CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Performance Studies Focus Group (PSFG) Sessions
Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Conference
July 28-31, 2022– Detroit, Michigan

Rehearsing the Possible: Practicing Reparative Creativity

Submission Deadlines:
**November 8:** for submission of abstracts for individual papers to conference planner Jessi Piggott at jpiggott@stanford.edu

**December 3:** 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 2022 annual meeting in Detroit. 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 2022 ATHE conference theme of “Rehearsing the Possible: Practicing Reparative Creativity.”

After a year and a half of a worldwide pandemic and continued political upheaval, the “possible” and the “reparative” represent hope and justice, but also loss and resentment. Revisiting the site of an imagined in-person ATHE 2019 in Detroit, the “Renaissance City,” and ATHE’s something-of-a-return are indicative of these myriad contradictions. Against this backdrop, we ask: What possibilities arise from framing reparation as “a critical, political and artistic practice” (Dorinne Kondo)? How might the field of Performance Studies facilitate reparation, and what obstacles and limitations do we face in the process? What assumptions underlie our call for reparative creativity? From whom does this call demand labor and whose futures are embodied in performances of the possible?

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:
● How do notions of utopia, such as Jill Dolan’s “utopian performatives,” work alongside, against, or within existing structures and institutions? How might they liberate? How might they constrain or erase?
● In *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, Alison Kafer challenges futures that present the idealized life devoid of disability. How might we complicate rehearsals of the possible that could also be (un)intentionally eugenicist?
● How does the call for reparation evoke 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?
● What conversations might the city of Detroit inspire when thinking about Black futurity and rehearsing the possible? How might we return to and build on the conversations initiated at the 2020 PSFG Post-Con “Performing Black Futures”, which asked: How might performance frame, archive, and expand notions of Black aesthetics and geographies, Black feminist and Queer futures, and Afrofuturism?
● How might performance frameworks such as twice-behaved behavior address and enact radical institutional change, and how might they reify said institutions? What are other discursive strategies within Performance Studies that highlight potentiality?
● How have COVID-provoked adaptations shown us new possibilities or changed our understanding of mediation? What impact has the use of livestreams, recordings, social media, websites, spreadsheets, and phones had on contemporary performance practices? Likewise, how has our extended engagement with virtual media shaped our view of live, in-person theater? Are we on the verge of a “return to normal” or has “normal” permanently shifted?

**How to Submit Your Proposal:**

1. All session proposals must be submitted directly to ATHE via their website, [www.ATHE.org](http://www.ATHE.org) by December 3, 2021.

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 three 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](#) and enter password: PSFG

b. **Join us for a virtual happy hour** to meet other PSFG folks and brainstorm panels. The happy hour will be held on Thursday, October 21 at 7:30PM Eastern / 4:30PM Pacific. Details for how to join the session will be sent out prior to the event on the [PSFG listserv](#).

c. **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 8.** 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](http://www.ATHE.org)) soon.

4. 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.

6. **Attention Contingent Faculty and Independent Scholars:** The Performance Studies Focus Group will be awarding one $500 travel grant to a Contingent Faculty or Independent Scholar presenting work at the 2022 ATHE Conference in Detroit, conditions permitting. The travel grant application will circulate in early 2022 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 2022. If you have any questions about eligibility or logistics, please contact PSFG Conference Planner-Elect, Krista Miranda: krista.miranda@gmail.com.

7. PSFG will also be launching its annual **Emerging Scholars competition** in early 2022. 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 Alison Mahoney: amm540@pitt.edu

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

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