This is a four-panel series examining, through an internationalist lens, notions of performing Americanness; we interrogate the ethical and political need for response and the responsibilities of performances originating and extending from an American milieu. Co-Curated by Joshua Abrams, Jennifer Parker-Starbuck and Ramon Rivera-Servera. Co-sponsored by Performance Studies and Latina/o Focus Groups.

Thursday, July 28th

1:30pm-3:00pm “Response/Ability: Exporting America 1: Strife”

This panel looks at the construction of countermemories and counternarratives of American identity. In an Age of Empire, how do minor histories of American political difference get represented and remembered? Does the US have a responsibility to stage alternatives to prevailing discourses? Josh Abrams questions the notion of touristic complicity in reproducing imperialistic hegemonies. Does market capitalism frame any American abroad as neo-colonialist and is there an ethical way of subverting this construction?

Wendy Arons investigates the exportation of alternative images of Americans abroad through US vacationers’ participation in WWOOF (Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms), framing it as performative activity with potentially transformative effects (real and ideological) for participants and native hosts. In the context of evolving 9-11 memorializations, Laurie Beth Clark considers memorials to traumatic events, globally and domestically. She considers institutional memorial structures and their sometimes contradictory user deployments. She focuses on US veteran tourism to Vietnam and memorials at My Lai, the DMZ, and the Saigon War Museum. Ann Folino White’s discussion of the USDA’s 1933 World’s Fair exhibit and a 1933 Wisconsin dairy farmer protest reformulates existing representations of performed Americanness. Her demonstration of citizens’ perceived interdependence illuminates problems with urban bias in extant performance historiography.

Chair/Respondent: Nick Ridout, Queen Mary University of London

Panelists:

Laurie Beth Clark, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Trauma Memorials
Wendy Arons, University of Notre Dame, WWOOF: Exporting Eco-Friendly Activism
Joshua Abrams, Roehampton University/ CUNY Graduate Center, Complicit Imperialism and the Liberal Voyager
Ann Folino White, Northwestern University, “For Milk We’ve Only Water”: Farmers and the Federal Government’s Food Rights Performances

Saturday, July 30th

10:45am-12:15pm “Response/Ability: Exporting America 2: Stars”

This panel looks at individual performances of American identity and explores the ways in which these ‘star’ identities refract general notions of what it means to be ‘American.’ How does the role of the star performer allow for notions of dissenting views of American imperial presence? Henry Bial’s paper explores the carefully-crafted image of the American West deployed by New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson. Richardson, the US’s leading Hispanic Democrat, has created a public persona that combines conservative frontier mythology with a more inclusive narrative of the West as multicultural utopia, propelling him to a leading place on the national and world political stages. David Roman’s paper considers the performance artist John Kelly’s 2004 version of Joni Mitchell’s classic 1960s anthem “Woodstock” in “Get Up and Jive,” his third full-evening tribute show to Mitchell’s brilliant musical career, and tracking the ways Kelly mines the Mitchell archive to retrieve countercultural practices and sentiments. Ramón H. Rivera-Servera examines the celebration of Helldorado Days in Tombstone, AZ in light of the 2004 presidential election. He discusses the layered discourses of history, memory and nationalism circulated in this honky-tonk Wild West scenario and the role of political campaigning within this performance event.

Chair/Respondent: Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez, Mt. Holyoke College

Panelists:
4:00pm-5:30pm “Response/Ability: Exporting America 3: Stages”

This panel looks at the bidirectional influence of American theatrical performance both today and historically. What are the responsibilities of American performers with issues of cultural translation? How are American politics translated into non-American readings of American theatre? Xavier Lemoine discusses strategies and counter-strategies adopted by the Parisian stage to circulate and contain the performance of America. Examining recent Parisian productions, he asks how a nation bearing the burden of global hegemony can be accommodated by another that claims to be a major player in world theatre? Rebecca Schneider examines the reenactment of Grotowski’s Akropolis, itself reenacted for a documentary in London, 1968 and then brought to NY via Richard Schechner. The film has been recently reenacted by a descendent of Grotowski’s Lab (also via Schechner), Liz LeCompte’s Wooster Group. Schneider explores the politics of theatrical “drag” across national borders and the temporal drag of reenactment together with Grotowski’s essay on theatrical lineage, “You are Someone’s Son.” After its 1922 U.S. premiere, The Hairy Ape, O’Neill’s expressionistic exploration of the U.S.’s transition from agrarian to industrial economy, was produced in Lima, Peru. Tamara Underiner examines cultural translation between U.S. and Latin America through the racial politics of its performance in both locales.

Chair/Respondent: Anthony Kubiak, University of California, Irvine

Panelists:

- **Tamara Underiner**, Arizona State University, *Transcontinental Substantiations in the Recent Work of Caticue Theater Company*
- **Rebecca Schneider**, Brown University, *Double Crossing: Liz LeCompte and "Someone's Son“*
- **Xavier Lemoine**, University of Nantes, *Dis/Integration of American Performance(s) on the Parisian Stage*

5:45pm-7:15pm “Response/Ability: Exporting America 4: Self-Fashioning”

This panel looks at the construction of notions of what it means to be American at a particular point in history. How are certain sites and locutions complicit in the production of an ‘American identity’ and the marketing of notions of American identity? How do specific historical and geographical locations and dislocations frame the constructed meaning of Americanness? Jen Mitas’s paper proposes a relationship between acting techniques for ‘emotion’ and antidepressants as technologies of the self that facilitate a particular experience/representation of self and emotion. As her point of focus, she will consider the marketing of these famously American technologies in European contexts. Jennifer Parker-Starbuck’s paper addresses the performance of dis-placed American identity through global telemarketing, the performance of this disembodied placelessness in the Builder’s Association’s Alladeen and her own American expatriation abroad. Maurya Wickstrom suggests that the American Girl Place and products are a constituent part an emergent paradigm she calls “Becoming American,” depending on a corpuscular spread through American culture in the form of clubs, classes, learning materials, and fashion shows. The Becoming American performance paradigm is sourced in a nationalist, xenophobic, corporate sensibility, which allies itself with the imperialist objectives of this historical moment.

Chair/Respondent: Shannon Jackson, University of California, Berkeley

Panelists:

- **Maurya Wickstrom**, College of Staten Island, *Making Americans: Performance and American Girl Place*
- **Jen Mitas**, Queen Mary University of London, *Doing Business with the Subconscious: Strasberg’s Affective Memory and Eli Lilly’s Prozac*
- **Jennifer Parker-Starbuck**, Roehampton University, *"Hello, and Welcome to Moviefone": International Telemarketing and Disembodied Americanness*