

## Paper Proposal for PSi #14 / Copenhagen, 2008

### “The ‘in-betweens’ of intermedia: bodies, modalities, disciplines”

**Bruce Barton**  
**Graduate Centre for Study of Drama**  
**University of Toronto**  
**214 College Street, 3rd floor**  
**Toronto, ON / Canada M5T 2Z9**  
[bruce.barton@utoronto.ca](mailto:bruce.barton@utoronto.ca)  
**Phone & Fax: 905-828-5371**

Chapple and Kattenbelt describe intermediality as “a powerful and potentially radical force, which operates *in-between* performer and audience; in-between theatre, performance and other media; and in-between realities... [my italics]”.<sup>1</sup> While I concur with this general assessment, I would further add that perhaps the most productive (in terms of research and creative potential) pre-existing categories that constitute the multidimensional “brackets” framing intermedial activity are, in fact, *disciplinary*. As Peter Frank contends, the experience of intermedial performance is, in fact, dependent upon pre-existing disciplinary categories<sup>2</sup> in order for it to maintain the performative force and effect of its ‘Other(-than)’ positioning.

At PSi #13, I collaborated with two members of the site-specific troupe Bluemouth Inc. in a performance/presentation that sought to both examine and enact the particular, paradoxical experience of *intimacy* in a mode of performance permeated by surveillance and simulation. In this year’s paper, I extend that investigation into the current Bluemouth Inc. work-in-progress, a re/enactment of the traditional dance marathon form, performed at the rowdy intersection of acting, dancing, writing, film, video, visual art, and electronic music. This subject matter overtly positions the company “in-between” two additional, interrelated and irresolvable categorizations that provide a larger frame in which to consider these interdisciplinary exchanges: *theatricality* and *performativity*.<sup>3</sup> Further, as the company’s dramaturge (and, perhaps, the smallest of the Russian dolls at play here), I find myself both literally and figuratively “in-between” their aggressive generative collisions as they seek to create a vivid site of engagement with an audience—one that is both volatile *and* intimate. With a particular focus on the interdisciplinary body in performance, my paper is, thus, a practically-informed dramaturgical “report from the trenches”—*and* a theoretically-framed contribution to the ongoing definition and interrogation of intermediality as a “discipline in between disciplines.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Presentation Requirements: Data Projector (for use with MacPro laptop)**

---

<sup>1</sup> See Chapple, Freda, and Cheil Kattenbelt. *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006. 12.

<sup>2</sup> See Frank, Peter. “The Arts in Fusion: Intermedia Yesterday and Today.” *Intermedia: Enacting the Liminal*. Eds. Hans Breder and Klaus-Peter Busse. Dormunder Schriften zur Kunst, 2005. 31.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of Bluemouth Inc.’s navigation of theatricality and performativity, see Barton, Bruce. “The Razor’s Edge between Performativity and Theatricality in Bluemouth Inc.’s *American Standard*.” *Canadian Theatre Review* 126 (Spring 2006): 23-26.

<sup>4</sup> See *Interregnum* “Call for Papers.” [http://www.interregnum.dk/index.php?menuid=1\\_1](http://www.interregnum.dk/index.php?menuid=1_1).