



L'opéra dans le cyberspace : Médias, technologie et histoire /

Opera in the Web Age: Media, Technology and History

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***The Holographic Diva and the Life-or-
Death Stakes of Remediation***



In discussing the impact of technologies of reproduction and remediation on opera, many scholars have entertained the hypothesis that film, video, and new media have provided the genre with an opportunity for renewal, survival, or even resurrection. Not only do audiovisual media expedite, expand, and disseminate live performances of opera (in ways ranging from the use of video in stage productions to cinecasts), they also allow for the multiplication and perpetuation of their posthumous existence as technological artifacts. In this paper, I investigate 'Callas in Concert', a multimedia project in which the two above-mentioned aspects intertwine: on the one hand, the spectacle is presented as a *live* event (and an orchestra indeed performs on stage); on the other hand, the audience is invited to see and listen to digitally manipulated reproductions of a *dead* singer's voice and figure, which incidentally take on the form of a (dis)embodied hologram of Maria Callas. Here, my interest lies in two interrelated issues. The first concerns the tension between the dead/alive and the body/voice binaries, and involves the question as to whether the visual or the aural dimension takes the lead in the attempt to playfully resurrect a deceased singer. The second revolves around the paradox that comes with the use of technologies of digital reproduction and remediation to emphasize the peerless uniqueness of Maria Callas's artistry. In bringing together these two

issues, my ultimate goal is to shed light on the artistic nuances and ideological implications that characterize today's fascination with liveness.

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