



DIGITAL SCENOGRAPHY / PERFORMING SPACE

Rapport d'activité (Novembre 2015 – Avril 2016)

The DS/PS project consisted of a six month practice-based inquiry into the nature of the use of digital technology on stage. In particular, the inquiry was conducted through the creation of an experimental stage production based on the source text *Pylade* by Pier Paolo Pasolini. This text was adapted by the theatre company MOTUS and the Masters in Direction students at La Manufacture. Three actors (graduates of La Manufacture) were hired. Three original pieces of open-source software were created for this project, and the process and production were thoroughly documented.

The original proposal for this project proposed that the source text would be Pasolini's *Notes for an African Orestia*. However, early on it was decided (through discussion with Andrew Sempere and MOTUS) that this text required more time and attention than was possible in six months. We proceeded with *Pylade* instead. This was the only major change from the original proposal - the timeline and the outcome fairly closely followed the original.

The area of inquiry which we established early on was "boundary crossing." Using technology to cross the lines of memory/reality, time, space and reality/illusion. The stage was created as a series of "rooms" demarcated by a kind of permeable projection screen (a material called "tripolina"). This was done to set the tone for the inquiry, allowing the actors to physically move through walls. The technical proposition from MOTUS was to invert the technology that we had used for an earlier project (*Leviathan*). Rather than focus on mobile video, we would focus on the use of mobile projectors, exploring the way in which projection could be treated as a theatre light to create mood and layers of reality for the audience. The idea of shifting space (location) and point of view was explored through the use of a network of video cameras and filtering software, allowing the stage production to perform with live video effects.

The *Pylades* text divided naturally into 10 sections, which were then given to Andrew (1), MOTUS (1) and the directing students (8). Each person or group took charge of the text and presentation for that section, working with MOTUS and the actors to develop a staging. Rehearsal process began with the tripolina and the text, and technology (lighting, sound, cameras, projection and software) were added gradually as the staging demanded.

In the end, a final experimental production was presented twice to a small public (the Staff and students of Manufacture). This production was a version of *Pylades* directed by ten different people and incorporating live acting, sound, video and lighting technology in order to tell ten different stories in an attempt to convey Paosolini's singular vision.

Three original pieces of software were created specifically for this project: *OSCLight*, *VoxCtrl* and *SyMix2*. In addition the production made use of the custom camera software *Watcher*, and commercially available *Millumin*. *OSCLight* and *VoxCtrl* were the most thoroughly developed and are immediately useful for light control in many scenographic situations. This project also saw the development of "DSCore" an objective-c based library for the creation of similar theatre control software. All of these projects and the DSCore have been released as open source using the MIT License. They can be downloaded here: <https://github.com/manufacture>

In addition, the project was thoroughly documented - this documentation is published online as a word press blog and as a series of galleries hosted on the image and video distribution sites Flickr and Vimeo. This documentation can be seen here:

<http://dsps.digitalscenography.org/>

<https://vimeo.com/album/3982315>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/digitalscenography/sets/72157665616417616>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/digitalscenography/sets/72157662893182014>

A full length academic paper outlining the theoretical research inquiry is being written and is forthcoming.