CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Performance Studies Focus Group (PSFG) Sessions
Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Conference
August 5-8, 2021– Austin, Texas

RE: ATHE

Submission Deadlines:
November 1: for submission of abstracts for individual papers to conference planner Jessi Piggott at jppiggott@stanford.edu
December 1: for submission of complete session proposals directly to ATHE at www.athe.org.

Join the PSFG panel brainstorm on Padlet. (Password: PSFG)

The Performance Studies Focus Group (PSFG) of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) invites paper and session proposals for ATHE’s 2021 annual meeting in Austin. Proposals will be welcomed in many formats—e.g. scholarly panels, seminars, roundtables, performance-based presentations, working groups, and other innovative, alternative-session structures—as well as on all theatre- and performance-related topics, particularly those that address the 2021 ATHE conference theme of “RE: ATHE.”

Re - in regards to. A call for reckoning and self-reflection, above all with the legacies of white supremacy and settler colonialism that continue to shape performance studies as a discipline as well as ATHE as an institution. What needs to be rethought, rejected, reinvented in the wake of this reckoning? Re, too, as an invitation to consider the “syncopated” time of performance (Schneider), of “repetition and revision” (Parks), of returns, renewals and remains that urge us to interrogate easy narratives of linearity and progress. As we plan to meet in Austin, the city itself helps us consider the rebellious spirit of a liberal cultural hub in the heart of an historically conservative state, while also recognizing the displacement of vulnerable populations catalyzed by those same cultural forces. PSFG encourages papers and proposals representing all historical periods and geographic locations. Proposals might consider, but are not limited to, some of the following questions, or pose alternatives to them:
**Reckon** - How has performance studies as a discipline been complicit in the operations of anti-Black racism? What reparations are due? What forms might anti-racism work take in performance-oriented methodologies, practices, research agendas, and pedagogies? What violences are enacted through entrenched paradigms like “professionalization” as they intersect with race, ability, gender, and class? How might performance resist, rethink and remake those paradigms?

**Reparation** - How are we and our affiliated institutions complicit in continuing generational wealth and opportunities? How might we as artists, scholars, educators, and activists facilitate reparations?

**Restore & Reclaim** - As wildfires rip through California and new pipelines pave the way towards catastrophic climate change, how does this moment call us to (re)consider the relationships we enact to land? How might we think with and through performance and land restoration: what gestures, acts and words are restorative? How do calls for Indigenous stewardship intersect with the discourse performativity?

**Revolt** - Uprisings across the US are reverberating around the globe, as state-sanctioned violence is turned again and again against Black bodies. How can performance methodologies help us attend to this repertoire of revolt? How might performance histories help situate and contextualize these within a remembered tradition of resistance? How are acts of revolt shaped by questions of access, ability, risk and privilege? What is at stake in the witnessing of revolt and what modes of spectatorship emerge around it?

**Reframe** - How might we, as educators and public intellectuals, push back on mass media framings of revolt and resistance? What political purchase lies in the act of reframing? What emerges when BIPOC practices and methodologies reframe performance history? How are Indigenous scholars and artists using performance to reframe Indigenous sovereignty and unsettle settler-colonialist epistemologies? Is the concept of reframing helpful in larger projects of decolonization - whether in the classroom, the studio or the street?

**Recuperate–Recover–Repair** - How can performance, specifically, address the need to balance recuperation and recovery with the urgency of redress and revolution? What acts of repair--material and affective, abstract or practical--can our methods and techniques enact?
How to Submit Your Proposal:

The format for this year’s submissions will be the same as in previous years, with the significant exception that decisions will need to be made about whether panels will be remote or in-person along the way, with final decisions on hybridity being made April 1, 2021. **Whether you can make it in person or need to present remotely, we encourage you to submit to the 2021 conference.** We look forward to our correspondence and planning with you all, and if we can provide any assistance in putting together potential panels for PSFG, please let us now.

1. All session proposals must be submitted directly to ATHE via their website, [www.ATHE.org](http://www.ATHE.org) by **December 1, 2020**. After submission, please forward a copy of your completed proposal to PSFG conference planner Jessi Piggott ([jpiggott@stanford.edu](mailto:jpiggott@stanford.edu)).

2. With an eye toward helping promote networking opportunities via PSFG, especially amongst new ATHE members, we are working to improve the individual-paper submission process. If you are looking for co-panelists, we are happy to assist in two ways:

   a. **Visit our Padlet brainstorming page** to pitch your panel idea and connect with other scholars looking for co-panelists. No sign up necessary! Just [click this link](https://example.com) and enter password: PSFG

   b. **You can also submit individual paper proposals or incomplete panel proposals in search of additional panelists to PSFG Conference Planner Jessi Piggott ([jpiggott@stanford.edu](mailto:jpiggott@stanford.edu)) by November 1.** Individual paper proposals should include a title, an abstract of 250 words, contact information and affiliation, and a brief bio. Incomplete panel proposals should include a session title and session abstract of 250 words, in addition to the components listed above for each contributing panelist (title, paper abstract, contact info and affiliation, bio). The Focus Group Conference Planner will work with these submissions to curate panels, matching up related papers, and then put those authors in touch with one another so that they can craft their own session proposal by the December 1 deadline.
3. ATHE also accepts proposals for Multidisciplinary (MD) Sessions. Multidisciplinary Sessions must be sponsored by two different focus groups. All MD session organizers must contact the Conference Planners of both sponsoring groups before submitting their session directly to ATHE. Rather than thinking of these sessions as “multidisciplinary,” then—for much of our work in theatre and performance studies is inherently multidisciplinary—think of these sessions as “multi-focus group.” Crafting your proposal so it will address the constituencies of these different focus groups will likely make your MD Session proposal more successful. More information on proposing Multidisciplinary Sessions will be available on ATHE’s website (www.ATHE.org) soon.

4. If you are considering an in-person panel (conditions permitting), please indicate A/V needs in your session proposal. If you do request audio or visual aids—particularly an LCD Screen and/or sound equipment—please be aware of the following: in order to schedule as many excellent Focus Group sessions as possible, your session may be scheduled in a room without any audio or visual aids available. You will need to confirm in the proposal whether or not you would be willing to present this session if the requested audio-visual is not available. Please understand that, if you say you are unwilling to present without audio-visual aids, the odds of your proposal acceptance may be negatively affected. See additional information about A/V requests here. You may request one piece of A/V equipment for free (see previous link for list of equipment). If you need more than one piece of A/V equipment, please remember to apply for the appropriate grant to cover the cost of A/V support at the time that you submit your session proposal. The grant must be requested separately from the submission of your proposal.

5. Notifications for accepted and rejected sessions are typically announced by mid-March. Successful panelists will have until April 1 to decide if they will present remotely or (conditions permitting) in person.

6. **Attention Contingent Faculty and Independent Scholars: If ATHE 2021 is an in-person event**, the Performance Studies Focus Group will be awarding one $500 travel grant to a Contingent Faculty or Independent Scholar presenting work at the 2021 ATHE Conference in Austin, conditions permitting. The travel grant application will circulate in early 2021 via the ATHE and PSFG listservs. The application will not be labor intensive and will include a CV, a brief description of your ATHE goals and its importance to your professional development, and an attachment with your paper or panel acceptance into the
PSFG stream for ATHE 2021. If you have any questions about eligibility or logistics, please contact PSFG Member-at-Large, Krista Miranda: krista.miranda@gmail.com.

7. PSFG will also be launching its annual **Emerging Scholars competition** in early 2021. Graduate students and early career scholars and artists who have not previously presented at ATHE will be encouraged to submit complete papers and works; selected winners will receive an honorarium, mentorship from established scholars, and free registration for the PSFG pre- or post-conference. If you have any questions, please direct them to PSFG Graduate Student Rep Clara Wilch: cwilch@ucla.edu.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, or would like to join the PSFG listserv, please contact:

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