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Paper Proposal from
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for

The New Space of Authenticity

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Scenography and the Authenticity of Theatrical Experience

My paper will explore the idea of how the design aspects of theatrical performance contribute to the 'authenticity' of its experience. For my purposes 'authenticity' connotes the believability of an artistic experience, which requires immediacy in its impact. While we often believe such descriptions emphasize the verisimilitude of the stage setting and the visceral or emotional content of performance, I consider the feeling of believability to be attributed to the feelings created by the interaction of the visceral and the intellectual, or to the inseparability of the two in how we perceive the phenomena and processes that create consciousness, or *being*.

The aspects of *being* that are of the most interest to me in this regard concern the contribution of spatial characteristics to how we perceive actions and events. Scenography's shaping of space therefore affects the sense of consciousness that performance communicates, and its ability to be convincing, or 'authentic'. Of particular interest to me in formulating such a theatrical description of consciousness and the part spatial perception has in its connotations, is some of the recent work done by neuro-scientists in understanding how we physiologically create our sense of *being*.

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