

## **Abstract for the general public**

Theater, dance, and other performances have always used new technologies. The second half of the 20th and 21st century was a time of stage artists who experimented with new media. Today, projections, video, and sound systems are only a few of many media used by performance creators. Contemporary artists have been changing old performing forms by using new media. Moreover, some contemporary performing artists are primarily involved in the creation of new media. All this means that by watching performances today, we experience the relationship of new media technologies with old forms.

### **The project goal**

Contrary to appearances, this experience is not specific for our time only. Although, this issue is unknown to us. The goal of the project is to recognize it. The reflection on the research problem described leads to the formulation of a series of questions. How has technology changed performing arts in previous centuries? How did 'new media' affect the works of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century? To what extent did technological progress have an impact on the performing arts?

### **Description of research**

The project tests a new perspective on the history of the relationship between performing arts and the media. The 'media archaeology' allows us to search for 'new in old' and find previously unnoticed features in old media. Today, we know a lot about the relationship between the media and the performing arts. We can look differently at the past experiments of creators.

The project will focus primarily on understanding cultural and artistic phenomena. However, it will also investigate the way of working of the old media. Among others - *mechanical theatres*, optical devices, early forms of projection, stage technology from the 19th and 20th centuries. The project is international. In this research participate outstanding specialist, media archaeologist, professor Erkki Huhtamo (UCLA).

### **Reasons for attempting a particular research topic**

The work of performing artists from Poland and Central Europe from the 19th and 1st part of the 20th century interested in technological progress is a poorly understood issue. Many of the examples of works appeared only as concepts or speculations. The creators have not always had the opportunity to implement ideas. They also had limited access to technology. It contributed to forgetting about the achievements of artists. Today in a new cultural context, we can look differently at past activities. Theater, dance, and other performance forms are now aware of how new media influences. Thanks to this, we can look at the old experiments of creators combining an interest in the scene and technology.

### **Substantial results expected**

A renewed perspective at forgotten creativity can allow a revision of media and performance history. The project also gives a chance to compare the experiments of the peripheral creators with better-described activities of other regions and to point out a local specificity and original ideas of artists whose qualities can be appreciated nowadays – in the era of ubiquitous new media.