The Third Space Symposium (Cape Town, 13-15 May 16)

Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts, Hiddingh Campus, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa, May 13–15, 2016
Deadline: Apr 8, 2016

James Macdonald

Call for Papers and Creative Works
The Third Space Symposium

As a starting point, the title of the Symposium draws on Homi K. Bhabha's notion of a hybrid "third space" that "displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom".

The ongoing struggles for transformation and equality in tertiary education institutions across the country have been characterized by attempts at a singular voice unhindered by affiliation to any specific authority.

Notably, the #feesmustfall protests repeatedly prevented government leaders and university structures from co-opting the voice of the struggle, creating a "third space" – accountable to neither bureaucracy – in which #feesmustfall galvanized and from which the movement has continued to draw momentum. Is it possible to speak of an equivalent "third space" in the creative arts? The need to envisage an alternative and generative "third space" seems particularly pressing in the light of an arts industry that functions comfortably within a neoliberal economy – in which the constraints and pressures of capitalism are supported rather than resisted, in which art is an exclusive commodity created for those who can afford it, and where the "saleability" of work, rather than its function in society, is the marker of "success".

How might we foster a "third space" that is unfettered by the automatic co-option of a violent colonial past, the commodification of the arts and the constraints of the "creative economy", and that is, at the same time, not answerable to anti-discourse? How might the independent voices that comprise such a space be sustained? What is the responsibility of university curricula to contest the push to teach what will sell? Or should university curricula mirror and answer to dominant needs and trends?

THE THIRD SPACE SYMPOSIUM will provide a creative platform where academia and the arts meet to interrogate these questions, facilitating a re-imagining of the status quo – of sector, institution and curriculum.

As such, the approach of this event is twofold. Firstly, to probe the potential of the creative arts curriculum to respond to the fluidity of transformation. And secondly, to provide an opportunity

for conversation around forms for carrying transformation forward.

A list of suggested topics is provided below. Participants are welcome to extend this list:

- Stasis and fluidities with relation to curriculum and transformation
- Decolonisation, heritage and history
- Systemic violence and the violence inherent in curriculum
- Language and the hegemony of English
- Absences and gaps within canonical texts/art works/performances
- Re-imagining the dissemination of knowledge
- Representations of the black body and the vulnerable body
- Art as subversion/transcendence
- Contesting and critical approaches to notions of the "creative economy"
- The monopoly on art criticism and standards
- Access to research and decolonisation
- Creative works and public spheres

Submission of proposals:

GIPCA invites proposals for papers (addresses of 10-15 minutes), performances, art installations or film screenings that explore the above ideas and themes surrounding "the third space".

Interested applicants should submit a single PDF file containing the following:

- Name, email address, contact telephone numbers
- A topic and an abstract of no more than 350 words outlining the proposed paper or creative art work to be presented at THE THIRD SPACE SYMPOSIUM
- Curriculum Vitae of applicant

Proposals should be submitted via email to catherine.boulle@uct.ac.za with the subject line THIRD SPACE SYMPOSIUM.

The new deadline for submission of proposals is: 17:00 SA time on Friday 8 April 2016.

For more information, please contact the GIPCA office on +27 (0) 21 650 7179 or catherine.boulle@uct.ac.za

About GIPCA

The Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts (GIPCA) is an interdisciplinary institute in the University of Cape Town's Humanities Faculty.

- GIPCA facilitates new collaborative research projects, particularly in the Creative and Performing Arts.
- Interdisciplinarity, Live Art and Public Spheres are key themes of the Institute, and projects are imbued with innovation, collaboration and a dialogue with urbanism and community.

- GIPCA was launched in December 2008 with a grant from the Donald Gordon Foundation, and continues its work as a result of a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
- In April 2016 the Institute will be launched as the Institute for Creative Arts (ICA).

For more information, visit www.gipca.uct.ac.za

Symposium call for Papers and Creative Works: www.gipca.uct.ac.za/the-third-space-symposium-proposal-deadline-extended/

Reference:
CFP: The Third Space Symposium (Cape Town, 13-15 May 16). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 30, 2016 (accessed Oct 23, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/12573>.