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The Palimpsestic Pop Music Video: Intermediality and Hypermedia

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Current debates concerning popular music videos frequently center on notions of hybridity exploring how post-cinematic visual aesthetics develop from and enhance a pre-existing music soundtrack. With this chapter I propose the application of intermedia theory for the analysis of popular music videos because it centers on the conceptual, practical, and modal interrelations between and across different media. Lars Elleström (2010) notes that: "intermediality has tended to be discussed without clarification of what a medium actually is."[1] This lack of clarification is what I shall address in this chapter, with the aim of interrogating notions of what a popular music video might be, as well as how it is informed by, or intersects with, other media. I will discuss the remediation of older media within video in an act of "multiplying mediation" known as "hypermediacy," specifically the creation of composite images using visual overlay or parallel diegeses, such that discrete moments in time, alternative narrative spaces, and different technologies are represented and referenced through a process of palimpsest.[2]

Palimpsest depends upon composite images, superimpositions, and the "interaction of different temporal traces" so that the present is seen to be "haunted by a past" that is either made visible, or brought into view through montage.[3] Examining the ontology of the palimpsestic pop music video through examples by The White Stripes, Björk, and The Lotus Eaters, I will attempt to show how a variety of contexts of representation—film, DVD, internet, and installation—produce new meanings through assimilation and extension from one medium to another. These examples affirm the relevance of intermediality for examining new meanings afforded by popular music videos. Central to the chapter is my examination of *medienerkenntnis*, or media recognition that calls the spectator's attention to medial border-crossings and hybridization.[4] Indeed, intermediality depends to a great extent on the recognition of "media borders and medial specificities" within specific instances of "intermedial practices within the arts," for without such recognition the term would lose its potency and relevance.[5]

Intermediality and the pop music video

The pop music video is based upon pre-recorded music, the forms and structures of which inform or determine the video image sequence and have particular material, perceptual, semiotic, or conceptual properties. It is always already a hybrid medium, comprising audio and visual forms and structures that intersect and interrelate in ways that can be described as intermedial. Offering a theoretical approach to the analysis of media, the term intermedia was first coined by Dick Higgins of the Fluxus movement in 1966.[6] A notable feature of twenty-first-century intermediality is "the blurring of generic boundaries" between media and art forms, including film, video, animation, theater, live art, photography, typography, literature, and recorded music.[7] Intermediality refers to artworks that incorporate multiple media techniques, themes, or aesthetics typically found in one medium and displaying in another. I argue here that the pop music video is intermedial because it offers a dialogue between the recorded musical performance and a sequence of video images that are made afterwards. Just as a multi-track recording of popular music offers the listener the semblance of a singular, authentic musical performance, so too does the addition of video images appear to intersect in fundamental ways with the music that may appear literal (e.g., the performance video), but always function metaphorically. This consideration of the intermedia relationship between a song and its video leads me to pose the following questions:

- What are the connections between the recorded sound and the images we see?
- How are these images and sounds rooted in other media that existed before the video?
- What visual and auditory techniques and conventions are used that enable the viewer to comprehend or perceive the video?
- What new meanings do intermedia artworks enable performers, creators, and makers to communicate?

A key aspect of intermediality, then, is the concept that different media have discernible borders with clearly defined characteristics and operations that can be crossed or transgressed. Ágnes Pethő identifies the "crossing of media borders … as one of the most persistent metaphors in the study of intermediality,"[8] making it a category of value and a productive starting point for analysis. Since the 1980s, pop music videos have challenged the borders and formal conventions of film—the principal medium that precedes video—and the techniques used in videos have been assimilated into contemporary film forms.[9] This cross-media fertilization is typical of remediation, an idea that stems from Marshall McLuhan's theories concerning media and the messages they convey. McLuhan was among the first theorists to comment on the cultural shift from written, printed, and other linguistic forms of expression to electronic modes of communication that emerged in mass media practices of the twentieth century. McLuhan observes that "ways of thinking implanted by electronic culture are very different from those fostered by print culture."[10] He creates a dialectic between the perceptual modes of literary, typographic forms, typified by their

"*lineality*, a one-thing-at-a-time awareness," and those of "electronic media," identifiable by the "field of simultaneous relations" they produce.[11] Central to McLuhan's thinking is the idea that each medium is infused with forms and structures of earlier media practices, so that we never perceive the message of the medium alone without an awareness of both the medium and its progenitors: the medium is the message. In their book, *Remediation— Understanding New Media*, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin take this idea further and claim that the "process of remediation" is one in which "media (especially new media) become systematically dependent on each other and on prior media for their cultural significance."[12]

One form of remediation is the imbrication of an older medium with a newer one as a means by which "to express the way in which one medium is seen by our culture as reforming or improving upon another."[13] The Lotus Eaters' video for the song "It Hurts"[14] demonstrates both the simultaneous relations identified by McLuhan and the systematic dependence of contemporary and past media forms advocated by Bolter and Grusin. This video remediates scenes from G.W. Pabst's 1927 film, *Pandora's Box*, starring silent movie icon, Louise Brooks. In planning the video, it was decided that visual moments from the silent film should be identified and a storyboard produced that would enable semantic, graphical, and thematic links to be made with the band performing on a constructed studio set following an expressionistic design. The two discrete media—*Pandora's Box* (1927) and the video footage of the band—could then be brought together in the editing stage to allow the film and video footage to cohere and appear to interrelate. The video for "It Hurts" opens with Louise Brooks's character lifting a veil to reveal her face, cuts to a long shot of the castle, and then to a tracking shot of the band performing. The opening shots situate Brooks and the band within an establishing sequence as though both she and the band are part of the same general location: inside a castle. The camera tracks to a medium close-up of the guitarist, Jem Kelly, who is wearing a blindfold and appears in direct address to the camera (0:21).

Figure 12.1 shows a frame from the storyboard with Kelly blindfolded and depicted roughly in this position within the *mise en scène* of the video. Kelly begins to turn to his left as if looking towards something or someone (0:25), then the shot cuts (0:27) to a close-up of Louise Brooks on the last word of the verse line, "Let me feel, let me come and stare." Brooks's face is positioned to her right, enabling the viewer to construct an eye-line match as though she is looking in the direction towards Kelly, thereby creating an intermedia relation between the film footage and the pop music video. This is one of many techniques in which the film footage is re-formed so that meanings and visual similarities are brought to a state of coherent interplay. Bolter and Grusin refer to the "double-logic of remediation" as one of "immediacy and hypermediacy," a part technological/part cultural move that "wants both to multiply … media and to erase all traces of mediation."[15] In the "It Hurts" video, two discrete media—video and film—are brought together in a state of immediacy in which the mediating forms and structures appear to cohere seamlessly as part of the same storyworld. Despite the six decades that lay between *Pandora's Box* (1927) and "It Hurts" (1985), the video aspires to attain "the logic of immediacy" to the extent that the "medium itself" appears to "disappear" and

Figure 12.1 Storyboard image from The Lotus Eaters' "It Hurts" (1985), with guitarist Jem Kelly wearing a blindfold (0:21).

leave the viewer "in the presence of the thing represented": the band's performance in a specific, if imaginary, location with identifiable characters and actions that relate to the lyrical content of the song.[16]

Intersections of the lyrics and the recontextualized film images enable the otherwise disparate images to cohere, and they do so in a way that provides an example of palimpsest. Kattenbelt observes that intermediality interrogates "the mutual relations between materiality, mediality and aesthetic conventions of making and perceiving."[17] In Figure 12.2 we see Brook's character, Lulu, being offered a gun, while the lyrics at this point (0:43) proclaim: "All I need is the warmth of your gun, it's so cold when I haven't got one." Since we know that *Pandora's Box* is a silent film, the sound is non-diegetic in relation to the film, but for the purposes of the remediated images the sound also functions non-diegetically as it does not emanate from the *mise en scène* depicted, but as though from another location within the castle. This is an example of palimpsest as one medium (the contemporary sound) over-layered upon another, where the semantic link between what is sung ("gun … one") coheres with the visual iconography in the film clip. This is also an example of palimpsestic memory, producing what Max Silverman refers to as a "Lazarean image" in which images "are drawn from a life after death" and the ability to distinguish between an imagined present and historical past (the film) is

Figure 12.2 Louise Brooks in *Pandora's Box* (1927): "All I need is the warmth of your gun" (0:43).

troubled.[18] The principal device allowing palimpsestic memory is the fact that the video footage is rendered in black and white. By pursuing the black and white visual aesthetic of *Pandora's Box*, and by the viewer forging links between the contemporary lyrics and performer action of the *mise en scène*, "It Hurts" was one of the first music videos to exploit the making and perceiving of silent movie conventions for the postmodern era and, in doing so, the present is "haunted by the past" and creates an "overlapping layering of time and space."[19]

Carol Vernallis claims that the pop music video has brought about a "new stylistic configuration," based upon "intensified audio-visual aesthetics,"[20] because it is a medium that has few limitations, no fixed conventions, and is a fertile site for experimentation. Castanheira contends that the emergent aesthetics of the pop music video are "characterised by camera work and editing strategies" that affect the viewer's perceptions in new ways as they develop "an intensely sensorial lexicon made possible by the sophistication of new technologies."[21] The use of black and white and palimpsest in "It Hurts" enables a form of narrative cohesion to be created to bridge a six-decade cultural gap of different media: film and video. But many pop music videos eschew narrative structure, preferring instead to "foreground unpredictable teleology and ambiguous endings."[22] Even when there is a discernible narrative structure in the video it is often accompanied by a self-referentiality that calls the viewer's attention to the processes of mediatization being employed as well as to medial borders being transgressed or, as Elleström puts it, "trespassed."[23] The pop music video frequently calls attention to "relations between media, to medial interactions and interferences,"[24] and this is evident in much of the work produced by French pop music video and film director, Michel Gondry.

Michel Gondry and The White Stripes: "The Hardest Button to Button" (2003)

Trained as a drummer, Michel Gondry preceded his career in film by making pop music videos for crossover artistes such as Björk and Beck, as well as more conventional rock acts such as Rolling Stones and Foo Fighters, and mainstream pop acts such as Kylie Minogue. One technique that pop music video directors employ is to "turn to a song's structure to generate the image."[25] Michel Gondry takes this to an extraordinary level with his direction of American rock duo The White Stripes' video for "The Hardest Button to Button" (Figure 12.3).[26] Gondry's intention is to "create a visual echo" of the music "in camera by using a manipulation" of the band's "instruments,"[27] and by linking images to the song's rhythmical structure. The White Stripes comprises singer-songwriter guitarist Tom White and drummer Meg White. Gondry's intention in this video is to create a canonical effect in which multiple drum kits, guitar amplifiers, and microphones repeat within the *mise en scène* to the beat. In his reflections on this video, Gondry explains:

> Each time Meg hits one part of her drum kit, this part remains on the spot it was hit and Meg, in a cut, moves next to it. She hits the same part again and AGAIN remains at the same spot as she moves to the next spot and so on … So, she leaves behind a trail of drum kits wherever she plays.[28]

The viewer is presented with a sequence of composite images in which the rectilinear frame of the video is populated by repeated images of the drum kit, and later amplifiers
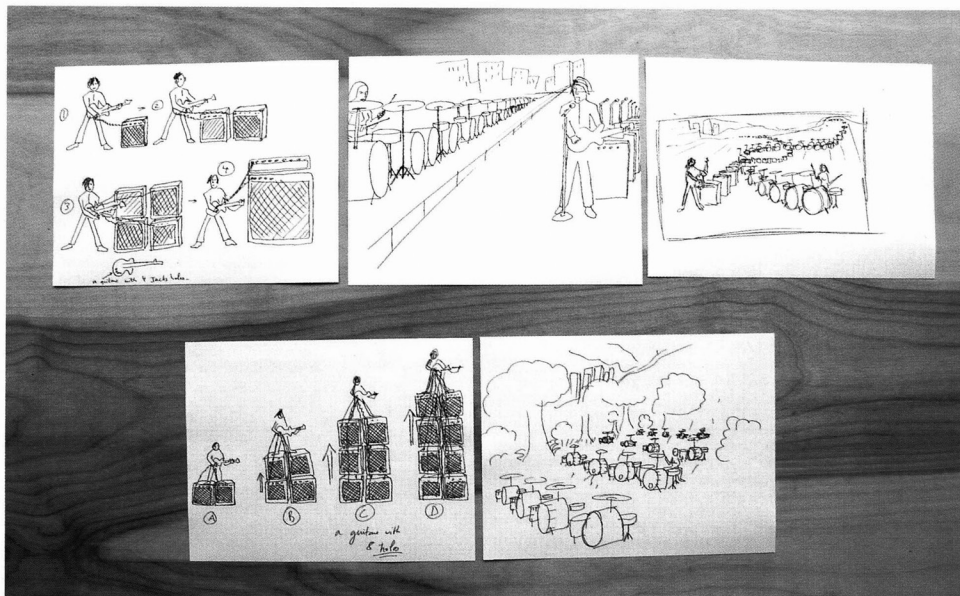

Figure 12.3 Storyboard ideas for "The Hardest Button to Button."

and microphones, in an additive way. The instruments form geometrical shapes that, on the one hand, appear and remain in the image to the logic of the beat, but, on the other, also attenuate the authenticity associated with live performance as the band replays the song. A convention of the performance video is to encourage the viewer to apprehend the band in its natural state, represented either as performing the song as if to a live audience or depicted performing the song in a specific location. Walter Benjamin, in his 1935 essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproducibility," points to our association with authenticity as a "unique existence in a particular place."[29] Transferring Benjamin's ideas to the interpretation of performance videos, we are given the illusion that the band is performing somewhere "in the here and now," as if the viewer is co-present in the performance and witnessing its "authenticity."[30] In "The Hardest Button to Button," the illusion of authenticity is destroyed through the visual motifs established by Gondry. There is something deeply satisfying and yet uncanny in seeing the proliferation of the instruments synchronized to the beat: our eyes see and continue to behold what our ears hear and have heard, all the while knowing that this is an impossible effect to create live. The disjunction of sound, action, and image, while the instruments remain in view, alludes to a past temporal moment in the song's structure so that we see simultaneously what the musicians are doing and what they have just done.

This strategy, based on repetition and mirroring, employs the technique known as *mise en abyme* in which the instruments—drums and guitar amplifiers—appear and are repeated in a ghostly, intermedia echo of the music.

> *Mise en abyme* presupposes the occurrence of at least two hierarchically different levels. It appears on a subordinate level by "mirroring" (content or formal) elements of a superior level … "Mirroring" can mean the repetition of the same, similarity or even to a certain extent contrast. The elements thus "mirrored" can refer to form (e.g. a painting is mirrored within a painting) or content (e.g. a theme occurring on different levels).[31]

In "The Hardest Button to Button," the subordinate level can be seen in the repetition of the instruments, but the higher level could refer to the musical text, itself constructed of repetitive elements: melodies and lyrical rhymes. In addition, as Gondry's focus is on a specific element—musical rhythm—we could say that the director is drawing upon his lived experience to create a meta-text that reflects upon its own construction and the recollected skill of the director as drummer. The viewer is presented with a palimpsestic memory in which the space of the *mise en scène* is structured by the geometry of the musical instruments appearing progressively in time to the beat. The mirroring of drum kits and guitar amplifiers calls our attention to the constructedness of the video image in the condition of "hypermediacy" in which "fragmentation, indeterminacy and heterogeneity … emphasises process or performance."[32] The repetition of the instruments troubles our perception of the simple, linear progression of time as it focuses on the rhythmical and melodic process of performance as the product of what has gone before. In a composite image we are reminded of what we have heard when we see multiple drum kits echoing back to the previous beats.

Bolter and Grusin define hypermediacy as "A style of visual representation whose goal is to remind the viewer of the medium," [33] and this self-reflexivity reminds us that video is an artificial assemblage of images. Instead of making an outright claim to immediacy—the representation of the real in illusory form—we are reminded of video's relation to film as a sequence of multiple frames per second and, in this case, the capturing of visual moments synchronized to the tempo of the song: 128 beats per minute. The visual repetition relates to the function of photographic images as captured moments in time because they remain in a palimpsestic, composite image as a "time-based mosaic of different shots."[34] This supports Rajewsky's claim regarding "media recognition" and the "formation of a given medium" as we are reminded that video, like film, comprises a sequence of individual shots.[35] Technologies of film enable the "persistence of vision" or "critical fusion factor" to trick the eye and the mind into perceiving "sequences of minutely variant" photographic images as continuous movement as opposed to individual frames.[36] Laura Mulvey describes the ability of films "to create the illusion of 'natural' movement" as being eroded in a contemporary cultural context that offers multiple platforms for the delivery and viewing of moving images.[37] Mulvey describes a move away from "moments of spectacle" that previously accounted for communicative structures of film and the new screen media, including pop music video, that instead produces "moments of narrative halt, hinting at the stillness of the single celluloid frame."[38] "The Hardest Button to Button" is intermedial precisely because it foregrounds the stillness of the frame and alludes to photographic images as representations of discrete moments in time, while allowing the passage of time to be seen to move forward and paradoxically to view the present as a product of the still visible past.

In its allusion to photography's ability to halt the flow of time, "The Hardest Button to Button" is exemplary of Rajewsky's second definition of intermediality as: "media combination (*Medienkombination*), which includes phenomena such as opera, film, theatre … Sound Art installations … multimedia, mixed-media and intermedia forms."[39] But this media combination, of video and photography, is not overtly referenced as it does not offer an homage to photographic forms, but it is a case of remediation, a kind of "complex borrowing, in which one medium is itself incorporated or represented in another medium."[40] This brings us into a field of intermedia relations in which we can see quite clearly that one medium, video, is made up of individual images combined in such a way that both immediacy and hypermediacy are constructed visually. A performance video at heart, "The Hardest Button to Button" nonetheless breaks the illusion of the band performing in a unique place, as we know that, in reality, Meg's drum kit cannot replicate as it does. We are presented with an example of "ontological montage" in which the coexistence of "ontologically incompatible elements within the same time and space" produce a jarring effect typical of hypermediacy.[41] From an ontological perspective, photography has become increasingly problematic to define owing to an array of platforms through which a still image can now be mediated. Digital photography has developed a long way from analog processes, defined as "a system of image making whereby light and chemicals create a negative," but share with analog photographs the ability to "produce an infinite number of positives."[42]

The introduction of photography as a medium in the nineteenth century reshaped our perceptions and expectations of what is possible with pictorial representation, but it has also been a fertile ground for exploring the limits of the medium and, to an extent, helping to determine possibilities for composite images in other art forms.

Figure 12.4 reproduces the work entitled *Woman Walking Downstairs*, a series of photographic images taken by Eadweard Muybridge depicting human locomotion.[43] The presentation of the individual shots within a single composite image produces an appearance of locomotion as successive moments, but it also moves away from the convention of the photograph as a single image. Instead, we are presented with a composite image in which the figures have been staged so that the camera can accurately depict the woman's moving body. This is another example of ontological montage, because the viewer has to connect the images in the sequence in order to imagine that the movement is continuous. Muybridge produces an "illusion of movement and of reality: not an analysis, but a spectacle."[44] This photographic illusion of physical movement became an inspiration for Marcel Duchamp, whose time-motion painting, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2* (1912), contains "all the phases and lines of movement … pasts, presents and futures of a gait, flight, descent" that Muybridge represented sequentially.[45]

The geometrical shapes in Duchamp's work reflect Gondry's creative process in making "The Hardest Button to Button" video "more … geometrical to reach an apotheosis of instrument shapes."[46] In focusing on the geometrical shapes, Gondry is privileging the video's formal qualities and creating an interplay of the visual and musical that is non-narrative and self-reflexive. The three different media—painting, photography, and video—demonstrate the notion of transmediality, or "the appearance of the same matter in a different medium."[47] In "The Hardest Button to Button," although Meg and Jack are not repeated, the motif of visual repetition occurs on a formal, aesthetic level that references
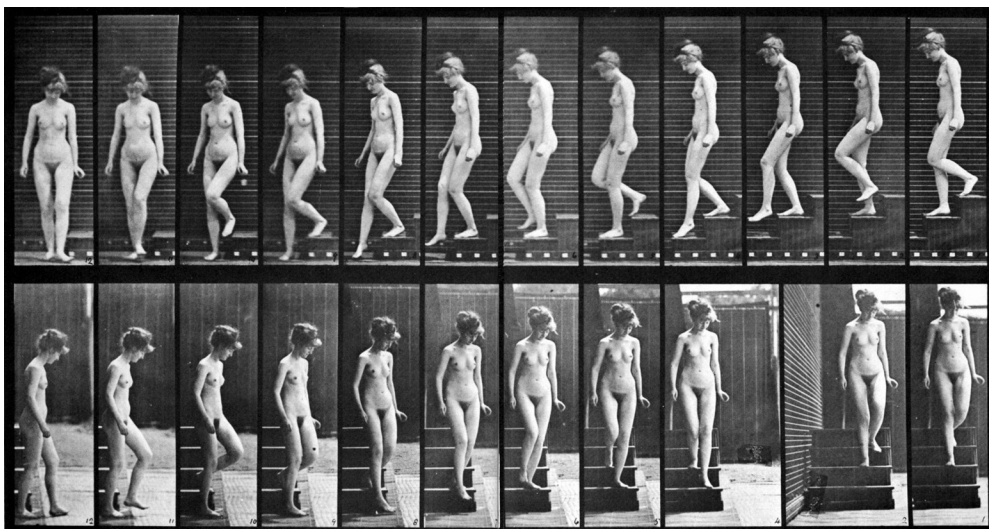

Figure 12.4 Eadweard Muybridge: *Woman Walking Downstairs* (late-nineteenth century).

the early work in different media. Performance videos can follow a visual mode in which the performers and their instruments cohere and cohabit space and time, not just by playing instruments, but also operating within a narrative structure, which is what we will discuss next.

Michel Gondry and Björk's "Bachelorette" (1997)

As a hybrid form, the popular music video has been accused of "cultural cannibalization" on the basis that it has to borrow its content "from culturally 'higher' art forms such as literature and film by plundering them."[48] In the video to Björk's song, "Bachelorette,"[49] Michel Gondry constructs a transmedia narrative that elaborates the protagonist's story in and through an intermedia modality. The video offers an implicit homage to a variety of media, including silent film, literature, black and white photography, photo-roman, printing, typography, animation, theater, and video. Gondry revels in attempting to cram as many references to these different media within the telling of a story, while managing to sustain a coherent narrative. Therefore, remediation rather than cannibalization is a more appropriate way to consider this process of border-crossing between media. This transmedia video is exemplary of remediation, "the formal logic by which new media refashion prior media forms," because music and narrative forms provide semantic stability through combinations of music, melody, lyrics, and cause and effect.[50] This enables the various media to cohere and flow, rather than to confuse or interrupt the viewing experience of the story.

"Bachelorette" offers an extended version of Björk's song tailored to suit Gondry's vision. It begins with a music-driven prologue, which situates Bjork's character, the eponymous Bachelorette, as the protagonist located outside a hut in a sylvan glade digging a hole. This establishing scene (0:08–0:35) is shot in black and white, and offers a prologue to the story and a preface to the song, referencing silent movies as the first moving-image medium, signified in the video by a flickering vignette effect. In a sense, the narrative resonates with the journey from innocence, located in the countryside, to experience, located in the city, and back again. There is a somewhat tenuous symbolism of nature as Eden, from which the protagonist, as an Eve figure, is lured away, not by a snake, but by the arts, just as John Keat's protagonist, Lycius, is lured in his poem *Lamia* (1820) by artifice.[51] Björk and Gondry create a protagonist whose voice-over accompanies the musical introduction to the song and to the narrative. Both music and voice-over are non-diegetic because, as Bachelorette is seen silently digging the ground outside the hut with a spade, we hear her disembodied voice narrate: "One day I found a big book buried deep in the ground" (0:11–0:15). But, once the book is opened, it takes over as the narrator and, subsequent to the character announcing "Then, to my surprise, the book started writing itself," we hear Bachelorette reading as the alphabetic text appears on the blank pages of the book (0:22). This is an example of *ekphrasis*, in antiquity a "rhetorical device," but which film theorist

Agnes Pethó relates to intermediality as "the urge of an artist working in the medium of language to express whatever falls beyond the realm of language … and thus cross over into the domains of the visible."[52] This is suggestive both of the Holy Bible—"In the beginning was the word … and the word was God"[53]—and the omnipotence of the written word to extend out into and determine visual media following the process of *ekphrasis*.

The video "Bachelorette" illustrates the lyrical content of the song in abstract ways, through a condition of *ekphrasis* in which "one medium"—video—"becomes the mirror of the other"—the book that writes itself.[54] The video features many examples of *ekphrasis*, including when Bachelorette appears in a composite image walking in the forest within the pages of the book (0:29), in a position usually occupied by a photograph, her walking figure appearing beneath the written text. Another example is when she is on the train "reading about my journey, the narration being one step ahead of what was happening," words we see being written as a subtitle to a speeding train travelling in the same direction as the printed text, before cutting to an image of Bachelorette reading from the book inside the train (0:34–0:36). As the narrative progresses in black and white, we are presented with an "intermedial [*sic*.] *mise en abyme*," as first words relate the action, then the actions described in the alphabetic text are represented visually within the *mise en scène*.[55]

I interpret the conceit of this video to be that, through a combination of *ekphrasis* and intermedia *mise en abyme*, Gondry is able to tell a visual story that does not represent the song lyrics in a direct way, unlike the synchronization of lyrics and images examined in the video for The Lotus Eaters' "It Hurts." The book predicts the story of Bachelorette, but is told in a combination of past tense (visually on stage) and present tense (in the lyrics) by Bachelorette. The visual narrative is told not once, but four times, in a scripted repetition that resonates with the rhythms and repeated sections of the song. While the song lyrics contain many images, including the chorus refrain, "like a killer whale, trapped in a bay," the plot of the video does not reference the lyrics at all until the very last verse. The plot sees Bachelorette find the book and, at its behest, travel from the country to the city, where she meets and falls in love with a publisher. This first section of the story is represented through black and white *film*, then in a montage of photographs (photo-roman 0:53–0:59). We then experience a montage comprising black and white video footage, black and white film stock depicting a Warner's cinema (1:24), and photographic images during which the book is published and mass produced, and then she and the publisher, Clark, meet with a theatrical producer (1:17). It is only when Bachelorette performs the story for the first time on a theatrical stage that color video is used, which suggests that we are now in the present, if not co-present with her as we would be in an actual theater (1:28). There is now a sense of theatrical immediacy in what we see, even though the story represented belongs to the past, but with each of three tellings a change takes place.

From a visual perspective, each theatrical rendition of the story requires a smaller *mise en scène* and the repetition of set, props, and characters suggests attenuation of lived experience as it passes into memory. In each retelling of the story something essential to the first love story is being lost and the ability to represent it diminishing emotionally as well as in scale. Each scenographic element of the theatrical stage set is duplicated, forming a composite image in a *mise en abyme* suggestive of a Russian doll, as set artifacts are reduced

in scale. Prior to the theatrical telling of Bachelorette's story, the video, photographic, and photo-roman forms that are used suggest that the story is being documented as it happens by an objective observer. In the theatrical versions, we are presented with a post-Brechtian, post-dramatic theatrical modality in which naturalistic illusion is eschewed on stage as there is no fourth wall: Bachelorette uses direct address (this is also typical of bands when they perform songs to live audiences). In the video the theatrical telling of the story also employs intermediality in the form of projected typography, which defamiliarizes the spectator by reminding them of theater as a construct. Hans-Thies Lehmann describes this post-dramatic modality as "a world open to its audience, an essentially possible world, pregnant with potentiality."[56] Ironically, the message of the narrative seems to be that love is cyclical and must return, like the story, to an inchoate state.

The final verse of the song lyrics enables auditory, semantic, visual, and narrative connections to be made with the video. As Bachelorette sings "I'm a tree that grows hearts" (4:16), she is framed by two-dimensional theatrical flats that resemble trees and represent the sylvan glade where the story began, thus connoting Bachelorette's affinity with nature. A few lines later, as Bachelorette sings "I'm the branch that you break," we see the first of the three publishers transform into a bush (4:22) and this shot cuts to a black and white montage of books beginning to unwrite themselves in the hands of their readers (4:24). By forging semiotic and semantic links that cross borders between auditory and different visual media, we observe what Rajewsky calls "*intra*compositional intermediality."[57] This is a state in which a variety of different media—video, animation (the bush, the unwriting pages), and music—participate in the meaning-making process while foregrounding their own medium specificity. For example, Bachelorette's book functions as a unifying visual motif, an object that is present in every scene and thereby functions to provide a semantic link with the original medium and location of the story. When she enters the publisher's office within the theatrical production for the fourth time (4:34), the publisher has become a bush in the shape of a man and Bachelorette turns the empty pages. What follows is a deconstruction of the story represented by the blank pages: the readership no longer immersed in the storyworld discard the book, and the principal characters apart from the protagonist become treeified. Gondry undertakes an *intra*compositional exercise as a range of different media participate in the untelling of the story, including black and white vignette film, treeification, and animation. The theatrical stage set is increasingly overgrown with tree tendrils and the book is overcome with branches—reabsorbed into nature with the implication that artistic birth, as with biological reproduction and perhaps human emotion, is cyclical. The video concludes with Bachelorette returning to the starting point of the story in the countryside, but in a scene that is fully color-saturated, reminiscent of early VHS videos. The narrative resolution depicts Bachelorette still wearing her stage costume, itself an ambivalent signifier as it is a full dress when seen from the front, but just an apron when seen from behind or the side: there are two sides to every story, an inner and an outer aspect to the psyche, a private and a public persona. Despite the *intra*compositional intermediality used to tell Bachelorette's story providing a perceptual effect that is, at times, jarring, it is apparent that the cyclical nature of love—like life—can be narrated in emotionally affective ways that are—like performance—ephemeral.

Conclusion

As I have argued, intermediality is a critical lens through which to interrogate the interactions of different media in the popular music video, and intermedia strategies for the conception and production of pop videos appear to be burgeoning. While the prevalence of digital media production tools offers a reason for why this might be, we have also considered that pop music video is a hybrid form—it is already intermedial—and in a sense its task is to erode borders between the pop music song and the medium of moving images used to promote it by finding new and innovative audiovisual connections between media. Pop music videos that reference other, or remediate older, media can bring new life and interest to forgotten cultural artifacts, such as is the case with *Pandora's Box*, scenes from which are intercut with video images in the Lotus Eaters' "It Hurts." But, if a central concern of the performance video is to represent an authentic image of a band playing, intermedia strategies that employ remediation tend to develop hypermediacy, which attenuates authenticity by reminding the viewer that the pop video is an artificial construct and not a document of live performance. The *mise en abyme* generated in "The Hardest Button to Button" is a device that references photography in an implicit way, while lending itself to a form of transmediation in an episode of The Simpsons in which the guitar amps, drum kits, and Meg and Jack are not videated, but subject to animation. The ease with which pop music video can transform itself across media suggests that media borders can be blurred, transgressed, or suspended, thereby locating the spaces in-between media as an emerging and fertile site for analysis. Gondry's direction of "Bachelorette" tests the limits of media borders, opening the way for a methodology in which different media are absorbed within each other in a process of cross-fertilization that produces new and vibrant perspectives on what the popular music video might be or become. With the rapid development of video creation and post-production technologies, it is likely that intermediality will be a useful tool in helping us to comprehend and analyze the new forms, structures, and methodologies that may emerge for some time to come.

Notes

1   Lars Elleström, ed., *Media Borders, Multimodaility and Intermediality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

2   Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation—Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 53.

3   Max Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory—The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Film and Fiction* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2015).

4   Irina O. Rajewsky, "Border Talks: The Problematic Status of Media Borders in the Current Debate about Intermediality," in Elleström, *Media Borders*, 51.

5   Ibid., 53.

6   Bernd Herzogenrath, ed., *Travels in Intermedia[lity]: Reblurring the Boundaries* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2012), 168.

7   Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt, eds., *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance* (Amsterdam: International Federation for Theatre Research, 2007), 11.

8   Ágnes Pethó, "Approaches to Studying Intermediality in Contemporary Cinema," *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies* 15 (2018): 167.

9   Carol Vernallis, *Unruly Media: YouTube, Music Video, and the New Digital Cinema* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

10 Marshall McLuhan, "The Agenbite of Outwit," in *Marshall McLuhan Essays: Media Research, Technology, Art Communication*, edited by Michel A. Moos (Amsterdam: Overseas Publishers Association, 1997), 123.

11 Ibid., 123.

12 Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 56.

13 Ibid., 59.

14 The Lotus Eaters, "The Lotus Eaters—It Hurts," YouTube video (3:06), official music video, directed by Jem Kelly, posted by "TheLotusEatersVEVO," August 13, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFxw02oNMTs.

15 Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 5.

16 Ibid., 5–6.

17 Chiel Kattenbelt, "Intermediality in Theatre and Performance: Definitions, Perceptions and Medial Relationships," *Culture, Language and Representation* 6 (2008): 27.

18 Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, 5.

19 Ibid., 5.

20 Vernallis, *Unruly Media*, 94.

21 José Cláudio Siqueira Castanheira, "Timeline Philosophy: Technological Hedonism and Formal Aspects of Films and Music Videos," in *Music/Video—Histories, Aesthetics, Media*, edited by Gina Arnold, Daniel Cookney, Kirsty Fairclough, and Michael Goddard (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 217.

22 Vernallis, *Unruly Media*, 94.

23 Elleström, *Media Borders*, 27.

24 Rajewsky, "Border Talks," 51.

25 Vernallis, *Unruly Media*, 9.

26 The White Stripes, "The White Stripes—The Hardest Button to Button," YouTube video (3:34), official music video, directed by Michel Gondry, posted by "whitestripes," May 26, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4dx42YzQCE. Figure 12.3 shows storyboard ideas for the White Stripes' video "The Hardest Button to Button." The storyboard is to be found in a short booklet accompanying a DVD of Gondry's pop music videos and is entitled "The Work of Director Michel Gondry" (2003). The booklet provides insights to Gondry's creative stimuli and childhood obsessions, but is structured in an ad-hoc manner, without page numbers.

27 *I've Been Twelve Forever* [film], directed by Michel Gondry (Sleeping Train Productions, 2003).

28 Ibid.

29 Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility," in *Walter Benjamin—Selected Writings Volume 4 1938–1940*, edited by Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 253.

30 Ibid., 253.

31 Werner Wolf, *Metareference Across Media—Theory and Case Studies* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2009), 45. See also William J. Mitchell, *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 8.

32 William J. Mitchell, *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 1994, quoted in David Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin *Remediation—Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 31.

33 Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 272.

34 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 155.

35 Rajewsky, "Border Talks," 51.

36 Brian Winston, *Technologies of Seeing—Photography, Cinematography and Television* (London: British Film Institute, 1996), 11.

37 Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2006), 7.

38 Ibid., 7.

39 Rajewsky, "Border Talks," 55.

40 Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 45.

41 Manovich, *Language of New Media*, 159.

42 Winston, *Technologies of Seeing,* 12.

43 Eadweard Muybridge [series of photographs], *Woman Walking Downstairs* (late-nineteenth century), https://www.flickr.com/photos/desdetasmania/647788068/sizes/l/in/photostream.

44 Sam Rhodie, *Montage* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 4.

45 Ibid., 111.

46 *I've Been Twelve Forever*.

47 Axel Englund, "Intermedial Topography and Metaphorical Interaction," in Elleström, *Media Borders*, 75.

48 Henry Keazor, "'I had the strangest week ever!' Metalepsis in Music Videos," in *Metalepsis in Popular Culture*, edited by Karin Kukkonen and Sonja Klimek (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 104.

49 Björk, "Björk—Bachelorette," YouTube video (5:17), official music video, directed by Michel Gondry, posted by "Björk," July 1, 2007, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJnhaXwK86M.

50 Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*, 273.

51 "Lamia," a poem by John Keats, relates the story of a snake-like creature who takes on human shape and deceives her lover, Lycius. The act of transformation can be taken as a metaphor for all artistic conceits. See https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2490/2490-h/2490-h.htm.

52 Ágnes Pethó, "Media in the Cinematic Imagination: Ekphrasis and the Poetics of the In-Between in Jean-Luc Godard's Cinema," in Elleström, *Media Borders,* 212.

53 Gospel According to St. John, https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/john/1.

54 Pethó, "Media," 214.

55 Ibid., 215.

56 Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, translated by Karen Jüers-Munby (London: Routledge, 2006), 12.

57 Rajewsky, "Border Talks," 57.