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## Between Liveness and Presence: Gob Squad's Paradox

By Irene Alcubilla Troughton

### Abstract

In this paper, the author analyses the intersection between audio-visual devices and live performance in *Kitchen (you've never had it so good)* by the collective Gob Squad. This piece is considered through the lens of intermediality, inasmuch as its blurring between media enables new perceptions and considerations of the status of artistic forms. This analysis will aid in exposing how Gob Squad's techniques challenge ontological debates on theatre. After a review of these discussions, this paper shows how Gob Squad's intermedial performances provide a different understanding of theatre that undermines binary divisions on live/recorded, presence/absence, and immediacy/mediation. Finally, the article takes on the way in which *Kitchen (you've never had it so good)* deconstructs these dichotomies by creating numerous layers of technological mediation. Through the usage of video recordings, screens, and headphones some members of the audience are able to participate with the actors and among themselves, constantly shifting between closeness and distance, reality and fiction, theatre and film.

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## INTRODUCTION

The English-German collective Gob Squad – formed by artists Johanna Freiburg, Sean Patten, Sharon Smith, Berit Stumpf, Sarah Thom, Bastian Trost and Simon Will – has been directing and performing together since 1994. As the core members declare, their main interests lie in the intersection between theatre, media, and life. By capturing those crossings of borders among genres through video, and staging their inquiries, Gob Squad immerses themselves in the intermedial field of filmic and theatrical productions.

In this paper I will analyze Gob Squad's performance *Kitchen (you've never had it so good)* in terms of how its intermedial techniques can aid in reformulating assumptions about theatre as a medium. In said piece, first performed in 2007, the collective tries to re-enact several of Andy Warhol's experimental films: *Kiss, Sleep, Screen Tests, Blowjob, and Kitchen*. A screen that is situated in the middle of the stage divides the image in three sections, each of them showing a different scene. However, *Kitchen*, as implied by the title, holds a central role: the majority of the scenes concern the re-enactment of this film. The fact that in Andy Warhol's *Kitchen* several actors gathered in the same space allowed Gob Squad, in their re-enactment of it, to develop further a communication among the actors of the company, and later among the spectators, that other films (usually enacted by one or two people) could not provide. Furthermore, the unprofessional, relaxed tone of the film where "the

actors just hung around”<sup>1</sup>, permits them to experiment with unconventional forms of theatrical speech – constantly changing between their performed selves<sup>2</sup> and themselves as actors reflecting on their performance.

The premiere of *Kitchen* took place in Prater at Volksbühne, in Berlin, the 30<sup>th</sup> of March of 2007. Since then, the show has been staged in theatres all over Europe, North America, and Australia. The last time it appeared on stage was on May 2018 and it is still listed under the label of ‘current projects’ in Gob Squad’s official website. In order to achieve, as they explicitly tell the audience in the piece, a ‘faithful’ reconstruction of Andy Warhol’s films, the actors of the company use, among other techniques, a meta-reflective way of approaching the past; their own situatedness towards archived artistic material; and the way their desires, beliefs, and their characters interfere with and modify the memories of that artistic product. As the show moves forward, the actors start changing roles in order to accomplish a satisfactory reproduction of the original that never takes place. Finally, and one by one, a selection of the members of the audience appear backstage and substitute the performers, following directions via headphones. These directions are given by the actors of the company who sit on the stalls and coach the newly-formed actors with either specific sentences or general cues about how to perform the scene.

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<sup>1</sup> Information retrieved from the Press Pack of *Kitchen*, available on their website: <http://www.gobsquad.com/projects/gob-squads-kitchen-youve-never-had-it-so-good>

<sup>2</sup> From the beginning, the components of Gob Squad warn the audience about their intentions: they are going to re-enact Andy Warhol films while remaining themselves. Nonetheless, far from being their usual selves, and in the spirit of encapsulating “the hedonistic experimental energy of the swinging sixties” (<http://www.gobsquad.com/projects/gob-squads-kitchen-youve-never-had-it-so-good>), the actors perform a version of themselves in that atmosphere. In this manner, for example, Sarah, one of the members of the company, tells the spectators that during the piece she will be playing the character ‘Sarah’ in Warhol’s films.

Hence, even if the material they act upon remains the same, their way of approaching that re-enactment, by means of an interchange of roles in each performance and through the staging of the play for more than ten years, inevitably alters the performance itself. This fact, which is also enhanced by the participation of the audience, is not gratuitous; on the contrary, it reflects a basic principle of the company that has implications for their understanding of art. My main hypothesis is that *Kitchen (you've never had it so good)* proves to be an exemplary case of how an intermedial piece of art can allow for a reflection on the boundaries of various media. Gob Squad's layering of media and interaction with the audience creates a space where spectatorship is challenged, perception is shaken, and the basic assumptions that underlie theatre and film are called into question.

In the first sections, I will draw attention to the ways in which filmic and theatrical strategies and devices collide in the collective's work, thus creating a critical point of departure for questioning the 'essence' of each medium. Two key concepts will be vital on this stage for understanding how the performance is constructed: 'liveness' and 'presence.' After a brief account of how contemporary discourses on theatre have shifted their focus from an 'auratic presence' to 'liveness' as the core of its ontology, I shall highlight the various ways in which the performance addresses its audience. Finally, this intermedial approach to perception will lead us to a further comprehension of Gob Squad's playful interaction with different media, along with some hints about how this can be understood as a broader critique on the state of the art.

## **INTERMEDIAL COLLISIONS: FILM AND THEATRE**

Aware of the heated debates on the concept of intermediality, both on its multiple acceptations and its validity, I would like to clarify that in

this paper the term will be used, following Chiel Kattenbelt's viewpoint, as the "co-relation of media in the sense of mutual influences between media" ("Intermediality in Theatre and Performance" 21). As the theatre and media scholar points out, contrary to methods such as multimediality (many media in one same object) or transmediality (transfers from one medium to another), the co-relations created in an intermedial mode of art "result in a redefinition of the media that are influencing each other, which in turn leads to a refreshed perception" (Kattenbelt, "Intermediality in Theatre and Performance" 25). Intermediality then, works in the realm of "in-between space – 'an inter' – from which or within which the mutual affects take place" (Kattenbelt, "Intermediality in Theatre and Performance" 26), creating an emerging area where media boundaries clash and reformulate each other. However, as Kattenbelt argues, for this new perception to arise, previously existing media conventions need to be present.

In this sense, it might be useful to address a concluding remark of Jens Schröter in his article "Discourses and Models of Intermediality." In this text, Schröter analyzes how different models of intermediality work as discourses where media definitions are produced. After having dissected how different discourses create disparate understandings of media and, consequently, of the intermedial practice at hand, the author arrives at an interesting conclusion. As he proposes, we should consider that it "is not individual media that are primal and then move towards each other intermedially, but that it is intermediality that is primal and that the clearly separated 'monomedia' is the result of purposeful and institutionally caused blockades, incisions, and mechanisms of exclusion" (Schröter 7). In connection to the previous point, what can be inferred from this is that for intermediality to work as an artistic and perceptive strategy then, it needs

to paradoxically stage the conventions of each medium in order to be able to trespass their boundaries, to make them clash.

As a summary, it could be said that two features of intermediality are at play here. Firstly, in order to trespass them, the artistic form has to explicitly display the borders of several media types. Secondly, intermediality depends on the viewer's perception. Regarding these two points, it might be fruitful to make use of Kattenbelt's consideration of the performative aspect of intermediality. As John Langshaw Austin pointed out in *How to Do Things with Words*, performative utterances had the peculiarity of not only describing the reality they represented but also of creating the conditions of their existence, such as sentences like "I declare you man and wife" show. Later reworked by Judith Butler, the concept of performativity took on a new scale where it was understood to be an essential staging act in which one's gender and identity was constituted and constantly reinforced. In this sense, Kattenbelt proposes to understand intermediality as performative inasmuch as it revolves around "the staging (in the sense of conscious self-presentation to another) of media" ("Intermediality in Performance" 29). By a conscious staging and emphasis on media boundaries for the sake of blurring or crossing them, intermediality performatively creates the conditions of its own existence as an artistic and perceptual mode.

During the time *Kitchen (you've never had it so good)*<sup>3</sup> is being performed, several intermedial techniques are used to enhance the staging of media. First and foremost, when the audience is introduced to the show, they are invited to enter 'Gob Squad's Factory' (a tribute to Andy Warhol's film studio, 'The Factory') where a tour of the stage is given. This simple mechanism introduces the public to the production of

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<sup>3</sup> The references to the performance will be based on the collective's official video documentation of a performance that took place in Nottingham Playhouse in 2007 (the same year as the premiere), which can be found in the Giessen Mediathek.

the theatre-film, allowing them to witness how the multiple layers of media are organized and distributed. Three spaces are created behind a screen that blocks both actors and audience from seeing each other directly and, at the same time, broadcasts what is being recorded behind.

The fact that the show declares itself as a re-enactment of Andy Warhol's films already makes a case for their play to be understood as an interpretation, a bodily re-signification of those films. Re-enactments arose as an artistic movement that aimed at preserving performance art in a different way than other types of documentations or tributes to an original. As Amelia Jones argues in an article reflecting on Marina Abramovic's re-enactments, this particular artistic form was popularized in performance art as part of a bigger fascination with retrieving the live event. However, re-enactments proved different than other forms, such as reproductions or adaptations (both more common practices in film), as "re-enactment both testifies to our desire to know the past in order to secure ourselves in the present and the paradox of that knowledge always taking place through repetition" (Jones 19). The specific "will to archive" (Lepecki 31) of performative art stands out as it makes visible the necessary condition of appropriation, interpretation and re-shaping of any process of documentation and referencing<sup>4</sup>.

Re-enactments in Gob Squad's *Kitchen* are staged in the course of their creation through different theatrical, filmic, and technological means. Firstly, the performers are presented to the audience at the beginning of each sequence as themselves playing a performed self. Secondly, directions are given on stage throughout the whole piece. In the third place, countdowns appear on the screen as projections are turned on and off. Fourthly, the performers tend to address the audience beyond the

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<sup>4</sup> André Lepecki decides to substitute the widely used expressions of "archival impulse" or "archival fever" for "will to archive" in order to centre the attention on the proactive process of interpretation, rather than highlighting the nostalgic drive to recover an irreplaceable past.

screen by breaking the fourth wall. Finally, the members of the audience who take on the actors' roles at the end of the performance are visibly directed through instructions given to them via headphones.

Simon<sup>5</sup>, one of the performers in *Kitchen*, opens the show with the following statement, "This film that we are in it's the essence of its time." I would like to suggest an interpretation of this syntactical construction ("this film that we are in") considering the above. By making evident the theatricality of the original film, their process of interpreting, and the constructedness of the whole show, *Gob Squad* allows the public to experience the film as something that we inhabit, that we perform. The movie is no longer something to be watched, but something to be in. This quality of staging media in a self-reflexive way, described above as a main feature of intermediality, challenges the perception of the audience who needs to re-negotiate the assumptions of each media and cooperate in creating a meaning of it.

## FROM AURA TO PRESENCE; FROM PRESENCE TO LIVENESS

*In such theatre the spectator is involved in drama of experience rather than looking at drama in which psychologically motivated relationships are represented by figures on stage. This a drama of perception, a drama of one's senses*

*Goebbels, 5*

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<sup>5</sup> The collective usually interchange their roles, thus permitting every performance to be interpreted by different actors and to be re-appropriated in diverse ways. However, they always follow the same formula of presenting themselves as playing their performed selves. Hence, it does not matter if the lines of one of the characters in *Sleep* are played by Sean or by Simon because they will always show themselves to the audience as Sean or Simon playing 'Sean' and 'Simon' in *Sleep*.

The presence of media on stage has made discussions bloom about whether these art practices should be considered as theatrical or as something else. The collective itself seems to vary in their classification of their pieces: sometimes they are addressed as ‘interactive live films’; in other occasions, they are conceptualized as ‘shows’ or ‘performances.’ Even Sharon, during *Kitchen*, doubts her own terminology: “I have made my hair specially for the show... film, especially for... I don’t know.” It is indeed tempting to approach the discussion of intermedial forms of art while striving as theorists for clear-cut classifications. This modernist impulse of extracting the essence or nature of each art medium still upholds in this era of blurred interconnectedness.

In this paper, instead of following this path, it is more productive to understand the ways in which perception is shaken, spectatorship challenged, and interferences created in this space in between. Nevertheless, to properly analyze how these experiences are being articulated, it is necessary to comprehend what assumptions underlie our encounters with media, along with how the collective makes use of those strategies to turn them against themselves. For that, I will summarize discussions around contemporary theatre practices that will aid us to explore, later on, the relations between claims for liveness and presence in *Kitchen (you’ve never had it so good)*.

Roger Copeland shows in his article “The presence of mediation” how discourses on presence from the ‘60s were focused on the search for a reciprocity between actors and spectators. In this sense, both a supposedly unmediated approach like that of the Living Theatre, and a supersaturated scene such as that of pieces like Richard Foreman’s *What Did He See*, can be directed to enhance the feeling of being ‘here’ and ‘now.’ Discourses on the auratic qualities of performance art place them

mostly on the actor's corporeality on stage. Nonetheless, a closer look at Walter Benjamin's opinion on the matter could give us a different insight on where to situate the auratic condition of theatre.

The aura of a work of art can be generally understood in Benjamin's work as the authenticity and uniqueness of a piece of art that is perceived as being distant, no matter how close it is. This quality is a product of a cultic relation that, coming from ritualistic and magical approaches to religious art, was later secularized through the importance of Beauty. In order to perceive this remoteness in proximity, it is not only necessary to comply with the requirement of originality or authenticity but also with that of presence. The possibility of being affected during that shared space and time was what, in Benjamin's opinion, constituted the difference between theatre and cinema, where the actor is only confronted with the camera.

When distinguishing between the stage and the cinema actor, Benjamin draws attention to the fact that the cinema actor is not able to hold on to its aura because his or her performance is developed in front of a camera, instead of an audience. The essential condition for the aura to appear, then, in both stage actor and cultic pieces of art, seems to reside in the presence of the audience or, rather, in the co-presence of both performer and public. By using the idea of Benjamin's aura, the essence of theatre was characterized as opposed to that of film and television. Following this argument, theatre, unlike non-live technologies, could retain the cultic value of the modernist work of art, where its presence (or co-presence among actors and audiences), no matter how close the actors could be to the audience, always retained a distance. The auratic qualities of unmediated, bodily co-presence in theatre seem, for some authors, to be of utmost importance in characterizing this mode of art. However, it is rather complex to unravel what concept of presence scholars and theatre

makers are using due to the historicity of the term.

Power Cormac in *Presence in Play* traces the use of the concept in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century's discourses on theatre, distinguishing three meanings: the fictional mode or making-present (the ability to make present fictions to the audience), the auratic mode or having-presence (possessing a presence that transcends the representational) and the literal mode, or being-present (sharing the same space and time). It is necessary to mention that the three of them can and they usually do coexist. Furthermore, the second and third use of presence tend to be inextricably linked when addressing questions of the uniqueness of theatre. As a summary, one could say that the auratic qualities of this art, in most contemporary discourses, derive from a capacity of being-present, which, later on, will give space to the idea that 'liveness' is at the core of theatre's essence.

Even if the mediated scene, as explained before in relation to Copeland's argumentation of the '80s theatre, can also contribute to this quest of presence, contemporary theatre discourse tends to focus on the live, unmediated face-to-face encounter between the actor and the audience. Grotowski and his theory of 'poor theatre' could be a perfect example of this impulse, where theatre, in a still modernist drive, tries to find its essence in the exposure of the corporeal presence of an actor in front of someone that sees and is seen at the same time. It is possible to see then how Grotowski's understanding of the auratic quality of theatre was found in the living presence of a human being on stage. Helbert Blau exemplifies this point when, while talking about presence as that which can look back at you, equates 'liveness' with 'alive.' For the author, the possibility of perceiving something as live comes from it being able to die: "liveness itself is exalted by its most disheartening truth: it stinks of mortality" (Blau 256).

As Auslander argues, when the development of technological recording called into question and created the concept of 'liveness', the terms of 'alive' and 'liveness' were equated in certain discourses on performative arts. Theatre, then, tried to distinguish itself from arts susceptible to reproducibility in the idea that its "'liveness' is - in and of itself - a virtue, a source of automatic, unearned moral superiority to film and television" (Copeland 42), making use of a literal mode of presence. This literal mode of presence was enhanced by canonical theatre theorist Erika Fischter-Lichte. Fischter-Lichte was the first theatre scholar who defined, as a main requirement of theatre and performance, the concept of co-presence. As she asserts in *The Transformative Power of Performance*: "The bodily co-presence of actors and spectators enables and constitutes performance. For a performance to occur, actors and spectators must assemble to interact in a specific place for a certain period of time" (32).

After having addressed the topic of presence, we need to ask ourselves certain questions: is co-presence in theatre only related to the literal mode of presence? When we take spatial coexistence out of the equation in a theatrical performance, does co-presence necessarily disappear? If not, then we would need to explore ways in which a spatially separated atmosphere can contribute to a claim for presence beyond a claim for liveness. Pedro Manuel uses this basis to analyze theatre practices in which this feedback loop of actors and audiences sharing the same space and time is cut off. In these situations, when the audience-actor pack is called into question, a modification of the concept of co-presence in theatre occurs. As he exposes, the question now is how to understand the 'real' and 'immediate' presence of the body on stage in the time of image manipulation, of digital encounters and of reproducibility. Pedro Manuel, in his research, explores the cases in which

this physical co-presence is extended in three ways: either the audience members create the dramaturgical action without actors, the audiences are spatially or temporally apart, or the performance is presented to a non-human public.

As Auslander convincingly argues, and as previous paragraphs in this paper have discussed, the concept of 'presence' has had an historical trajectory which modified and expanded its meanings in various fields. Conversely, 'liveness' is a more restricted concept that arose in the light of technological developments. 'Liveness,' taking place in a temporal sphere, could be understood in the sense of a claim that does not necessarily engage with the audience. Auratic presence (from where co-presence derives) was, on the other hand, characterized as a presence that encompassed a sense of its historicity<sup>6</sup>, which created a sort of absence within the piece. It is understandable, then, how by shifting the specificity of theatre from 'auratic presence' to 'liveness,' discourses on contemporary performing arts changed from 'distant no matter how close' to 'close no matter how far.'

Following Auslander's idea that the condition of 'liveness' would ultimately fall to the capabilities of the medium and the acceptance of the public, I would like to analyze the piece in terms of 'claims' for liveness and presence. In *Kitchen (you've never had it so good)*, Gob Squad's intermedial approach to art creates a space where claims for liveness and presence intersect, contrast, and co-relate. Through layers of mediation, the collective is able to play with presence and absence, with reality and fiction, in a way that enriches and stretches the boundaries of both filmic and theatrical media.

A claim for liveness is mainly achieved during the show by the

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<sup>6</sup> Walter Benjamin described this quality as a "unique existence of the work of art [that] determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence" (3)

creation of a feeling of immediacy. As Bolter et al. stress, to produce such an experience, a mediating act requires to be as close to a lived experience as possible, thus rendering itself, so-to-speak, invisible. By covering the whole stage with a screen that blocks the audience's sight, and by broadcasting on it a live-streaming video, Gob Squad distracts the attention from the screen itself to the actions which are happening in the 'now.' The perception of temporal concurrence is enhanced both by showing the process of creating the piece and by addressing the audience. *Kitchen*, in its disposition to expose the making-of of an unfinished product that it is being created now, contributes to a feeling of closeness and immediacy that overlooks the physical distance provoked by the layered media.

Regarding claims of presence, we must look to a particular type of co-presence where the audience is spatially separated by technological means. The creation of technological frontiers between audience and actors in their pieces has become a trademark of the collective. Nevertheless, the manner in which they employ these familiar devices allow for a sense of intimacy to happen. The screen that divides the space, even if it is the main separation used by the collective, proves itself to be a porous border, as both actors and audiences can trespass it. This has a double effect: on the one hand, contrary to the claims of liveness, it reinforces the layers of the medium itself, making them obvious to the audience. On the other hand, it reveals that, even if negated by sight, the coexistence of space and time is indeed happening during the show. Furthermore, the screen, as a border, functions both as an obstacle (to sight) and as a protection. When some members of the audience take on the performers' roles on stage, the screen permits a sense of private contact and intimacy for that portion of the audience, as they do not need to confront the whole of the public but a few actors and a camera.

The screen is, during the totality of the show, divided in three sections, each portraying one of Andy Warhol's films. During the first part of the performance, when the actors are still on stage and no one from the audience has started participating, the performers tend to focus on their own scene without interacting visibly with the rest. However, once the audience-actors begin re-enacting their roles, prompted by headphones, a specific claim for presence takes place. Even if they are told to concentrate on their selected scene, when something remarkable happens in the contiguous rooms it is perceivable by how they look, involuntarily, sideways. This simple act positions the rest of the audience in a different atmosphere, as now it is perceivable that there is a spatial connection backstage. Even if this spatial connection was hinted at from the beginning during the tour through 'Gob Squad's Factory,' the large-scale screens that occupy the whole stage and that show specific scenes, focus the attention of the audience in that particular frame. Therefore, it is through the interferences in that focus that a constant shifting between reconstruction and deconstruction of physical and mental borders takes place.

The utilization of headphones also contributes to this spatio-temporal connection between audience and stage by making obvious the process of delivering and transmitting information; a sense of 'here' and 'now' comes into being. The generation of this mediated intimacy (or alienated intimacy<sup>7</sup>, as the collective name it themselves) is what ultimately permits the expansion of the notion of co-presence. Paradoxically when reinforcing the borders and addressing the layers established by the media, the audience can engage with a feeling of intimacy that is cross-spatial and cross-temporal.

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<sup>7</sup> Information retrieved from the Press Pack of *Kitchen*, available in their website: <http://www.gobsquad.com/projects/gob-squads-kitchen-youve-never-had-it-so-good>

By this reinforcement of borders, I am referring to the collective's impulse in addressing the materiality of the media used rather than opting for an illusionist theatrical or filmic experience where the mechanisms used to expose a story are ignored through a fictional pact in favor of the story in itself. This technique, as their own labelling of it suggests, is indebted to Brecht's *verfremdungseffekt*. In Brecht's theatre a series of distancing modes of performing took place in relation to the characters and the actions of the story portrayed. This way, the audience could intellectually access the process of composition and staging of the play, and consequently reflect on its implications. However, in Gob Squad's plays, those alienating effects, instead of working as an obstacle to empathy, constitute the medium through which they create an emotional connection, an intimacy among audience and actors. Furthermore, this reinforcement of material borders in an alienating effect that unites in intimacy paradoxically weakens the borders between traditional artistic media. Therefore, collisions of 'liveness' and 'presence,' claims of closeness and distance, of estrangement and illusion, constantly play out during *Kitchen*.

### **CONCLUSION: THE TRANSFORMATIVE SPACE IN-BETWEEN**

In this article, I have pointed out the ways in which Gob Squad's *Kitchen* uses media on stage by an intermedial approach and how that can shake preconceived notions of theatrical and filmic media. Through the use of what I have called 'claims of liveness and presence', the collective engages in a paradoxical enterprise of both constantly reinforcing and erasing physical and perceptual borders. Such an attitude helps in creating a space in between where the audience needs to renegotiate both their assumptions of what they are experiencing and their reaction towards it.

This particular interrelated use of various layers of media supports in *Kitchen* a type of communication between the participants that unfolds during the whole piece. Due to the fact that face-to-face encounters are usually blocked in Gob Squad's shows, the connections between audience and stage (essential for the collective's works) are established through media. The main devices employed in the piece are the headphones that transmit instructions, the cameras that film backstage, and the screen itself

The initial spatial separation between audience and stage is overcome using technologies that ask for the public's participation. The connections, nonetheless, rather than being communal, tend to follow a one-to-one or one-to-two scenario where the members of the audience need to react individually and self-reflectively. This rejection of standard theatrical communication can be observed as well in the collective's approach to performing: no definite roles are given, rather in every show they re-distribute the characters that are then appropriated by each actor. Such a way of conceiving a play, along with the audience participation which adds a factor of improvisation and unexpectedness, opens a space for individual and often contradictory viewpoints, feelings, interpretations.

Finally, Gob Squad's attempts at re-creating the atmosphere of the '60s and Andy Warhol's film reveal something else. As the new Simon and Sean (performed by members of the audience with headphones) assert, times are changing, things have moved on. It is not possible anymore to come back to the naiveties of the first experimental films, to the excitement of an era in which everything seemed to commence, to the idea of the original, the complete, the real. Constant change, permanent mediation is the norm, the only way we, as audience, are able to access and co-create the play. But once this has been accepted, something wonderful happens: the re-encounter through the media becomes

possible, as the last scene shows, when the stage is finally just occupied by non-professionals and the headphones stop delivering information. They are free to move, talk and react without further indications. As we can witness, while they remove their headsets, they start sharing their experiences of the play: how they reacted and why, what were they thinking at specific points or what they felt towards each other's performances. The stage has become a place of reunion, of communication in the here and now. Although, the audience can only perceive that scene through the screen, maybe that is where Gob Squad's strength lies.

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