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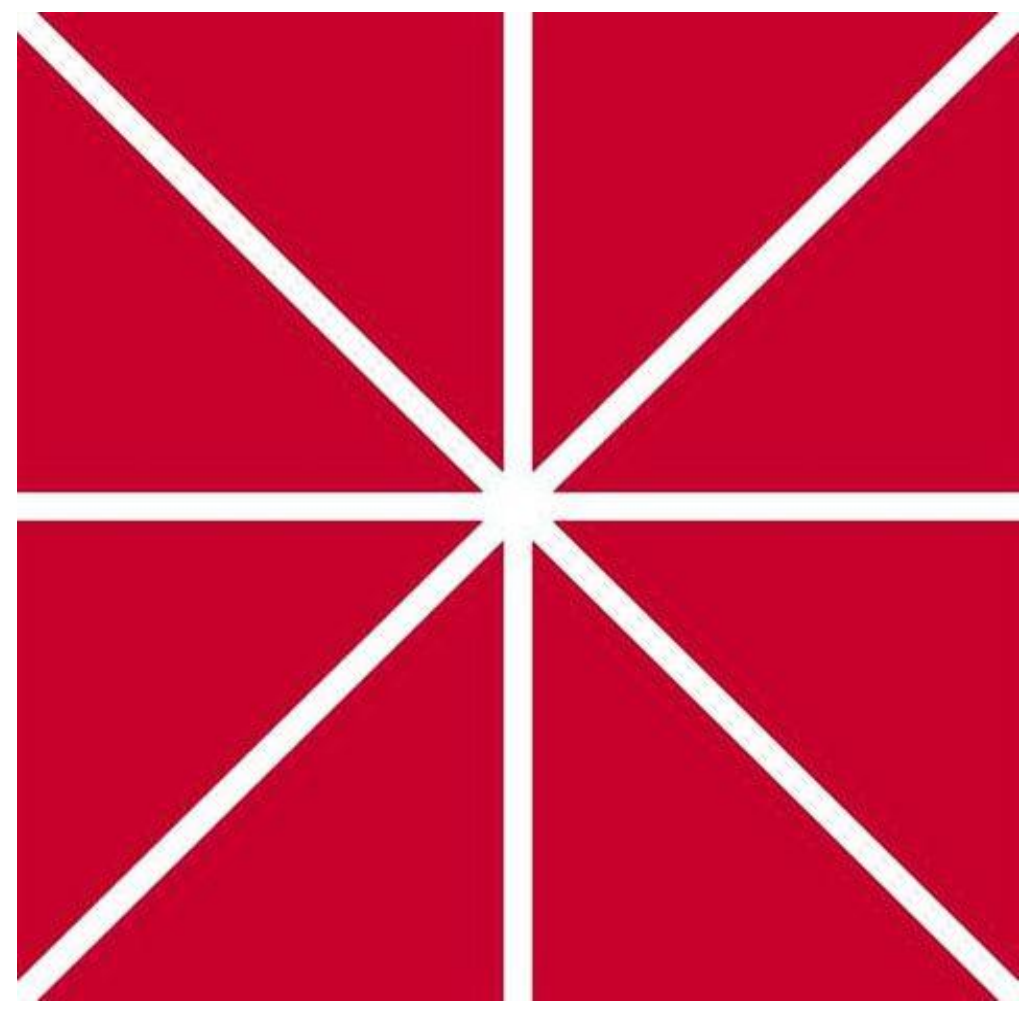
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eSports: A New Take on Entertainment in Immersive Theatre

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Thesis:

Theatre and performance art can be defined in various ways and exists in many different forms. eSports focuses on video games, but it is no different than a production of a play. The players are the actors, who have dedicated countless hours of their time to honing their craft of playing a certain game. The audience members are the viewers that watch from home or attend the events in person, expecting to see professional gameplay that could be compared to professional acting. The difference between eSports and traditional theatre, however, is the interactive experience that it provides. Because eSports is so interactive, it can't be described as regular theatre, but instead as immersive theatre.

Methodology:

Because of how contemporary eSports is, I conducted almost all of my research online, utilizing electronically published articles, reports, and studies. The sources that I used focus on the interactive/social appeal to eSports and how those qualities resemble what it means to be considered a new form of immersive theatre. The reputable quality of my arguments were supported by the famous organizations and companies that the authors of the resources belonged to, such as ESPN and Playbill. I showcase graphs that reveal how eSports pulls the attention of the modern audience. I then emphasized how eSports impacts our social communities through the use of online streaming, high live-production value, and its accessibility to young artists. I then analyze how these qualities affect theatrical communities as well as how eSports can be welcomed into the world of theatre.



Significance:

eSports constantly grows, garnering new spectators from around the world everyday. This popularity has exponentially grown within the last ten years due to online streaming services in tandem with the growth of technology. The footing that eSports has established so far has been accomplished with the support from prestigious sponsors such as Coca Cola and Red Bull. This kind of support is what theatre needs today. Traditional theatre needs innovative methods to capture the attention of modern audiences and continue to thrive in the artistic world. By connecting a modern form of performance art with a traditional one, eSports exposes people to endless creative possibilities, which they can then take into their own lives and apply them to their theatrical communities.

Moving Forward:

The most important step in recognizing eSports as a theatrical form is to simply spread the word about it. It's time to move conversations from "What is eSports?" to "I know eSports" Video games and theatre may not seem connected at first, but once those similarities become clear, we can then, as an artistic community, help eSports grow as well as learning from the successful model that it has become. eSports is the catalyst that theatre needs to continue to grab more community members. The immersive nature of eSports allows it to make the first step in appealing to a brand new spectator, creating that first connection. Interactiveness is what compels audience members to stay and not only watch, but be a part of the event. In my years as a theatre member, nothing has captivated me more than eSports. The most important thing about theatre is telling a story, and eSports will not only show you, but also make you a part of it.

