**Miss Castro and the métempsycose**

A so-called 'Miss Castro' performed *The story of Galathée* at the Folies Bergère in Paris and toured around many fairs in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. Her show illustrated a so-called 'métempsycose': *"La statue s'évanouit, les formes disaparaissent, et vous voyez apparaître Galathée naturelle et vivante, qui se transforme ensuite en un magnifique bouquet de fleurs."* Late nineteenth-century showmen turned 'métempsycose' into an illusionary technique giving grandeur to 'living statues'. By using optical illusion, the 'métempsycose' illustrated the migration of the soul from one body to another and was inspired by theories of Plato, Pythagoras and mystical religions. Inspired by Belgian archival material and late nineteenth-century discourse analysis, this paper will question the nineteenth-century métempsycose on popular stages, its technical aspects and the relation to similar illusionary stage techniques at fairground booths and music halls.