

Contemporary Acting Techniques in Eurasian Theatre, Performance and Audiovisual Arts: Intercultural and Intermedia Perspective

Online conference
28–30 September 2021

Faculty of Humanities of the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń
The Grotowski Institute, Wrocław
in collaboration with the Bridges Foundation

Contemporary acting encompasses a wide range of established and evolving approaches, techniques and strategies. This conference, the second conference held as part of the InlanDimensions International Arts Festival – will offer a platform of dialogue for international researchers and practitioners focused on contemporary acting techniques interpreted from an intercultural and intermedia perspective. We cordially invite all researchers interested in contemporary Eurasian theatre and performance, cinema and audiovisual arts. This Eurasian dimension provokes investigation of cultural exchanges between East and West, including the spread of ideas and practices, intercultural influences and interweavings, inspirations coming from the masters of the 20th century and stimulating practices of intercultural theatre, as well as embracing the area of audiovisual and digital technologies. Avenues of inquiry might include the liminal territory of live performers, animated objects and mediated images, living bodies and inanimate matter (puppets, objects, analog/digital pictures), corresponding with inventions in the field of hybrid forms of performance. As the organisers, we would like to focus especially on the newest acting techniques – ideas, concepts and practices from the turn of the 21st century – as they are creative continuations of particular traditions and/or re-interpretations of the achievements of theatre, performance and cinema masters.

The organisers encourage submissions that explore the following research territories and issues:

1) Back To The Roots/Re-Inventing Innovators

To what extent the theatre and performance practitioners inspired by traditional techniques can be seen as innovative? What about the tension between preservation of historical patterns of onstage behaviour and the purpose of groundbreaking innovation? Jerzy Grotowski's 'poor theatre' and the notion of the Performer delivered his personal 'reply to Stanislavski' – what are the newest replies to Grotowski, Brecht, Hijikata, Mei Lanfang, etc.? What are the achievements of the practitioners of theatre anthropology following Grotowski, Peter Brook or Eugenio Barba? What innovations does bring the postdramatic theatre, contemporary cinema and audiovisual arts?

2) Encounters/Mobility

How effective are the encounters of Western and Eastern actors/performers at the crossroads of ideas and practices? For instance, how can we explain the expansion of Japanese *butoh* and its widespread presence all over the world? What are the modes of transcultural exchanges, routes of wandering performers, forms of collaboration, knowledge transfer, multicultural training and casting? How are Eastern actors' techniques used in the practice of Western performing arts? What are the effects of applying conventions of traditional theatre (e.g. local variants of *xiqu*) in the process of staging Western drama or interweaving Western physical theatre with Eastern dance and martial arts?

3) Embodiment

What are the local philosophical/religious/ritual concepts of the body-mind relationship and what is their impact on acting/performing techniques? What is the influence of the latest research in the field of cognitive science on academic understanding of the actor's/performer's practice? Which dimension of the actor's body as medium could be perceived as the most promising for the future of performing arts, with regard to the exploration of multisensory contact between performers and spectators (spect-actors)? What is the prospect of physical theatre in the development of corporeal skills regarding the performer's motoric and energetic body? What are the major ethical issues related to training techniques (including the master's temptation to manipulate his/her students, physical and mental nakedness abuse, various forms of violence)?

4) Liveness/Hybridity

What are the challenges of interaction of human performers, non-human agents (e.g. puppets, robots, cyborgs), live performance and digital technology (motion capture, VR, etc.)? How do these interactions affect hybrid behavioural repertoires, performance expressions and the basic definition of the *conditio humana*? Are there any grounds for general fear of theatre's and live performance's erasure or even extinction in a digital-only environment?

We welcome different approaches and perspectives and therefore encourage submissions from various disciplines. The working language of the conference will be English (20-minute papers). The organisers of the conference aim to publish selected papers in a peer-reviewed journal.

Invited keynote speakers

Eugenio Barba
Tang Shu-wing
Danny Yung

Submissions

Abstracts (up to 300 words) and biographical notes including the author's affiliation and e-mail address should be sent to actingtechniques2021@gmail.com.

Application deadline 30 June 2021

Acceptance notifications 31 July 2021

Conference fee

400 PLN/90 EUR/90 USD, Ph.D. students 200 PLN/45 EUR/45 USD

Conference team

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Maciej Szatkowski, Ph.D. (Centre for Chinese Language and Culture, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń)
Jarosław Fret, Monika Blige (Director and Deputy Director of the Grotowski Institute, Wrocław)
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The conference will be hosted online by the Faculty of Humanities of the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland. Unregistered viewers will have direct access to a live feed, subject to platform limitations.

The conference is part of the InlandDimensions International Arts Festival.
For more information, visit <https://inlanddimensions.com>.

