



CALL FOR CONFERENCE PROPOSALS and PERFORMANCES

Drama for Life in partnership with the Norwegian University of Science and Technology Presents:

Performing Democracy

The fire. The fight. The fiction?

CONFERENCE DATES: 16-19 August 2021

This online conference results from a long-standing collaboration between two centres of applied theatre education and research in South Africa and Norway (2017- 2022). It invites knowledge, critical conversations and artistic work related to issues of democracy, both historical and contemporary, within the global framework of our current (post)-democracies.

We invite stories, presentations, performances, experiments and workshops from artists, teachers, art therapists, students and researchers who explore the potential and challenges of theatre as a political-performative medium in dealing with community-specific democratic issues.

The online conference seeks to respond to current events within the Arts sector by asking pertinent questions around DEMOCRACY, inclusion, and performance work that challenges post-democratic conditions, corruption, and uninspiring leadership.

- What are the academic, activist, arts educator, therapist and artist roles in the current landscape of destabilised democracies and the post-pandemic climate?
- How can theatre facilitate equality and contribute to effective democracy?
- How can theatre both stabilise and destabilise, for example, in times of revolutions?
- How do contemporary democracies affect people, artists, arts therapists, arts educators, and theatre-makers?
- When, in democratic contexts, is arts-based theatre research inclusive or exclusive?
- How does theatre negotiate its autonomy against frameworks of donors, funders, and stakeholders?
- How does theatre offer a space for dealing with a traumatic past?
- What role do lived experiences play to challenge the status quo in society and activate political change?

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- What terms has the world offered to the creative forces of theatre and drama to unravel and de-ravel the paradoxes and complexities of 21st-century democracy?
- How may human performance represent more than human existence and challenge anthropocentrism?
- What is the role of theatre in the era of Big Data, deep fakes and algorithmically determined media consumption?

We are looking for projects, research papers, presentations, workshops and other creative research which investigates drama/theatre/performance and its relationship to relevant democratic issues, protest and (un)resolution.

Performance work is welcome; however, as this is an online Conference and Festival, applicants will need to consider how to present their work on an engaging online platform.

We are excited about innovative and relevant research about reimagining democracy- especially in this unprecedented time.

Please submit abstracts (250-300 words) for presentations at the Conference and Festival to: alison.green@wits.ac.za

DEADLINE for abstract submission: 15 June 2021

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Presented by:



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