

The Etheatre Project: Directing Cyber-Brechtian Theatre

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Abstract: Written from a practice-based perspective, this paper looks at post-Brechtian aesthetics of critical political interaction in online theatre practices. In the Etheatre Project, I applied Brecht's dialectic and interactive approach to directing, using V-effect techniques to break the fourth wall and allow critical participation of the audience in the cyberperformances. In particular, I look at forms of cyber-adaptation, cyber-ethnotheatre and cyber-collaboration as directing methodologies for producing dialectic forms of political cyberperformances, with reference to the productions of *Cyberian Chalk Circle* (2011), *Merry Crisis and a Happy New Fear* (2012) and *Etheatre Project and Collaborators* (2014), respectively. In a political cyberperformance, the role of the director is to promote real-time discussion between the audience and the performers via a chat box and assist the active participation of spectators in the performance. I argue that the use of the chat box not only allows documentation of audience response towards the performance but also gives space for the strong dialectic thinking of the spectators to be heard and for correlations with reality to be accomplished.

Bio: Christina Papagiannouli recently passed her practice-based PhD viva voce examination with thesis title: *The Etheatre Project: Directing Political Cyberformance*. During 2013-2014 she worked as an Hourly Paid Lecturer and Research Assistant at University of East London (UEL). She holds an MA in Theatre Directing from UEL, a BA (hons.) in Drama from Aristotle University and a Diploma in Drama from Kent University. Her paper *Cyberformance and the Cyberstage* was published in the International Journal of the Arts in Society during 2011 (Vol 6. Issue 4, pp. 273-282). www.etheatre.info