

# The Involved Audience

## Abstract

The 2011-2012 season has the lowest ticket sale since the counting started. Why has the Danish theatre experienced such a dramatic fall in their ticket sale during the last five years? This thesis suggests not only to understand this problem as a cultural and political problem. Instead it is aimed to discuss the problems concerning the division between the traditional theatrical forms of perception and the ones available in our modern mediatized society. The thesis discussed the conditions and possibilities for the theatre in the mediatized society and provided solutions to make use of these changing conditions of perception. To increase the artistic relevance and the total number of the audience in the future this thesis suggested the theatre to incorporate the use of media to reflect the perceptual conditions of today's mediatized society.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, I focused on the media theory presented mainly by Lev Manovich and introduced his definition of 'Augmented Space'. To develop this term, I, among others, presented Roland Barthes theory on photography. In addition, I presented Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology and concentrated on the terms: 'Perception', 'Gesture' and 'Habit'. The second chapter contained analyses of the four performances, *Viljens Triumf* by Fix and Foxy, *100 Prozent Zürich* by Rimini Protokol, *Hotel* by Lora Arias and *Library and The Quite Volume* by Tim Etchells and Ant Hampton. All of them used media and involved the audience in the theatrical space. The first three analyses mainly concentrated on the concept 'Augmented Space', and Barthes' concept of 'the Photographic Referent'. The last analysis looked at the phenomenology in a further perspective. In the end I made a comparative analysis of the four performances in regard of Merleau-Ponty's concept of 'Gesture', and closely examined the differences between the performances in relation to how they use 'Augmented Space'. To conclude, the thesis discussed how we can understand these performances related to today's mediatized society. As these performances reflected this kind of perception that we experience in our use of digital, mobile media, I proposed to see them as examples of how to develop the audience's perception in theatre in order to re-actualize the role of theatre in the modern mediatized society.