

# Moving Across Page, Stage, Canvas: Theatrical Dance as a Form of Intermedial Translation

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines two works of contemporary dance, Marie Chouinard's *Jérôme Bosch: Le Jardin des Délices* (2016) and Mathieu Geffré's choreography for the ESD company *Froth on the Daydream* (2018), as examples of intermedial translations into dance. In doing so, it proposes a conceptualization of translation through the lens of theatrical dance. In the last decade, the concepts of multimodality and intermediality have prompted a revision of inherited notions of text, language, and translation. This has led translation scholars to stretch their definition of translation so as to include text produced in and through other media, including dance. A number of articles and book chapters from the fields of Dance, Literary, Intermedial and Translation Studies have been published that make the case for the usefulness of the concept of translation for interpreting dance performances. Building on these works, this thesis reverses the question and asks how theatrical dance can help us understand intermedial translation. It does so by mapping the "implicative complex" (Tyulenev, 2010: 241-242) of dance, such as creativity, ephemerality, and the dramaturgy of bodies, onto the realm of translation. The theoretical framework is tested on two very different case studies: Chouinard's choreography is based on Hieronymus Bosch's painting *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, while Geffré's on Boris Vian's novel *L'Écume de Jours*. The methodology combines live attendance at the performances with footage analysis and ethnographic methods such as semi-structured interviews and participant observations. The first case-study focuses on issues of agency in translation, while the second looks at the way in which intermedial translations constitute "performative acts of memory" (Plate and Smelik, 2013: 2), comparing Geffré's choreography with previous intermedial translations of Vian's novel into film, opera, and graphic novel. Translation emerges as a creative and corporeal (and therefore political) practice deeply intertwined with issues of memory and struggles for representation. The analysis of the case-studies, together with the theoretical work that precedes it, contributes towards a redefinition of translation within the field of Translation Studies.

## KEYWORDS

intermedial translation, theatrical dance, embodiment, Compagnie Marie Chouinard, Eliot Smith Dance, the garden of earthly delights; froth on the daydream

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