

PERPHOTO International Conference

The Archive, the Body, and the Medium

Crossing Photography and Performance in Theory and Practice

Lisbon, School of Arts and Humanities | University of Lisbon (FLUL)
September 21 - 23, 2022

Call for Papers

Deadline: **March 15, 2022**

The PERPHOTO research project invites scholars and artists to submit proposals for presentations reflecting on the multiple challenges, opportunities, and limits that arise from the encounter and intersection between photography and performance, in theoretical and practical issues.

Apparently based on an ontological paradox, due to the ephemeral and eventual fictional nature of the performative act opposed to the petrification and alleged transparency of photography, the relationship between photography and performance opens a wide and challenging field of experimentation, rich in reciprocal suggestions, either in stage photography in its strictest sense, in the different forms of performed and staged photography, or through the appropriation of photography as dramaturgical issue or optical device in stage productions.

Over time, these topics drew the attention of scholars coming from different and somehow divergent disciplinary approaches, such as history of photography, visual culture, theatre studies and Performance Art.

Although belatedly, concepts of “theatricality”, “acting”, or “mise-en-scène” integrated the main discourse of photohistorians and critics (Poivert, 2002; Fried, 2008), and seminal works allowed to revalue the long and innovative tradition of “staged photography” in the light of theatrical practices (Pauli, 2006). From a different point of view, exponents and theorists of Performance Art (Jones, 1997; Auslander, 2006) brought a significant improvement to the subject, by questioning the role of photography in the documentation of live events, and the collaborative dimension of creative work. Much closer to theatre studies, photographic images contributed to define the basis of the new disciplinary field of theatre iconography (Balme et al., 2002), combining archival surveys with cultural and visual analysis.

More recently, several conferences and publications (Anderson, 2015; Baker, 2016; Chiarelli/Noirot, 2015; Joinnault, 2018) tried to connect these heterogeneous perspectives into a coherent disciplinary field through the mapping of specific case studies and issues.

However, in order to better design this field of study, it still seems necessary to undertake an in-depth theoretical reflection, even beyond the possible practical applications. The processes, perspectives, and

limits emerging from the intertwining of photography and performance still need to be questioned, considering, namely, the archive, the body, and the medium.

How does this encounter redefine our relationship with reality and representation, document and fiction, memory and archive?

How does it affect the tension between presence and absence, corporeality and immateriality?

How does the performative dimension of photography relates to the universe of other lens-based media, regarding the notion of stillness and movement, and between mediation, remediation and intermediality?

The conference aims to foster transdisciplinary debate and is open to contributions that critically discuss these, and other issues, using any chronological or geographical focus, but with a strong methodological implication.

The conference also invites artists and performers to present works addressing the relationships between photography and performance through a 'practice as research' approach.

The conference will preferably be in person, in accordance with the sanitary restrictions in place. Remote or hybrid presentations might be considered.

Please email your proposals to perphotoconference@gmail.com by **March 15, 2022**, with the subject as follows: Perphoto Conference and your full name. The proposal should be in English for 20 minutes presentations, comprising of 250 words abstract (not counting references) and 200 words biography. Presentations should be preferably in English, but other languages may be considered.

The Conference organizers will select the proposals and organize the panels with the advice of the Scientific Committee and will communicate the decisions by **April 30, 2022**.

Papers may be selected for an edited book on the subject to be published by an international publisher (to be announced).

Invited Guests and Keynote Speakers:

Joel Anderson (Royal Centre School of Speech and Drama of University of London)

Christopher Balme (Institute of Theatre Studies, University of Munich)

Amelia Jones (Roski School of Art and Design at University of Southern California)

Rebecca Schneider (Department of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University)

More information at: <https://perphoto.ceteatro.pt/en/conference>

The conference is organized within the PERPHOTO research project coordinated by Filipe Figueiredo and Cosimo Chiarelli.

PERPHOTO - *Performing the gaze* is a funded project by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), hosted by the Centre for Theatre Studies of the University of Lisbon.

The project explores the multiple interactions between photography and performing arts in theoretical, historical, and cultural contexts, as well as in Portuguese and international theatrical practices throughout the last 40 years.

Partners:

National Theatre and Dance Museum, Lisbon