

**‘Performance as Research and Democracy’
Performance as Research Working Group Call for Papers**

The 2015 annual conference of International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) will be organized by the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Hyderabad (UoH).

For the 2014 meeting of the Performance as Research Working Group of the IFTR, we are sending out a call for proposals that will respond to the wider conference theme, “Theatre and Democracy”, but from a specifically Performance as Research (PaR) perspective, with a special focus on politics, methodology and performance in a wide sense, including dance, theatre, live art and experimental practices. In *Practice-as-Research in Performance and Screen*, Baz Kershaw (2009) suggests that ‘the *foundational principles* of practice-as-research work to a democratically deconstructive and decentering agenda.’ Meanwhile, Chantal Mouffe (2002) argues that there is a fundamental conflict in liberal-democracy of individual human rights versus the community and popular participation. We seek to interrogate the relationship between democracy and performance as research, and welcome proposals exploring (but not limited to) the following themes:

1. *PaR, politics and society*

What is the relationship of PaR projects to the larger society where they take place?

How do practitioner-researchers conduct PaR research in and across cultures and institutions, and how are they responding to specific social and political systems?

How are PaR projects involved in democracy and social action in the public sphere?

How can PaR projects respond to democratic issues of representation and dialogue in terms of culture, gender and sexuality through performance/research design?

How can we include our non-human counterparts in a PaR ecology, with animals, plants, objects, space, and networks all considered as part of the performance/research process?

Can performance as research projects envision more democratic institutional structures for society?

2. *PaR, and performance practice*

What kinds of PaR practice particularly explore and/or challenge ideals of democracy and why?

Can we locate PaR case studies that aspire to specific qualities of democracy or operate outside of democratic processes?

What power relations are in operation in the production of performances in PaR projects including issues of authority, censorship, access to resources, institutional directives and so on?

What is the status of the various practitioners in performance projects and who has a voice in the dissemination of performance as research?

3. *PaR, democracy and methodology*

What is the relationship between PaR as a methodology and democratic values?

Is the idea of PaR as democratic valid or even valuable, and what are the alternatives?

Is PaR a more 'democratic' methodology than others, in areas of research activities and dissemination?

Who are the 'eligible citizens' in PaR projects – who is being included or excluded and who is being represented?

How do the democratic ideals of PaR projects compare with those of social sciences and other disciplines?

How do digital technologies impact on the distribution of PaR projects and what are the issues of participation, access, inclusion, policy and rights involved in the circulation of materials online?

How can the PaR WG devise methods for dialogue and engagement with the issues of its membership within the WG context?

We are planning a collaborative session with the Queer Futures WG, if you feel your proposal fits within both the remit of Performance as Research and Queer Futures, please identify this in your proposal.

The deadline for abstract submissions is JANUARY 31, 2015.

All applicants should follow the instructions regarding abstract submission through the conference website <http://www.iftr2015hyd.in/call-for-papers/>

Application Process

The PAR working group at any conference is strictly **limited to 25 participants**. You can participate in the WG as a **presenter** or **participant**. Please mark your preferred role clearly on your abstract submission.

To join as a presenter, send an abstract of (maximum) 250 words via the Cambridge University Press website by **31 January 2015**. Please copy your abstract to **performanceasresearch@gmail.com**. The process for accepting abstracts will be competitive. The Working Group conveners will review all abstracts and make selections. **A maximum of 15 presentations will be selected.**

To join as a participant, please submit a short letter of motivation by **31 January 2015**, directly to **performanceasresearch@gmail.com** indicating why you would like to be a participant and what your interest in the topic is. **A maximum of 10 participants will be selected.** It is required that participants will be registered for the conference.

The chosen presenters will then write a 3000 word paper. The papers will be made available to all presenters and participants, before the conference. All finalized papers must be submitted by **5th of May (eight weeks before the conference)** and any papers submitted after this date may be excluded from the Working Group.

For more details on the process see "Aims and methods of the Working Group" ([link here](#))

In addition we will be proposing a **panel** from the working group to the main conference program. If you wish to be considered for the panel please indicate this clearly in your abstract submission.

We remain committed to enabling **new members** to engage with the Working Group, and we will reserve up to 10 places at the meeting for them. New members may elect to formally present or propose attendance as a participant, which is often a good way to first experience the Working Group. Applicants should submit a brief CV and statement of interest in Performance as Research (and an abstract if they wish to present) to **performanceasresearch@gmail.com** by **31 January 2014**.

There will be spaces for some **Visitors** who are attending the main conference. Visitors can observe some of the Working Group sessions, and do not have to be available for all of the Working Group sessions. Visitors should contact us on performanceasresearch@gmail.com at least one week in advance of the conference in order to express an interest.

All applicants should also follow the instructions regarding submission through the conference website: <http://www.iftr2015hyd.in/>

We look forward to your responses to this call!

Annette Arlander, Jonathan Heron and Emma Meehan