This is a brief version of the lecture that I gave at the lab of Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts in Malmö in May 2016.

The theme of the lecture was interactivity by means of electronic devices with an audience participating in site-specific works or projects.
By prof. Claes Peter Hellwig

When Sara Erlingsdotter and I started to think about the idea of interactivity by means of electronic devices three years ago, there was a lot of talk about it as a new interesting technique for developing new ways to make the audience interact more. Many companies manufacturing applications were also interested in developing different games or set-ups that could be useful. Artists and industries seemed to team up together and we expected an explosion in the field of hand-held devices (mostly telephones). Everything was in place and a lot of people in the performing arts were talking about it as the new thing that would change the interactivity in so many ways, but also allow the artist to meet a new, mostly young, audience who knew their phones and were used to applications of different kinds. Of course, a lot of work has been done in this area, but I can't say that I have seen the expected development so far.

There are of course a lot of nice and very practical applications in connection with museums, exhibitions and tourist sites with the purpose of guiding the visitor and creating far more interesting and live experiences. Most of them are audio-based and do not interact far more than the older ones, which used recorded material. However, there are several areas where applications and mobile phones are being used that are slowly growing and developing. I will try to give two examples.

There are pedagogical live games with a mixture of real/live actors who lead the game, and pupils who participate and play with computer-generated sequences. The games that I know of are still very expensive to develop and need real actors who can facilitate and make the games interesting. But we can assume that, with the growing interest from schools and teachers who need to teach young people, the area will grow. Especially courses that are more about abstract or ethical problems will become more than just experimental in the future.

One of the most advanced examples in Sweden was developed by Lena Lucki, a director and set designer who has been working with two quite big projects for more than five years. She has been fortunate to develop the area due to fresh money for pedagogical/technical development, which has made it possible to manage the development budget and resources. I will try to describe one of her pedagogical games.

This game is intended for children 9-11 years old. It starts with a story that is initiated by a letter and a package with a request for help from children in a country called Lailonien. The game is built on a theme based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, articles 12-15. It is about the child's rights to take part and participate in response

to things that concern the child's own life. The articles set forth the child's right to speak and think freely, and to be respected.

The story and the game process create a fictitious world where the children in a school solve dilemmas in ethical problem situations. The game results in the children creating a convention on children's rights, which shows the children's perspective with focus on their view on democratic rights. Lena Lucki uses an actual school and analogue props together with virtual spaces in computers and phones.

Her games are the only ones in Sweden when it comes to:
- a complicated production with live actors and online actors who also are game masters
- a dramatic story in game dramaturgy
- children and youth functioning as supporting characters during 2-3 days
- digital material and analogue sets and props
- complex ethical questions.

I think that this kind of experimental didactic work will have a lot of possibilities in the future. The main problem is that it demands live actors to an extent that makes it costly as mostly all live performances are.

The other example from Sweden is built around the director Rebecka Forslund who works in the northern suburbs of Stockholm. Her company RATS (Research, Arts and Technology for Society) has co-worked with the telecom company Ericsson, and other high-profile and engineering companies/game producing companies, as well as Stockholm University. But her audience or participants have mainly been young people with a non-Swedish heritage.

RATS have developed a couple of interesting works that have taken the interactivity between the artist and the audience to a new level. Their work combines all kinds of social media with the artistic experience, and includes the actual event in a more complex and direct situation in which the audience take part. With the play "Antigone in Husby" (the suburb), RATS also made it possible to use the direct response of the audience in the performance, so that the audience became real participants in a real event.

RATS have done several productions that are very similar to what we propose in our Meeting place project. Interactive walks and site-specific projects have been successful and RATS continue to develop both the artistic and technical aspects. They have also made some more theatrical performances that are, except for the technical aspect, more like conventional theatre productions. Their aim to become or be a science theatre may be one reason for this, but I think that we can see a pattern.

The problem with many of these interactive technology-driven experiences could be that the main artistic drive is rather to develop interesting possibilities than an actual artistic experience. It is evident that developing this kind of complex structures takes so much time that the effort to create something artistic on the same level as the digital technique is nearly impossible. It reminds us that the main objective, to interact with the audience in the suburbs of Stockholm, is far more reachable than making great artwork. But I am sure it will come!

Since I gave this lecture in May, the world has gone mad by Pokémon fever. The introduction of Pokémon Go this summer has led to a leap into augmented reality. When this technique becomes more common, I am sure there will be a lot of interesting results.

Dramatic forms

Ritual	Epic	Psycho-realism	Post-dramatic	Post-epic
Ethical and moral conflicts	Historical and political conflicts	Social and psychological conflicts	Refers to itself as autonomous work Simultaneous perspective All the older forms/conflicts can be included	Post-political About the dual conflict to produce meaning
Gods symbols	Individuals as historical examples	Identifiable individuals and/or situations	Individuals as signs and symbols as examples	The performer and the audience
Circular Lacks real forward motion Comes back to where it starts	String of pearls of fragmented continuity	Three parts of a single block Continuous movement forward	Non-continuous Fragmented and simultaneous	Fragmented metafictional
Uniting Keeps the group/society together	Divides the audience into social or class interests	Suggests a situation to the audience to identify with	A game between the audience and the artwork	An investigation of the different possibilities of the situation
Defines the group and society and builds a shared identity	Defines different groups, classes and conflict areas	Defines social and psychological similarities Amplifies the performers' identity as being the shared situation	Defines the experience as a unique event with focus on the process	Defines the duality of both the artwork and the factual situation
The content is known	The content is presented	The content comes out of suggestion	The content is interpreted by the audience	The content is problematised

COMMENTARY

The first row presents the conflict matter or subject area. The first three areas are the classic forms of ritual, epic and psycho-realistic drama. It is evident that these three areas are there to be looked at and discussed in every society. The post-dramatic area uses the possibility to talk about all three preceding areas and in a way that makes the audience's own interpretation important. The post-epic area addresses how we create and communicate meaning.

The second row shows who or what is the acting subject in the performance.

The third row shows the differences in form.

The fourth row shows what effect the performance may have on the audience or the participants as individuals.

The fifth row suggests the meaning of the performance to society.

The sixth row is a discussion of what the relationship between the content of the performance and the audience/participants will be.

As this model is theoretical, a far more complex picture emerges if one looks at actual productions and artworks. But as a way of talking about differences in dramaturgy and audience participation, this model has a meaning.

Claes Peter Hellwig