

## **LIVE MOVIES: PERFORMANCE, THEATER AND NEW MEDIA**

The presentation “Live Movies” employs digital images and video clips to depict and discuss new media performance as treated in our recent book, *Live Movies: A Field Guide to New Media for the Performing Arts* (). *Live Movies* documents the New Stage Technology Project, in which we have been engaged for the past five years at the Multimedia Performance Studio (MPS), and the work of our performance company, Cyburbia Productions. We will also discuss the *Live Movies* book as a resource for the field of new media performance.

Cyburbia Productions is a professional multimedia performance company founded in 1999 by Kirby Malone and Gail Scott White in Fairfax, Virginia. Cyburbia’s focus is the collaborative creation of “live movies,” syntheses of cinema, theater and music, geared particularly to today’s multi-sensory young adult audience (of all ages). The company’s work employs digital projection and sound technologies, and filmic narrative techniques (such as flashback, lip-synch and slow motion), to construct moving stage pictures and sonic theater, in which live actors, singers and musicians interact with animated performers, and emerge from or vanish into projected environments, settings and dreamscapes.

This work breaks away from the traditional rectangular screen format, casting multiple, synchronized projections onto scrim, sculptural set elements, stage floors, and performers’ bodies and their costumes. Stage space is three-dimensionally gridded and multi-layered, for the interactive unfolding of montages of live performance and projected imagery. In order to accomplish this symbiosis, the company operates simultaneously as a performance ensemble, a film and animation production house, a digital garage band and a new media stagecraft laboratory, all geared toward producing dynamic multimedia performance spectacles.

Cyburbia creates original productions, often drawing on historical or science fiction sources; innovative stagings of opera and new music theater; multimedia scenography for theater, dance and performance art; and indoor and outdoor projection installations.

Cyburbia’s artists work in the Multimedia Performance Studio at George Mason University, under the auspices of the Department of Art and Visual Technology, where they experiment with new and traditional stage technologies, and develop imaginative approaches to the integration of these technologies with the live action and music of theater.

MPS is committed to creating innovative, thought-provoking productions by collaborative teams of guest artists, resident faculty artists and student artists. This interdisciplinary work is carried out in the belief that it is just such a mix that led to many of the ground-breaking developments in new media, music theater and performance, new opera and dance theater in the 20th Century, in centers of experiment such as the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College.

As a studio and laboratory for new technologies in the performing arts, MPS brings together an evolving ensemble of multimedia artists, writers, designers, animators, directors, actors, musicians, composers, dancers, stage managers, inventors, dramaturgs, historians, cultural critics, mad scientists, and engineers. These artists and scholars engage with new media, turning them in on themselves, to cast light on the way they shape and re-configure our world.