultery and revenge, and West's novel depicting Hollywood during the Great Depression, are relatively less well known than other literary works Punchdrunk have adapted. It is reasonable to suppose that few audience members were equipped with prior knowledge of the narrative world they were about to witness. This means that differences in the degree of text awareness for each audience member are less likely to affect their experience of *The Drowned Man*. At the same time, the lack of prior information amplifies the importance of the fragmented information the audience encountered, as the clues for how they might navigate and piece together the text. Moreover, while the trace of *Woyzeck* can be found in the main plot of the protagonists, minor characters were greatly expanded for this production. As Machon observes of this production, '[a]ll the characters are under scrutiny throughout so focus shifts away from one protagonist'; in other words, the overwhelming amount of effectively minor details constantly distracts the audience from the main narratives.[39] The textual significance of each element can be understood often retrospectively, through the process of unpeeling more layers and reflecting on the experience after the performance. The marginal details that are comparable to notes do enrich the text however, the difficulty in grasping the text and the flood of partial and potentially misleading fragments make it highly challenging for the audience members to discern which paratextual notes are connected to what part.

The fragmented performance and its structure of following unique paths of one's choice result in disparate audience experiences, something that is evident in the varied responses of critics. In his five starred review, Charles Spencer for *The Daily Telegraph* spoke highly of this production which 'plays fascinating games with truth and illusion', predicting that it 'will be talked about for years to come'.[40] Michael Billington for *The Guardian* and Paul Taylor for *The Independent* both gave three stars: while the former shows slight disappointment that the performance did not live up to his expectation based on the company's hit in 2007, the latter

[39] Josephine Machon, 'Immersive, Immediate, Intimate: Punchdrunk', in *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable Programme* (Punchdrunk and National Theatre, 2013), pp. 20–23 (20).

[40] Charles Spencer, 'The Drowned Man, Temple Studios, Review', *The Telegraph*, 18 July 2013 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/10186535/The-Drowned-Man-Temple-Studios-review.html> [accessed 5 December 2020].

regrets that 'the dramatic encounters come across as signalled rather than experienced' despite his appreciation of the choreography and 'extraordinary logistic flair of the staging'.[41] A selection of readers' reviews by the *Time Out London* blog also revealed that audience reception was polarised: some applauded the elaborate environment and the excitement of exploration, while others expressed their frustration and boredom at not being able to see any narrative or plot, which led some of them to walk out not even waiting for the finale.[42] In Punchdrunk's immersive promenades, a journey shaped according to an audience member's individual choices does not ensure an encounter with the narratives, let alone guarantee that you will experience a (rare) one-to-one interactions. Someone else's route through the same sets of fragments will form different impressions and interpretations, and in all cases this is depending on the willing engagement of the audience and the choices made at each stage.

My own experience as an audience member on the two different occasions turned out to be highly contrasting, despite some inevitable points of overlap. On the first visit to the production, I found myself walking around room after room, most of which were uninhabited. The performers I finally managed to find quickly disappeared, pursued by the host of fellow spectators. The few moments of action I caught a glimpse of were so fragmented that they hardly made sense at that time in relation to the synopsis at hand. The excitement of freely exploring the carefully constructed fictional world was fuelling enough at first; yet being physically tired from walking around, I felt frustration from a feeling of 'not seeing much' towards the end of the evening. However, the second time I attended the show left me with a totally different impression. With more action in sight and inadvertently gaining a one-to-one interaction with one of the characters, some details of the environment, which had been out of the corner of my eye, started to glow as part of the (potentially central, yet largely hidden) 'text'. The fragmented notes I encountered on this evening, and those which exhausted me on the previous visit, began cross-referencing, together forming a web of meaning.

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[41] Michael Billington, 'The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable – Review', *The Guardian*, 17 July 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2013/jul/17/drowned-man-hollywood-fable-review> [accessed 5 December 2020].
Paul Taylor, 'Theatre Review: Punchdrunk's *The Drowned Man* – "For All Its Logistical Flair the Show Is Lacking in Heart"', *The Independent*, 18 July 2013 <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/theatre-review-punchdrunks-the-drowned-man-for-all-its-logistical-flair-the-show-is-lacking-in-heart-8714120.html> [accessed 5 December 2020].

[42] 'Readers Review… Punchdrunk: The Drowned Man', *Now. Here. This.* (The Time Out London blog), ed. by Sonya Barber, 31 July 2013 <https://now-here-this.timeout.com/2013/07/31/readers-review-punchdrunk-the-drowned-man/> [accessed 17 June 2018].

Here, I quote my own journal entry of the day I attended *The Drowned Man* for the second time (19 September 2013) to support my argument. While I acknowledge the limitation of a first-person account, I quote a one-to-one encounter I experienced that represents one of many available opportunities for audience experience:

> A male character, whose name I did not know yet, stared at me. I turned back to see if I was in the way of performers, but there was no one behind. He chose me. Guided to a small room, which was locked shortly after we entered the space, he removed my mask and reached out to shake hands, saying his name, 'Conrad'. Feeling both excited and nervous, I shook his hand, responding to him. He clicked a counting device he found on the desk and announced a number matter-of-factly, which I guessed represented the sum of people who entered this small confined space. Then we moved to the next room, a rest area with a bed. I was guided to sit on the bed and he started to relate a story of a lonely young boy, firmly holding my hands and staring into my eyes almost without a blink. There was something compelling in his complexion that made me feel as if he was imparting a secret that should never be shared with anyone else. The story went that the boy pursued the sun, the moon, and the stars, only to find they were withered sunflowers, dim streetlights, and glittering spangles. Conrad suddenly realised there was a red thread creeping in to the room under the door. We seemed to have to follow that. I quickly grabbed the mask when he grabbed my shoulder to take me with him, following the red string. Complete darkness awaited us outside the door. All I could perceive was the strong grip of his hand on my shoulder, the sound of his breath quickening, the red thread dimly lit by his torch, and the anxiety gradually surging within myself as I became even more disorientated. We walked fast — it felt like an escape from some danger looming behind us. We were startled by a seemingly real corpse of horse, which is the symbol of the Temple Studios. Conrad brought me to a door above which the familiar green light of an emergency exit sign was flickering. He noticed the eyeless portraits stuck on the floor and got frightened at it. He put the mask back on my face and said, 'Everything is inside out in this world — so we have to be careful… Go… Go!' I pushed through the door with an emergency exit sign and found myself again in one of the dimly lit corridors of the film studio. The door I had come through is now locked and it did not have access from the side I was now standing. I was left alone, feeling as if I just woke up from a bad dream.[43]

[43] This account is from my own experience from the performance of *The Drowned Man: A Hollywood Fable* I attended on 19 September 2013 and is based on the note I made later on the day of the performance.

This brief yet intense encounter with one of the characters provided me with a story which cross-referenced the other fragmented notes I had found by then. It also gave me an opportunity to come into close proximity with a character as his interlocuter. The compelling force of this intense experience influenced my reading of otherwise minor and marginal details. For example, I remembered a small room filled with withered sunflowers and their distinctive aroma on my first visit, which at that time did not seem to demand close attention. The sunflowers in the small room were as described by Conrad in his story of a little boy: in the solitude the boy walked towards the sun looking for company, only to find it was not the sun but dried and dead sunflowers. This memory is connected to Conrad's story, and registered as one of the potential clues to decipher further layers of meaning. Stepping out of the one-to-one experience, the black-and-white portraits of actors and actresses, similar to those without eyes, were found on the floor in the corridors that led to the film studio. The disconcerting and troubling posters of eyeless smiles now implicitly referred to Conrad's account that 'everything is inside out': the posters were indeed displayed as if they were spilling out from the other side of the world through the door, signalling the sinister turn the narratives had taken.

These fragmented pieces of information were separately introduced to me as an audience member and remained as mere fragments whose significance were unknown. Particularly on my first visit, such fragments supported my journey as part of many uninhabited scenes I passed by, but they did not call attention to particular narratives or reveal their significance in relation to the text as a larger whole. These fragments surrounded the absent text as disparate and disconnected notes. Such perceptions were later subverted by the one-to-one encounter with Conrad, which helped me shape my interpretation of the text, compiling the fragmented notes, including retrospectively, in search of the text. This back and forth movement of coming to understanding recalls Genette's discussion of how notes operate. For Genette, 'the paratext is an often indefinite fringe between text and off-text' and 'the note — which, depending on type, belongs to one or the other or lies between the two — perfectly illustrates this indefiniteness and this slipperiness'.[44] The fragmented information gained through the elaborate installation in *The Drowned Man* was there for all audience members to access, yet the audience needed the reference points to see the specific, local meanings they carry in relation to the text. The glimpsed sight, sounds and actions the audience encounter in this production remain ambiguously situated between the text and off-text, hinting both at a distant promise that they could reveal some textual clues and at the inherent partiality of one's audience experience

[44] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 343.

and effort to 'read' it all. It is this partiality of the encounter with the narrative world and a cross-referencing between the seemingly minor information of notes one might find that fuels Punchdrunk's masked audience to pursue their journey, although their inability to see its entirety is at the same time clearly signalled and apparent from the beginning.

Contrastingly, the controversial 'premium ticket' option Punchdrunk advertised arguably provided a fundamentally different type of audience experience. While the fragmented pieces of information scattered throughout the meticulously created environment were available to all audience members, the much more expensive 'premium ticket' option included an extensive explanatory preface in addition.[45] Holders of premium tickets were admitted to the basement of the building through a separate entrance, where they were presented with an archive of 'every character, every event and every scene on the four floors of the performance' and a prologue delivered in private by a character.[46] This option seemed designed to appeal to those audience members who aspire to a certain manner of 'effective' consumption of immersive theatre. Zaiontz calls this as 'competitive mobility', borrowing what Sarah Bay-Cheng describes as '*anti-flâneurie*', where an audience member 'races with a purpose — immersed and committed to the performance and rearing to consume as much of the theatrical event as possible'.[47] Genette states that the paratextual element contrasting to the notes is the preface: both the preface and the notes are supplementary to the text and they are closely related to each other with 'continuity and homogeneity', while their contrasting features are 'the preface dealing with general considerations and the notes taking responsibility for points of detail'.[48] Due to the tempo-spatial order in which the reader normally encounters the preface and the notes, the latter may expand on the points discussed in the former, but not vice-versa.

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[45] Premium tickets were priced at £85 as opposed to the standard price of £49.50. Barrett explained to Siobhan Murphy for *The Metro* that this the premium tickets subsidised the cheaper tickets (£19.50) which made the production accessible for broader range of audience members.
Siobhan Murphey, 'Punchdrunk's Ambitious The Drowned Man Takes Their Immersive Theatre to a New Level', *The Metro*, 20 June 2013 <http://metro.co.uk/2013/06/20/punchdrunks-hugely-ambitious-the-drowned-man-takes-their-immersive-theatre-to-a-new-level-3847739/> [accessed 5 December 2020].

[46] Jan Wozniak and Keren Zaiontz report their experience of attending the performance as premium ticket holders in their articles respectively. They both emphasise the fact that the premium price 'purchased' the interactions with the characters at close proximity, making a toast with them and being offered helpful clues in the form of a one-to-one encounter, which other standard ticket audience have no access to.
Jan Wozniak, 'The Value of Being Together? Audiences in Punchdrunk's The Drowned Man', *Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies*, 12.1 (2015), 318–32 <http://www.participations.org/Volume 12/Issue 1/20.pdf> [accessed 5 December 2020] (pp. 318–19).
Zaiontz, 'Narcissistic Spectatorship in Immersive and One-on-One Performance', p. 413.

[47] Zaiontz, 'Narcissistic Spectatorship in Immersive and One-on-One Performance', pp. 411–13. Sarah Bay-Cheng quoted in Zaiontz (p. 411).

[48] Genette, Paratexts, pp. 319–20.

The premium ticket holders, who were given access to architectural plans of the building, the details of all scenes and characters, and a one-to-one delivery of the prologue, were well-equipped with prefatorial information for their efficient consumption of the text. Therefore, their approach to the fragmented notes was essentially distinct from that of the regular audience members. The premium ticket holders, provided with another set of paratexts, the preface, had an overall perspective to which they could refer back and based on which they could 'efficiently' make their journey through the text, although it remained unlikely if not impossible that even a premium ticket holders could see the text in its entirety. The fragmented notes for these audience members were something to collate in line with their knowledge acquired through the preface, for the sake of filling the gaps in the whole picture, rather than taking these as their primary source of information despite their partiality.

The audience's meaning-making process of piecing together the fragments continues even after the three-hour performance. The manifest incompleteness of the text seen by any one audience member in a visit to this (or any other Punchdrunk) production regularly inspires, the audience and fans to share, compare and collate experiences in an online community, via Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and personal blogs, where they could continue to engage with and interpret the fictional world presented by Punchdrunk. Zaiontz identifies such behaviour of collaborative meaning-making as that of the *anti-flâneur*, who hopes to detail their journeys, share their knowledge, and discuss 'how to maximize their spectatorship in return visits'.[49] Meghan O'Hara argues that the company's own invitation for continuous engagement in the New York production of *Sleep No More* with the hashtag *#mysleepnomore* enabled the audience to share their experience and 'engage deeply with the performance by becoming co-creators'.[50] These hashtags and fan blogs allow the audience to collectively compile allographic annotations to the performance, which can be then fed back into someone else's audience experience epitextually. O'Hara discusses *The Drowned Man* sale in 2014, where the company made all material components of the production available for public purchase, following the closing of the run.[51] Making a purchase of a prop or costume as a souvenir on this sale, O'Hara says, is 'a means to supplement an incomplete experience'.[52] Consequently, the relation between audience and text continues. Purposefully fragmented performance, filled with the partial notes without the main body of text in sight, propels the audience not only during the performance but also

[49] Zaiontz, 'Narcissistic Spectatorship in Immersive and One-on-One Performance', p. 409.
[50] O'Hara, 'Experience Economies: Immersion, Disposability, and Punchdrunk Theatre', p. 488.
[51] O'Hara, 'Experience Economies: Immersion, Disposability, and Punchdrunk Theatre', p. 489.
[52] O'Hara, 'Experience Economies: Immersion, Disposability, and Punchdrunk Theatre', p. 491.

retrospectively to seek narrative coherence. It would seem that, through this process, the fragmented notes in Punchdrunk's productions become not only aesthetic and textual devices but also commodities fetishised by audience members after the performance.

Conclusion

Immersive performance works, especially of an order exemplified here by Punchdrunk, offer a meticulously created and to a significant degree 'closed' narrative universe that physically envelops the audience. With the presumed promise of the larger narrative present, the audience members are invited to unlock it by collecting fragmented information along their individual solitary journey through the maze-like performance space. Whether these accumulated pieces constitute the countless pockets of space in the building, each neatly designed and packed with yet unknown textual significance, or the fleeting moments of action by performers witnessed on the way, these fragments function in the audience's meaning-making as notes severed from a decisive reference point, lacking a recognisable main text. In *It Felt Like a Kiss* in which the abundance of dispersed information is taken to its extreme, the fragmented presentation itself reflects the historical dislocation of the period in which this piece is set. The accumulation of scattered notes, which the audience are invited to actively make sense out of, turns out to be a theatrical apparatus that positions the audience themselves at the centre of the work, a gesture encapsulated by the way in which they are forced, playfully, into a direct performance action on their exeunt. With its elaborate installation, performers' actions and occasional one-to-one encounters all at work, *The Drowned Man* similarly invites the audience to seek out the text by piecing together the multitudinous notes, although the text is always only ever partially revealed. The paratextual element of notes in this piece functions as a propelling force that drives the audience on in this expedition, and the rigorous search for the text collecting these paratexts itself become the main offering — the text — of this work. The use of paratexts is thus integral to the aesthetics and the machinery of Punchdrunk's work, where the text remains perpetually out of reach and the elusiveness itself constitutes a significant part of the appeal for the audience.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the potential of a paratextual model that I set out, applying Genette's concept of paratextuality, for better understanding of contemporary theatre practice in its fullness. Reflecting Genette's own acknowledgement that 'the paratext is essentially itself a text: if it is still not *the* text, it is already *some* text', the paratextual model at times presents challenges in setting up a strict classification of elements found in a performance text, and establishing beyond doubt whether these belong to the main body of the text or to the paratext.[1] Nevertheless, as this thesis has shown, it is this very indeterminacy in the nature of paratextuality that makes it a useful tool in analysing contemporary theatre, and above all for practice that invites the audience to take up a more immersed and participatory role, for which the boundaries between performer and audience, the performed and the not-performed, the text and the paratext, are likewise blurred.[2]

The validity of the paratextual model has been established through Chapters 1 and 2, exploring two research questions: What new perspectives will a paratextual model provide in the context of theatre and performance studies? How does it supplement existing critical discourses? As Genette anticipated, the concept of paratextuality presents a wide extension and applicability beyond literature.[3] My review of Genette's conceptualisation of paratextuality revealed that the textual elements that function paratextually against the main text can be observed in an array of contemporary performance examples. While the essential difference between the printed books on which Genette's concept is based and the less tangible art form of theatrical performance necessitates redefinition and adaptation of the original concept, I have argued that paratextuality provides a useful analytical tool in discussing boundary-crossing acts that occur between textual elements, whether this is intended by the authorial figures or is achieved as an incidental consequence of the performance structure. Although an awareness of and prioritisation of the marginal — or an awareness of 'para' — is not a new venture of contemporary performance practice or contemporary theatre scholarship, the paratextual model that I set out provides an innovative perspective for performance analysis, enabling us to examine the interaction between the performance 'centre' and its periphery. In performance, the paratextual does not only operate spatially but also temporally: seemingly insignificant elements situated at the margin at the outset of the performance can be foregrounded to assume a central

[1] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 7.
[2] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 7. Italics in original.
[3] Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 407.

position — and fundamental significance — over time in the audience's interpretation. I have argued that it is this slippage, as a result of interaction between text and paratext, that the paratextual model enables us to capture and examine. The paratextual model this thesis proposes is, therefore, valuably distinct from the experimentation by practitioners since the Sixties, and from previous applications of Genette's model in recent scholarly work in theatre studies, even when it intersects with these. The value of this paratextual model is in its ability to capture the impact made by marginal elements which may, initially, be only at the edge of the audience's conscious reading of the text, and in its provision of vocabulary that make it possible to analyse such impacts regardless of the genre of the work in question.

The case studies I have examined of selected performance pieces that take diverse formats and inhabit disparate physical spaces support the value of the paratextual model that I propose. The research question — What paratextual force can be observed in contemporary performance works? — has been explored, starting with Forced Entertainment's work as an example *par excellence* of manifestation of the paratextual in performance. The company's aesthetics and dramaturgical choices persistently embrace the paratextual, as shown in the performance examples: fragmented statements to activate the audience's engagement with the work and prefatorial acts create the constant shift of focus in storytelling. The company's 'paratextual' performance practice deliberately destabilises textual coherence, profoundly complicating the audience's meaning-making process. Chapters 3 and 4 together turned critical focus to performance practice situated in spaces beyond theatre buildings — the hotel space and the city space respectively — and opened another question: What does application of a paratextual model reveal about the relationship between the space and the performance that occupies it? Performance situated in an environment that is codified with its own specific rules, functions and significances inevitably welcomes the external materials brought by the setting itself that has been co-opted for the purpose. In the case of performance within hotel space, especially hotels that are functioning, as shown through the case studies, the attributes that hotels innately possess and the physical structure of the hotels paratextually inform the audience's experience that is at the same time made open to that creative interference produced by the space. Accommodating performance within its premises draws out the creative potential of the hotel space, and in turn the space usefully activates the audience's imagination and enriches their reading of the performance text. The performance examples located in the openness of urban space were used to demonstrate first, how the text and the paratext can be interchangeable, particularly in the city where there are no clear boundaries between the

performed and the not-performed; and second, how the initially marginal elements found in the city may gain textual significance through the audience's journey. It can be said that the works which expose themselves to the expansion of a city, encapsulated by the two examples I discussed, fundamentally embrace the paratextual, leaving the edges of their text permeable to the possibility of reinvention, suggesting alternative narratives. Examples in Chapters 3 and 4 together have displayed the interplay between the performative act and the non-theatre space it inhabits. In the space in which the physical boundary between text and paratext is less articulated, peritext and epitext spatially coincide with one another and become fluidly interchangeable. The advantage of the paratextual model is that it enables us to capture such subtle, and at times haphazard, influences occasioned by the selected surroundings and which in fact constitute a significant part of the audience's understanding of the performance text. Finally, examination of the immersive performance practice of Punchdrunk revealed that the purposefully fragmented encounters the company constructs with the seemingly absent or deliberately withheld text can be interpreted as comparable to accessing that text solely via the paratextual element of 'notes'. The audience's accumulating fragmented paratexts constitutes a propelling force that drives the audience onwards in their expedition in search of text, and it is in the end this quest that represents the main offering of the company's work. Whether those 'notes' are the physical objects that fill the meticulously constructed environment, glimpses of performed action, or rarely chanced upon one-to-one interactions with actors in character, these fragments simultaneously offer the promise of a larger whole and hint at the ultimate inability of the audience to grasp this.

As an epilogue to my examination of paratextual elements in theatrical performance, I briefly examine a manifestation of 'epilogue', taking the recent theatre production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2012) as an example.[4] The plot of this play, adapted by Simon Stephens from Mark Haddon's popular novel, is centred around the mysterious death of a neighbour's dog and the protagonist, fifteen-year old Christopher, who is on the autism spectrum, and who decides to investigate the case by himself. The story is presented in the form of a play-within-a-play, written by the protagonist, thus the temporal and fictional status of the scenes swiftly transitions between the fictional present where Christopher narrates the story and the fictional past within the story where he is engaged in investigation.

[4] Simon Stephens, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, a National Theatre production, premiered in 2012, then nationally and internationally toured. I attended the performance at Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield, on 9 May 2017.

The status of a particular scene can be ambiguous at times, since this transition can be made only briefly, freely moving back and forth. Partly supported by blurred boundaries between the fictional present and the past, aspects of the main body of text bleeds into a paratextual element of 'epilogue' and this epilogue provides an additional layer to the meaning-making of the whole text. In Act II, Christopher takes a maths A-level exam, during which he reads the question aloud and starts to explain the process of solving it. Siobhan, his school mentor, interrupts him, advising that a math problem would not interest the theatre audience. Christopher, though not convinced, finally agrees to follow Siobhan's suggestion to explain it after the curtain call, so only those who are interested to hear it can choose to do so. While the exam itself takes place in the story-within-the-story, the conversation between Christopher and Siobhan belongs to the fictional present where he is in the process of writing his story as a play. The two timeframes conflate in this scene, and the disjunction between his wish to incorporate the maths lecture on the one hand, and Siobhan's realistic opinion on the other, signals the conflict between Christopher and the world. Throughout the story, the audience witness several moments where what he believes does not necessarily accord with what is taken as accepted norm by society, a disconnection explained by his autistic spectrum condition. Here, theatre is described by Siobhan as a place to see a spectacle ('because people love stories'), a play as a story, and the audience as people who come to hear the story. She maintains that a maths problem would bore the audience and that such a lecture is not what the theatre is for, which some audience members might agree with. However, this assumption made by Siobhan is subverted in the form of epilogue. As promised, after the curtain call has ended, Christopher reappears on the stage to complete the task he started in the Act II: to solve the maths problem in front of the audience. The vivaciously delivered explanation by Christopher, still in character and making the most of the visual technology of the set, stops in their tracks the majority of audience members who were about to leave. In so doing he proves his point that a maths problem is indeed interesting enough for the theatre audience, even if — supposedly — not to the extent of including it as 'part of the show'.

This epilogue, therefore, functions as a point of which the conflict between Christopher, whose logical mind often finds it hard to grasp contexts, nuances and metaphors, and the world, is momentarily resolved. Though not in the body of text — since it has to wait until the epilogue, a non-essential paratext — this final moment of performance expresses the positive note that the world can be a more generous and tolerant place, by making the audience experience directly how established assumptions can be disproved. In this play, the epilogue as a

paratext is used as an opportunity to resolve a conflict raised within the main body of text. A concession Christopher made in the play-within-the-play that he himself was authoring is rectified and realised in this paratext. It is at this moment — once the 'play proper' has concluded, in other words — that Christopher, the author of the play, truly owns his work by effecting his authorial intention in the form of paratext, defending its validity. Situated as temporally marginal, at the very end of the performance after the curtain call, this sequence can be missed by the audience members, accidentally or by choice. However, despite its position on the periphery, it exerts a potentially powerful paratextual force in relation to the main body of text, giving an extra insight to those who witness it.

The theatrical performance examples I have concentrated on in this thesis are primarily those which demand a more directly immersed, participatory role for their audience. This is because, as I have proposed, the value of the paratextual model as an analytical tool is most effectively demonstrated through contemporary theatre practice that deliberately admits external elements into the text and experience of the audience, including those beyond the artists' control. The model also brings particularly pertinent insights for reading the work that actively invites the audience to play a part in meaning-making through their embodied experience of the event. Nevertheless, as shown through the example of *The Curious Incident*, the utility of the paratextual model is not limited to the analysis of experiential performance of the kind that I examined as case studies. The paratextual model is supremely capable of capturing the marginal, apparently peripheral aspects of a performance text and detailing their subtle yet meaningful interactions with the main textual body. At the same time, the textual or paratextual status of a certain element in a performance work is far from static, as I have consistently shown, and this model provides a vocabulary for the shifting positions and potency of different aspects of performance and the influence these shifts may assert upon the audience's reading of the work as a whole. The flexibility of a model that calls for case-by-case definition of what is text and what is paratext means that it can be applied to analysis of practice regardless of genre, format and type of performance space. The potential areas of future research using this paratextual model include a festival environment where multiple and disparate performance works are presented in the same tempo-spatial context and are likely to be experienced in a consecutive manner by the festival audience. If a highly curated festival environment is seen as a text to be experienced, the juxtaposition of the performance works and the order in which the audience encounter performances will undoubtedly reveal significant paratextual interaction of one with another. The paratextual model would help us examine to what extent organiser

curation may exert a form of authorial intention, as well as how the self-led curational practice of attendees constructs a multileveled, fluid festival 'text'. Taking this application further still, a competitive festival environment, such as Festival OFF d'Avignon or Edinburgh Festival Fringe, typically involves productions that creatively sprawl out their epitextual traces across the city, at times in the form of derivative or promotional performance actions that attempt to appeal to and drawn in more spectatorship. In such circumstances, will the paratextual events taking place at the margin effectively make the connection to its anticipated destination, meaningfully supplementing the 'official' text? The paratextual model, therefore, promises to be an innovative and valuable addition to the critical discourse of contemporary theatre analysis, able to address text-based theatre as well as creative experimentation beyond the verbal, capturing the interactions and slippages between different orders of textual material, and in so doing potentially bridges gaps between performance forms.

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