



VIDEO SCENE AND VISUAL CULTURE: Approaches and Video Projects for Theatre

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ABSTRACT

Video scene, as an integrative concept linking theatre and video materials, constitutes a new dimension of audiovisual production as one further component within the mise-en-scène. This article proposes an analysis of works belonging to contemporary Spanish theatre that incorporate video, with the aim of characterising video-scenic production through a study of its technical options, functions and uses. The conclusions address the various configurations that deepen the different degrees of integration of video within the dramatic proposal of the scenic projects.

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1. Video Scene: Visual Culture, Dramaturgy and Video Practice

In recent years there has been a growing interest in interdisciplinary work between the performing arts and audiovisual creation, which populates the country's major theatres and forms part of a hybrid visual culture and a transmedia and digital audiovisual ecosystem that experiments with all kinds of materials and functions (Elías-Zambrano & Cabezuelo-Lorenzo, 2024; Montes Rodríguez et al., 2024; Palencia Triana, 2024). These works, with a strong visual imprint, incorporate video through the deployment of videographic apparatus, whether as projection or by introducing the screen as an object through various sculptural or architectural devices.

This expansion of theatrical media is not new (Diéguez, 2010), but rather an extension of the fact that theatre is a total artistic space that can be included under the umbrella of the transformation known as postdramatic theatre (Lehmann, 2010), which has involved a shift of interest from narrative in its classical conception towards other scenic elements.

The importance of the disciplines of *mise-en-scène*, or "*mise-en-cadre*" (composition, scenography, costume), distinguishes this type of theatre from the components that contribute sequentiality and narrativity, such as the text. Thus, these non-narrative-leaning proposals focus on the development of a visual dramaturgy (Arntzen, 1991), with a series of characteristics that problematise the necessity, superior hierarchy or pre-eminence of the written text (Vindas Villareal, 2019, p. 134). With it, the theatrical work emancipates itself from the text (De Morant et al., 2016; Nassimbeni, 2017) and prioritises other "material-texts" (Danan, 2010) that require a different work of adaptation from the conception of the dramaturg: "It is a matter, whether in writing or in *mise-en-scène*, of letting a form speak" (Danan, 2010, p. 66) or of an open dramaturgy (Turner & Behrndt, 2016), where fragmented actions take place in parallel and the representation is no more than the place where they intersect or are juxtaposed.

When the literalness of the text is replaced and the content of the work is conveyed through objects, scenography, costume and other elements of *mise-en-scène*, one then speaks of visual dramaturgy, constructed with a tendency towards the plastic or visuality (Blais, 2019; Haase, 2015; Pearce et al., 2018). The influence of audiovisual formats that depart from conventional narrativity or suffer from a certain "narrative weakness", such as advertising formats, music videos and others—even urban ones (Zahar & Roberge, 2016)—is materialised and adds to the general trend of technological application through the image in theatre since the beginning of the twentieth century.

As part of the process of displacement towards a more visual dramaturgy, scenic plastic has leaned towards the integration of video in performative practice, a phenomenon that characterises contemporary audiovisual creation in its tendency towards the intermedial, and synthesises the need to unite what comes from the script (literary part), the scenic, the choreographic part or list of dance/performance actions, and the visual (plastic part)... It is towards this plastic component that theatre moves when speaking of visual dramaturgy and its techniques applied to video, the video scene, a term developed by Fouquet & Faguy (2016), Luna (2017) and Thenon (2005), creating a specialised field of study:

We speak of scenic audiovisual, video scenic or video scene to refer to any manifestation of video, with or without sound, interactive or not, in theatre, which, like the rest of the plastic and sonic elements, must integrate a dramaturgical purpose, consolidating itself in the global dramaturgy of the *mise-en-scène* (Teira Alcaraz, 2020b, p. 141).

And as Martínez expresses:

We call video scene the use of audiovisuals in the performing arts; it is therefore one more tool of signification at the disposal of the *mise-en-scène* design that the director has to elaborate a spectacle in combination with the other tools: scenography, costume, sound space, lighting... (Martínez, 2018, p. 173).

There are many categories that allow the contribution of video to theatre to be analysed, and this has precisely been the object of study of authors such as Diaz Olivares (2025), Martínez (2018), Montes Rodríguez (2016; 2021; 2022), Palacio Enríquez (2019; 2021) or Teira Alcaraz (2020a; 2020b; 2021a; 2021b), who have unpacked the core of this new field of research around audiovisual creation in theatre.

1.1. Referents and Object of Observation

Theatrical audiovisual has emerged as an evolving and continuous component, with a significant number of artists specialising in the field. Notable creators include Álvaro Luna, Miguel Ángel Gaio, and collectives working in visuals for the performing arts and digital performance, such as Konic THTR, Chunky Move, or the company Adrian M and Claire B. There has also been significant research activity in medialabs and creation centres focused on this theme (Matadero Madrid, Medialab, Vjspain collective). These are interdisciplinary projects that jointly bring together two modes of representation — the dramatic and the audiovisual — offering a multitude of possibilities both for the application of technologies and for continued reflection on the role of artistic practices in society.

Whether referred to as scenic plastic, visual dramaturgy or video scene, there is currently growing interest in this term from the profession and, beyond it, in academic circles. In fact, a claim has been developing for the definition of its specificity in order to secure recognition as a distinct technical-artistic role, evident in professional forums such as the Fifth Scenic Plastic Days organised by the Centro Dramático Nacional (CDN, Madrid, Spain) in June 2021, or the open letter in support of video scene that advocates for the figure of the Lighting and Video Scene Designer (according to AAI, Lighting Designers Association).

As a practice, it remains a field in formation but on the path to consolidation, gaining legitimacy and support from professional audiovisual associations that recognise video scene as a differentiated role within theatrical work, evolving from the creation of visuals for events (VJs) or live cinema (Palacio Enríquez, 2022) to its later hybridisation with lighting and scenography tasks, and ultimately to the full recognition of its distinct status. Certain technical manuals, such as Kjørner and Szatkowski (2003) and Oliszewski and Fine (2018), have contributed to this specialisation.

In Spain, during this most recent stage, Álvaro Luna stands as an indisputable referent. The artist has worked since 1999 across different fields of audiovisual creation, including cinema, documentary and video art. A pioneer of what he termed video scene, he has spent the last fifteen years researching the inclusion of video and visual projection in opera, theatre, music and dance productions as a particular and autonomous discipline within the performing arts. Partly motivated by this consistent and distinctive body of work, the methodological design of our research centres on the oeuvre of Álvaro Luna. The analysis of his extensive video-artistic production provides a methodological framework from which to examine the scope of the artistic proposals undertaken and offers an initial approach to a broader debate at both social and professional levels.

2. Objectives and Methodology

2.1. Objectives

The present work analyses a corpus of theatrical works in which video is present in order to explore the various possibilities of interaction, functions and uses of video in the stage.

The argument of the works has been examined using the information available both on the website of the theatre where they premiered and on those of the company or director responsible for them, with the aim of understanding the generic narrative framework into which the video material is inserted. It should be emphasised that limited access to the complete performance represents a limitation of this study: in part, the analysis has relied on in-person attendance, which was only fully possible on certain occasions. On the other hand, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the video-scenic creator Álvaro Luna, which allowed for immersion in the social reality and greater insight into professional routines, tactics and the structural relationships among the different cultural and business agents that define the creation of theatrical works, alongside reflection on his practice, constraints and creative solutions. Audiovisual documentation available on the video social networks (YouTube and Vimeo) of the Centro Dramático Nacional (National Drama Centre) and other institutions was also consulted, for example the talks from the V Jornadas de Plástica Teatral (Fifth Conference on Theatrical Scenography).

2.2. Sample

On the other hand, a textual analysis methodology is proposed, applying categories that enable a characterisation of the video scene that has been taking place in recent years in Spanish dramaturgy. In this case, 21 works by the video-scenic artist Álvaro Luna, produced in recent years, are presented. These are listed in Table 1, which details the title of the work, the date and place of premiere (the exact date has been included where available) and the direction. Information and videos that served as reference can be found on his website¹.

Table 1. Sample of works analysed with their technical information

Work	Date of Premiere	Place of Premiere	Direction/Dramaturgy
Mi niña, niña mía	2019	Teatro Español, Madrid	Itziar Pascual and Amaranta Osorio
Loop	2022	Teatros del Canal, Madrid	Enrique Cabrera
Rif, De piojos y hombres	2014	Teatro Valle-Inclán (CDN), Madrid	Dan Jemmett
Los últimos Gondra	2017	Valle-Inclán Theatre (CDN), Madrid	Borja Ortiz de Gondra
Pedro Páramo	2023	Teatros del Canal, Madrid	Mario Gas
Punk Rock	2014	Teatro Español, Madrid	José Luis Arellano
Viejo amigo Cicerón	2019	Roman Theatre of Mérida; CDN, Madrid	Ernesto Caballero
El curioso incidente del perro	2017	Teatro Marquina, Madrid	José Luis Arellano
Reina Juana	2016	Teatro Español, Madrid	Ernesto Caballero
Medea	2015	Valle-Inclán Theatre (CDN), Madrid	Andrés Lima
Muerte de un viajante	2023	Teatro Español, Madrid	Rubén Szuchmacher
Los poni	2016	Teatro Bellas Artes, Madrid	Paco Bezerra
Ulloa	2021	Canal Theatres	José Luis Arellano García
Los hermanos Karamazov	20 November 2021	Teatro Valle-Inclán CDN	Gerardo Vera
Macbeth	2020	Maria Guerrero Theatre	Alfredo Sanzol
Unamuno, Vencerás pero no convencerás	2018	La Abadía Theatre	Carl Fillion and José Luis Gómez
El idiota	20 February 2019	Teatro Valle-Inclán CDN	Gerardo Vera
La gran Cenobia	2022	Comedy Theatre	David Boceta
Todos pájaros	2024	Canal Theatres	Mario Gas
Un monstruo viene a verme	2024	Canal Theatre	Jose Luis Arellano García
La Judía de Toledo	2017	Lope de Vega - Comedy Theatre	Laia Ripoll

Source: Authors (2025)

2.3. Methodology and Categories of Analysis

The categories of analysis explained in detail below have been constructed from a comprehensive review of academic articles and documentation on the selected productions, giving rise to the following analysis table (Table 2). The interview conducted with the author of the video-scenic work has served for methodological triangulation.

¹<https://alvaroluna.es/work>

Table 2. Categories of analysis

Work	Plot	Type of projection	Video-scene function	Modelling function
		Conventional projection (screen or multi-screen) -Video mapping -Live recording or live cinema	-Transmitting information Playing or simulating weather effects -Transitions between events -Transitions between events -Spatial construction -Characters Visual metaphors, construction of the body -Time -Time -Constructing planes of reality -Discursivity	-Video scenography Multiplicative video-scene Characterising video-scene Textual video-scene

Source: Authors (2025).

The categories of analysis explained in detail below have been constructed from a comprehensive review of academic articles and documentation on the selected productions, giving rise to the following analysis table (Table 2). The interview conducted with the author of the video-scenic work has served for methodological triangulation.

Thus, the first category developed is the type of projection, which has been directed towards understanding the basic technique in which the video is inserted into the work: conventional projection, videomapping techniques or live recording techniques. It seeks to investigate the most logistical aspect related to the video medium, although this has consequences for the interrelationship between the work and the spectator, since the options range from lesser to greater discursive presence of the video and a greater degree of use of the monitor object or screen. The type of projection is usually related to the achievement of a certain degree of multimediality — conventional and multiple projection — or intermediality (Abuín, 2008; İşıkkaya, 2023; Provencio, 2019; Ramírez, 2025), where theatre acts as a container medium for other media — often characteristic of videomapping — (Lesage, 2008) or hypermedia as convergence with the inclusion of other languages while maintaining their specificity (Grande Rosales & Sánchez Montes, 2016).

For its part, live video represents another totalising technical formulation of the visual in the theatrical proposal with regard to video and entails the arrangement of the *mise-en-scène* in such a way that it can be offered via camera to the spectator so that they contemplate simultaneously the production of what the image will contain and the projection itself: it is “a deliberate proposal to show the audience, gathered in a room and on a screen, the result of the process of cinematic creation carried out in real time on stage, which in turn is a film set” (López Antuñano, 2022, pp. 10–11). However, it is necessary here to emphasise that the use of live-generated video employed in the work can involve various degrees of complexity, ranging from live video in front of the action and its overhead projection to the so-called live cinema show by names such as Katie Mitchell or the Asociación Señor Serrano. Its inclusion in the scene through screens or multi-screens enables the so-called remediating scene (Zorita-Gutiérrez, 2020), or through the closed-circuit television mode.

Second, the function of the video scene aims to ascertain the element to which the video primarily contributes to the work, which may be a spatial, temporal or textual element. For this reason, the main functions catalogued from a corpus of academic works generate instrumental roles in the use of video for the stage:

- Transmit information
- Reproduce or simulate weather effects
- Transitions between acts
- Spatial construction: cover the entire visible space, provide other viewpoints regarding a seen space or multiply by hacking frontality
- Characters: doubling of actors, generation of new characters not present live, characters’ mentality and introspection.
- Visual metaphors, the body as a narrative or poetic element
- Time: reconstruction of past moments (flashback); reference to future time; simultaneity; temporal expansion or games with time and alternative temporality.

- Construct planes of reality
- Discursivity

Most of these functions are self-explanatory, although others require more detailed description. Some, such as those related to time, space and characters, have been generated through an attempt at clarification from categories proposed by Iglesias Simón (2008), López Antuñano (2002), Melendres (2005), or Teira Alcaraz (2020a; 2020b; 2021a). Others present a complex casuistry of differentiation, as in the case of discursivity, understood as the capacity of video to awaken the spectator's critical ability through the work. This occurs when a type of visuality is produced that goes beyond the work to appeal directly to the spectator with a reflection on the very apparatus of the work... In some way, this function subverts the conception of the screen in its reference to surveillance capitalism (ubiquity of screens, screenification effect) and with it the work bypasses classical enunciation mechanisms and breaks the fourth wall. Without being able to delve into the implications of these aspects, due to their extreme complexity and because they have been more than analysed in theatre and put into practice by authors such as Bertolt Brecht, Samuel Beckett or Luigi Pirandello, with this function it is intended here to point to a work that problematises the traditional conventions of theatre, with video material playing a principal role in constructing this effect in its relationship with the spectator: "The inscription of video in the scene triggers an exploratory process that touches both extremes of the scenic event, production (the performers) and reception (the spectators)" (Féral & Morin, 2023). López Antuñano (2022) points to this function as vehicular: "Proposals in which the audiovisual acquires a vehicular protagonism change the nature of the representation and lead to discussion about the appropriateness of calling these spectacles 'theatrical', a question that I leave posed here" (p. 18).

On the other hand, it is always necessary to know the basic bet of the video with respect to the scenic proposal and its space of representation, which has been termed here modelising function: it therefore refers to the conception of the video scene and the degree or quantity of intervention of the video. In this sense, the differentiation proposed by Teira Alcaraz (2020a) in the relationship between scene and video scene is applied directly, when she speaks, first, of video-scenography for functions assimilable to scenography in its spatial, locative and atmospheric character. This is probably the most employed category.

Second, multiplicative video scene, for its part, and following the author, when its principal function is fractal, occurs with "temporal extension in prolepsis or analepsis, collage, multiplicity of viewpoints, enlargement of visibility, replication of actions, hyper-immediacy of video scene within the video scene and incorporation of augmented reality elements" (Teira Alcaraz, 2020a, p. 161). In this type there are linear or non-linear temporal jumps with a disordered time in the narration, which is sometimes linked to a scenic background full of screens, where video achieves as much presence as the live action.

With video scene as characterising for the creation, doubling or modification of characters, Teira Alcaraz describes "functions relating to the creation or modification of actants or characters, such as narration or interior monologue, the purely video-scenic character, the mixed video-scenic character that has a scenic counterpart, the video-scenic double or the distorted double" (Teira Alcaraz, 2020a, p. 161). The character, as a dramaturgical component, allows multiple interactions between scene and video: doubled characters, absent characters present only to some degree in the video scene, characters that transit between the character and the limbo of video... In short, some of the functions around the character are grouped here, although in this case the focus is on the extent to which the deployments and interrelations between live characters (actors) and those represented on video can be generated, and to what extent they become the dramatic core of the work. Textual video scene employs all kinds of texts in relation to the dramatic action, dynamically or statically.

In Table 3 a summary of the results can be observed, which will be discussed and analysed in greater detail in the following section. In each case the main function of the video scene is highlighted, although almost never is this function unique.

Table 3. Summary of results.

Work	Type of projection	Function of video-scene	Relation to video
<i>Mi niña, niña mía</i>	Conventional projection	Spatial construction Multiplying perspectives Time: expansion Climatological effects Introspection Visual metaphors Constructing planes of reality	Video scenography
<i>Loop</i>	Videomapping	Spatial construction Constructing planes of reality	Multiplicative video-scenography
<i>Rif, de piojos y hombres</i>	Conventional projection/ some videomapping	Spatial construction Time	Multiplicative video-scene
<i>Los últimos Gondra</i>	Conventional projection	Spatial construction Multiplying perspectives Weather Climatological effects Introspection Visual metaphors Character (interaction between scenic and video-scenic characters)	Characterising videoscene
<i>Pedro Páramo</i>	Videomapping	Spatial construction Time: expansion, games Visual metaphors Construction of planes	Videoscenography
<i>Punk Rock</i>	Videomapping	Time Characters	Multiplicative video-scene
<i>Viejo amigo Cicerón</i>	Conventional projection	Characters (interaction between scenic and video-scenic characters) Discursivity	Characterising video-scene
<i>El curioso incidente del perro a medianoche</i>	Conventional projection	Spatial construction Visual metaphors Discursivity	Video scenography
<i>Reina Juana</i>	Conventional projection	Spatial construction Characters Visual metaphors	Video scenography
<i>Medea</i>	Videomapping	Spatial construction Climatological effects Visual metaphors	Characterising video-scene
<i>Muerte de un viajante</i>	Conventional projection (various screens)	Spatial construction Time: alternative temporality...	Multiplicative video-scene
<i>El pequeño pony</i>	Conventional projection	Spatial construction Character	Characterising video-scene
<i>La gran Cenobia</i>	Conventional projection	Time Creation of planes of reality Discursivity	Video scenography
<i>Macbeth</i>	Conventional projection	Spatial construction Characters Visual metaphors	Video scenography
<i>El idiota</i>	Conventional projection	Characters	Characterising video-scene
<i>Unamuno, Vencerás pero no convencerás</i>	Conventional projection	Time Characters: video-scenic double Discursivity	Characterising video-scene
<i>Ulloa</i>	Conventional projection	Characters (interaction between scenic and video-scenic characters)	Characterising video-scene
<i>Los hermanos Karamazov</i>	Conventional projection	Constructing planes of reality Characters (interaction between scenic and video-scenic characters)	Videoscenography

<i>Todos pájaros</i>	Conventional projection	Time Introspection Discursivity Transitions between acts Climatological effects	Video-scenography
<i>Un monstruo viene a verme</i>	Conventional projection (theatricalisation of the video through an object device)	Spatial construction Discursivity	Video-scenography
<i>La judía de Toledo</i>	Videomapping (circular screen)	Spatial construction Time	Multiplicative video-scenography

Source: Authors (2025).

3. Results

Of the 21 works examined, a majority of 16 cases feature conventional projection, while the other 5 employ videomapping arrangements and include moments of simple projection; one special case (*Un monstruo viene a verme* (*A Monster Calls*)) adopts a configuration in which the screens are integrated into the scenography: their size allows for a conceptual approach close to the contextual and totalising in relation to the *mise-en-scène*, rather than an objectual or anecdotal use of the screen as an object. This diversity in technical approaches is a consequence of varied production processes, timelines and budgets, according to the author himself, as well as a reflection and participation as one more element in the staging of the work (In-depth interview with Álvaro Luna, 2024).

Conventional projection offers considerable diversity: it is carried out onto the scenographic elements themselves or through them — that is, allowing the projection to act as light and generate occasional shadows from characters and objects, as in *Divinas palabras* (*Divine Words*) (Image 1) — or through its ubiquity and multiplication.

Image 1. *Divine words* (Gerardo Vera, 2006)



Source: Alvaro Luna's website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>

When multiple projection screens are used, they produce an effect of fragmentation of the scenic background, as well as temporal extension and expansion that broadens the horizon of meanings and planes within the action of the scene. This occurs, for example, in Arthur Miller's *Muerte de un viajante* (*Death of a Salesman*) (Mario Gas, 2009) (Image 2), with contextual effects on space and time that align with the well-known plot of the play and enable a play with the information the spectator possesses about the dramatic space. This type of configuration thus has a denotative function in relation to the *mise-en-scène*, but it also functions as a formal element by configuring the scenography in a fragmentary manner: the effects of simultaneity of actions across these screens construct a temporally fragmented perception across various diegetic times. This combination of the live present of the scene with references —in video— to the past, together with dialogue and reflection, enriches and animates the diegesis of the work and makes the spectator feel the guilt that pursues the main character.

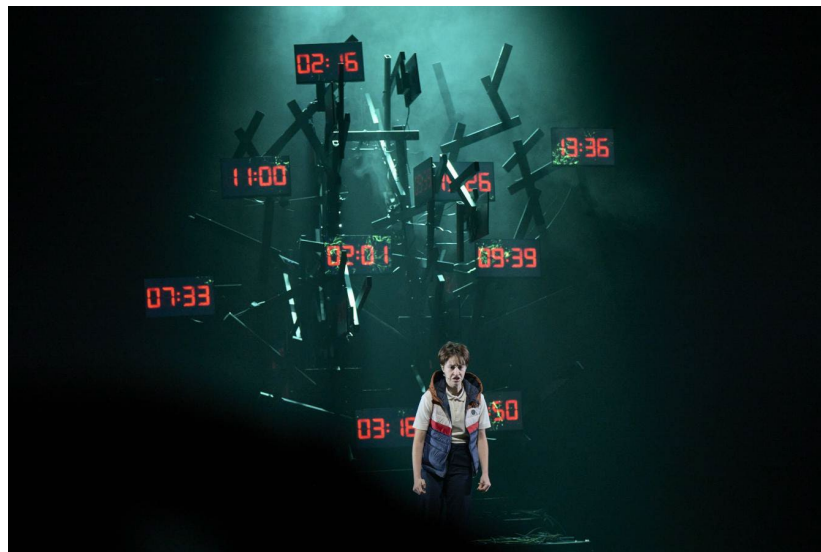
Image 2. *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller (Mario Gas, 2009)



Source: Alvaro Luna website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>

In other cases, a screen-within-a-screen approach is used (*Pedro Páramo*), while in others the form is unconventional, as in the circular screen of *La judía de Toledo* (*The Jewess of Toledo*). One case stands out: a device in which the screens are integrated, becoming a scenographic object in the form of a central tree in *Un monstruo viene a verme* (2024) (Image 3).

Image 3. *Un monstruo viene a verme* (Jose Luis Arellano, 2024)



Source: Photo Pablo Lorente. Alvaro Luna's website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>.

With regard to videomapping (5 cases), it is worth highlighting the diversity it allows in the scenic action in *Loop*, *Punk Rock*, *La judía de Toledo*, *Medea* and *Pedro Páramo*. This technique is furthermore characterised by an objective of dynamising the scenic space linked to complete occupation of the background and stage area, as well as its synchronisation with music. The influence of the language of the music video can be identified, serving as inspiration for the video-scenic artist, according to his own statements (In-depth interview with Álvaro Luna, 2024). In the work *Loop*, a particular interaction is located between the scenic and the projected content, in so far as a strategy is employed of placing this content over parts of the stage where actors and dancers are introduced or appear. This achieves varied magical moments that affect the dramaturgy of the work, which plays with other elements such as neon lights or scenic boxes from which characters emerge (Image 4).

Image 4. *Loop* (Enrique Cabrera, 2022).

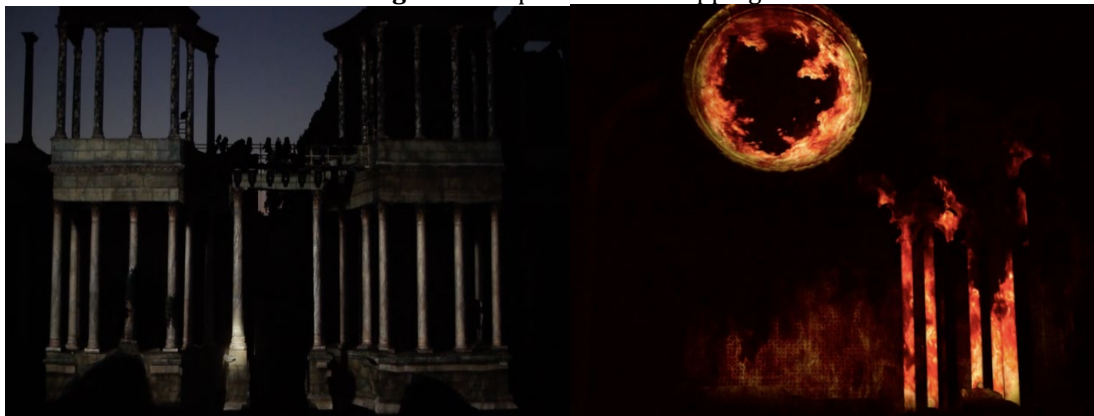


Source: Álvaro Luna website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>

In *Punk Rock*, the projection expands beyond the concept of the screen to occupy the floor; the scenic background acquires special geometric forms until it reaches maximum fragmentation. The specific patch of projection produces a cube that is transmuted as a stage space, with an unsettling effect on both the characters and the spectators.

In *La judía de Toledo* or *Medea*, an approach closer to the conventional use of videomapping can be discerned, with specific projection onto scenographic elements such as columns and other classical façade features. This can be seen in examples from Image 5.

Image 5. Examples of videomapping.



Medea

The Toledo Jewess

Source: Álvaro Luna's website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>

With regard to the functions of the video scene, beyond a mere count of cases that would be purely descriptive, some common denominators are highlighted here, bearing in mind that these functions are not exclusive but often occur simultaneously or several functions are present in the same action. Thus, the table highlights the most important function, although an attempt is made to emphasise those options that are of particular interest or more innovative. Spatial construction stands out above all others (13 cases) and is especially prominent in the case of conventional projection in works such as *Rip, de piojos y hombres* (*Rif, of Lice and Men*), *Muerte de un viajante* (*Death of a Salesman*), *Los hermanos Karamazov* (*The Brothers Karamazov*), *Todos pájaros* (*All Birds*), *Los últimos Gondra* (*The Last Gondras*) or *El curioso incidente del perro a medianoche* (*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*). As a variant, the simulation of weather effects is developed with considerable variety: on its own it has limited effects on the dramaturgy, although it reinforces the situation in which the actions and dialogues take place. This is often combined with the use of text as titles between episodes, dates and locations with changes of acts and scenes. It occurs in 4 cases.

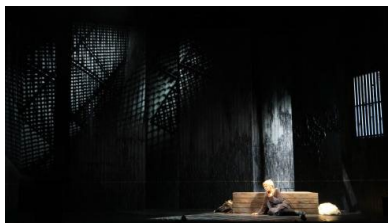
With respect to functions linked to the temporal dimension, these occur primarily in 4 cases and secondarily in another 6. It can be seen how moving images are employed through text to punctuate

analepses and prolepses, as occurs in rather complex works that unfold across different geographical locations, varied characters and numerous temporal moments that the play gradually reveals, as in *Todos pájaros*. In this staging by Mario Gas, which adapts the text of the famous playwright Wajdi Mouawad, the video has a particularly pragmatic function and one of relationship with the spectator due to the quantity of conceptual images and landscapes, birds, fish, bombings and newsreels. All of these turn the work into an emotional experience.

Temporal expansion of the frame occurs especially in some works in the sample that stand out for their temporal and action ambition, such as *Pedro Páramo*, *Rif, de piojos y hombres* or *La gran Cenobia* (*The Great Cenobia*). In these cases, a kind of temporal simultaneity is produced, facilitated by the screens and their reference to the performative action, which allows the fantastic-realist world full of overflowing imagination that unites diverse times and spaces in these works to be translated into scenic language. Multiple voices, interior monologue or fragmentation of actions are conveyed through video and, above all, through synergy across the entire theatrical mise-en-scène.

Several visual metaphors are present in some works (7): in these cases, the content of the work or the space or situation of the character is visually represented by the video-scenic content as a form of allegory. *Reina Juana*, *El curioso incidente del perro a medianoche* or *Macbeth* (Image 6) contain especially lyrical moments. In these cases, *mi niña* combined function occurs with that of locating a character in an abstract, psychic or emotional space, one of the main functions that theatrical direction demands of a video-scenic artist (In-depth interview with Álvaro Luna, 2024). The work *Pedro Páramo*, for its part, sustains a great deal of metaphorical content. Based on Juan Rulfo's homonymous novel, the need to adapt the magical realist world of the novel to the stage allows video to portray the human and spatial geography through a fusion of reality and magic. This is also found in *Los últimos Gondra*, *Medea* and *Mi niña, niña mía* (*My Girl, My Child*).

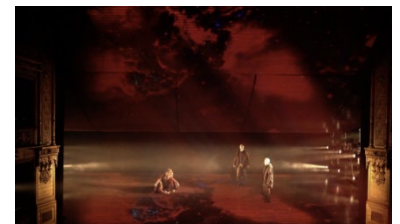
Image 6. Examples of visual metaphors.



Queen Joan



The Curious Incident of the Dog at Midnight



Macbeth

Source: Álvaro Luna's website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>

Regarding the creation and management of video-graphic characters, there exists a wide variety of proposals. From the function of a purely video-scenic character — that is, the absence of a principal character on stage and its reference solely in the video — which is observed in *Mi pequeño Pony* (*My Little Pony*), to the doubling of a character and its transmutation, as in *Unamuno, vencerás pero no convencerás* (*Unamuno, You will Win, but you will not Convince*). However, the most employed option concerns the interaction between scenic and video-scenic characters, which alternate in various moments, as occurs in *Ullóa, Los idiotas* (*The Idiots*) and *Los hermanos Karamazov, Viejo amigo Cicerón* (*Old Friend Cicero*) and *Los últimos Gondra*, where certain scenic characters engage in dialogue with or refer to other video-scenic characters from previous generations (Image 7).

Image 7. Characters.



My little pony



Unamuno, you'll win but you won't convince



Ullóa

Source: Álvaro Luna's website <https://alvaroluna.es/work/>

Regarding the discursive function (6 cases), it is present in *Unamuno, vencerás pero no convencerás*, *El curioso incidente del perro a medianoche*, *Viejo amigo Cicerón*, *Un monstruo viene a verme*, *Todos*

pájaros and *La Gran Cenobia*. In the case of the latter, through video (and also music) a spectacle is deployed that includes the grandiloquence of harangues, musical performances and that explicitly reveal to the spectator various aspects of how truth and reality are constructed from power. Specifically, the screen and its fragmentation are especially employed for this kind of political poetics found in contemporary works, while at the same time reflecting on the nature of theatre. Undoubtedly, this function of video in the scene requires deeper analysis, given the proliferation of such proposals in contemporary Spanish theatre.²

In this way, and regarding the major functions of the video scene, the following data are found: at least 9 works selected in the sample contain uses of the video scene related to video-scenography. There is a first configuration of the video scene for background functions that occurs in more habitual or conventional proposals, characterised by a pre-eminence of scenic action over the video scene. Among these, noteworthy examples include the theatricalisation of the video scene in *Un monstruo viene a verme*, the scenographic expansion in *El curioso incidente del perro a medianoche*, or the achievement of a videographic texture (with texts, gauzes) that complexifies the scenography in *Reina Juana and Mi niña, niña mía*.

The works structured around the multiplicative video scene function (5) (*Loop, Rif, de piojos y hombres, Punk Rock, Muerte de un viajante* and *La judía de Toledo*) tend to involve greater implication of the enunciation of space and time and, in some cases, coincide with discursive opening functions.

The cases of characterising video scene number 7 (*Los últimos Gondra, Viejo amigo Cicerón, Medea, El pequeño Pony (The Little Pony), Los idiotas, Unamuno, vencerás pero no convencerás* and *Ulloa*) and are developed in works with a special treatment of the dramatic component “character”, which is relevant in contemporary theatre, linked to related functions. Luna (2020) describes the process of creating the dramatic text, in which the protagonist and dramaturg of *Unamuno, vencerás pero no convencerás* modifies the script after a session in which video bursts in as an inspiring element. As Luna confessed (In-depth interview with Álvaro Luna, 2024), “the character speaks to himself throughout almost the entire work, which made mechanisms necessary to avoid the empty spaces typical of a work with a single character and to dynamise the action”. Moreover, the games between past and present, the character’s doubts about his way of acting—which form the core of the work and link it to the real historical facts of his actions in the first months of the war— allowed moments of repetition of actions and fragmented reflection to be united in a play between image, character and mirror, which are recurrent in his work (Interview with Álvaro Luna). In other examples such as *Ullóa, Los idiotas* or *Viejo amigo Cicerón, La gran Cenobia* scenic moments unfold in which fictional characters embodying historical referents appear and come to life, conversations take place with characters from the past or already deceased. It is also worth highlighting that many of these works achieve a special balance between the scenic and video-scenic parts, as they depend on the creation of two (or more) spaces that dialogue with each other: one live, the other visual, as can be easily observed in *Viejo amigo Cicerón*.

As for textual video scene, it does not occur predominantly in any case, although it is present in some works on a punctual basis. The texts are arranged statically, adding to scenographic elements (*Mi niña, niña mía*), or they fulfil functions of revealing information, contextualising space and time, or serving as transitions between acts or scenes, with phrases, places and dates. In the case of sentences, they occupy the entire image space or are placed on one side, drawing the spectator’s complete attention because they require careful reading over several seconds. In the latter cases they tend towards the function of intertitles between acts, that is, with a transitional function, as in *Todos pájaros*.

4. Conclusions

The video and its conceptualisation as a component of drama through the video scene enable audiovisual experimentation through various avenues, which can be summarised as a search for all the possibilities of the screen and projection within scenic proposals. These appear to possess an extreme capacity to overflow spatio-temporal boundaries with which each work locates itself for the interpretation that takes place during the process of reception. There is also a resignification of

² Other examples not included in the exhibition are *España, 1936* (Andrés Lima, 2024) and *Falsestuff. The Death of the Muses* (Nao Albert and Marcel Borrás, 2023).

theatrical media, to varying degrees, through a refunctioning that causes the live scenic presence to interact with all dramatic components — time, space and character.

In this sense, video as a medium and technology seems to constitute a specific territory of interaction between the live scenic and the diegetic world of the work, with the intention of expanding it and establishing links with the act of reception. These links are concerned with informational enrichment, with the opening of emotional functions in the construction of characters' bodies (scenic or video-scenic) and with the multiplication and/or extension of the space of attention for the spectator. Frequently the functions found in a single work are multiple and, in each case, appear to be configured in a singular manner, which is consistent with diverse artistic production processes.

Nevertheless, considering this analysis three formulas or configurations can be distinguished. The first and most common is the video scene with overhead projection, with contextual functions, of space and time or of presentation and relation of characters, as is permitted by a dramatic piece based on a classical text, with a single scenic space, whether with fixed scenography into which the video is inserted, or generating it through the video itself. This type presupposes a video scene that has been previously scripted and included in the work in the form of a screen or background projection (in its many dimensions and forms). In this case, the work makes use of video to fulfil specific functions, while integrating it as one more element alongside scenography, lighting or costume, which derives from a primary conception of the inclusion of video. Within this, the majority option can be considered the single projection, although some cases resort to multi-screen. As a variant, a tendency is also observed (or can be included here) for the screen to camouflage itself within an object that forms part of the scenography, which has been termed the theatricalisation of the video scene.

In a second configuration there is videomapping, an option of growing complexity that has been chosen on few occasions and in pieces of classical origin, which precisely premiered in open-air theatres, with a great weight of the architectural component. The work is conceived as a total spectacle, where video, with notable technical display, has presence beyond a functional role.

Finally, one can speak of other works that include a more decided integration of video; this becomes part of the core of dramatic conviction, beyond its location as background and punctual duties. These are the cases of works with a characterising function. In them the games and planes of simultaneity, duality, character construction... are intensified: video occupies various functions, but their set configures an option for a more abstract diegesis. This type of work has a clear discursive intent and, in some cases, reaches certain degrees of rupture with theatrical illusion. Video, in this case, possesses full capacities of dramaturgy; it is an integrated presence and one of coexistence with the scenic event itself and, therefore, constructs in an integral manner a particular conceptual bet of postdramatic type, where the rupture with the illusion of transparency of representation is made clear. In this commitment of the author and video-scenic artist with the spectator there is maintained and found a clear bet on functions where video expands the limits of performative dramaturgy, in some cases without renouncing more traditional punctual uses (proper to previous configurations).

In so far as the video scene involves all components of drama — characters, scenography, time and space — in a discursive process of creation, but adds an original and totalising contribution to the process of reception itself, it causes the scenic event to recover its political function, turning it into a total problematising artistic space of the scenic: that is to say, representation and theatrical reception are called into question from a latent hypertextuality through the use of audiovisual, which involves the public in participating in and interpreting the drama from a constructive social debate. In that generation would lie the production of knowledge from the video artist and from the public, in a theatrical space that is inserted into a social context of growing screenification and digitalisation.

In short, video content links with all kinds of cultural texts, generating new forms of openness to the transdisciplinary; especially in performative practices it finds gaps, formulas, strategies with which to interact. This suggests that various forms of presence, avatarisation and hybrid corporeality will originally populate theatrical texts — and others — in the future.

The options for integration of the live camera and real time will increase as systems become more stable and applications are configured that can even be controlled by the actor on stage. It will be a challenge for research and creation to locate and analyse the possibilities that video in its immersive, virtual reality and 360° modality proposes for the virtualisation of characters — bodies and subjectivities — and the creation of dramaturgies and narratives.

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