Towards an Ecology of Becoming - Engendering Posthuman Assemblages through Digital and Hybrid Performance

This essay analyses and discusses digital and hybrid performance practices created in response to the online shifts driven by the Covid-19 pandemic. It focuses on an emergent theoretical framework which seeks to define the relationship between human and non-human as an ‘ecology of becoming’, using as a case study a 2-year practice research and performance project developed in two iterations – *Flanker Origami*, a home-specific digital performance for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2021 and *Flanker Origami Go To Town*, a hybrid performance pilot at Sook, a multi-purpose, high-tech venue in a newly built shopping centre in Edinburgh, performed in January 2022 for proximal and online spectators. The aim is to offer a critical perspective of the transition from a
digital to a hybrid performance space, which intersects and identifies the liminal and interdisciplinary areas of creativity and processes that allow performers and technologies to enmesh, thus reconfiguring and repositioning performance practices in a posthumanist context. While the technologically saturated environments can be seen as influencing and enriching the agency of the non-human on both performers and spectators, through the support of technological devices in the digital home performance and its migration onto the screen technology at Sook, I argue that both processes and performance outcomes engender a posthuman assemblage which diffracts the performers’ identity and the perception of the spectators. I then evaluate how the combined effect of intermedial performances, social media interactions, original animations, digital cinema, hybrid use of screen technology and online platforms build towards the in-presence reveal of the two digital performers in the pop-up shop. The conclusion draws attention to the thresholds between material and immaterial, and the entanglement between the techne of the performer’s body and that of the technology, in a quest for soft boundaries between the post-pandemic human and non-human interaction.

**Bianca Mastrominico** is a performance maker, performer, writer and scholar. Since 2002 she has been co-artistic director of Organic Theatre ([www.organictheatre.co.uk](http://www.organictheatre.co.uk)), an international and cross-cultural performance laboratory rooted in ongoing training and research for innovative practice and pedagogy. Bianca is Programme Leader for MA Digital Performance and BA(Hons) Performance at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, as well as an associate member of the Centre for Communication, Cultural and Media Studies. She is an active researcher within the Practice Research Cluster: Finding and Understanding Creative Knowledge at QMU and is a member of the TaPRA Performance & New Technologies Working Group. Bianca is active within the Magdalena Project network of women in contemporary theatre and has published for *The Open Page, Total Theatre Magazine, New Theatre Quarterly, International Journal of Performance Arts & Digital Media, Body, Space and Technology* and *Journal of Theatre Anthropology.*