

Polish Association for American Studies Annual Conference
Institute of English, Szczecin University,
18-20 October 2017

Call for Papers

PERFORMING AMERICA

"We are part of an ontohistorical formation which, in accordance with my geological metaphor, might be called 'performative deposit'" – writes Tomasz Kubikowski, translator of *Perform, Or Else. From Discipline to Performance* in the "Foreword" to the Polish edition of Jon McKenzie's 2001 book. Introducing performance in the "rhizomatic" language of Deleuze and Guattari, Kubikowski acknowledges that translating this book on the idea of performativity, which plays out theory as an aesthetic/ethical complex rather than an exposition of existing knowledge, was one of his most difficult professional challenges. But it was neither McKenzie's writing style, Kubikowski divulges, nor the many exotic concepts that *Perform, Or Else...* re/constructs that turned out most unruly in translation – instead, it was the basic vocabulary pertaining to performance that presented the utmost difficulty.

Apart from having about twenty Polish translational equivalents, the English term "performance" is also capable of becoming synonymous with almost forty other English words, depending upon their particular context, idiolect, situation etc. It is therefore one of the most interesting, or, highly "incandescent," as Susan Sontag would say, cultural phenomena to date, and no wonder Kubikowski had trouble grasping the term's vibrato. As an "object of study," performance is even harder to grasp., Definable in fourbroadly understood ways as "behaviour," "artistic practice," "fieldwork," and "social practices and advocacies" (Schechner 2006: 1-2), it presents itself as a transcultural mixture of "many voices, themes, opinions, methods, and subjects" (Schechner 2006: 1). In Schechner's idiom again, it emerges as an "overriding[ly] and underlying[ly]" (*Performance Studies...*1) open field. Performance thus emerges, as it were, as a democracy in the making, and hence as democracy itself.

Despite – or maybe because of – its openness, performance is, historically and theoretically, part and parcel of the American context. Grasping how performance has thrived and how it has operated in this context is crucial for understanding its specific, , praxis-oriented meaning. The University of Szczecin and the Polish Association for American Studies invite proposals from those interested in exploring the multiple ways in which America and performance have been re/making one another.

SUBMISSIONS & DEADLINES

We invite abstracts of up to 300 words, to be sent in MS Word and pdf formats to:

performingamerica2017@gmail.com

Abstracts should be received by: **May 31, 2017**

Acceptance notifications will be sent out by: **June 19, 2017**

The conference will include a parallel session or sessions for PAAS members, including doctoral candidates, to present work in progress that may be unrelated to the conference topic

FEES & REGISTRATION

A registration fee of **€120 (PLN 500, USD 130)** will apply to researchers

A registration fee of **€ 60 (PLN 300)** will apply to doctoral students

Deadline for registration and payment of the conference fee: **September 4, 2017.**

Conference venue: Faculty of Languages campus

Conference organizers:

Dr Beata Zawadka

Dr Justyna Stępień

Dr Anna Łakowicz-Dopiera

Mgr Barbara Braid