

The body in 20th-century stage design (Loughborough, 26 Jan 18)

Loughborough University, UK, Jan 26, 2018

Deadline: Dec 19, 2016

Rachael Grew

Bodily Scenography: The body in 20th-century stage design

Friday 26 January 2018, Loughborough University, UK

This one-day symposium will explore the interplay between stage design and the role and significance of the body. It aims to examine the portrayals and meanings of the body, the ways in which it is performed, and the relationships it builds with other bodies, as crafted through 20th-century scenography, focusing particularly on costume and set design.

The way in which the body of the performer is dressed, as well as the setting (s)he is placed in, speaks volumes about the nature of that body and the identity it conveys to the audience. This is further affected by the other bodies that (s)he comes into contact with during the performance, including that of the audience. This embodied process helps create a more fluid, unfixed approach to bodily identity. Here, we seek to tease out this process in order to explore the impact of 20th-century scenography on how we engage with the body and issues of identity.

Some of the core questions we aim to address include:

- How is the performer's body affected by the design of their costume and/or the performance space?
- How can scenography develop relationships between the bodies of the performers and those of the audience?
- How might particular issues / concepts regarding the body and/or identity (such as gender, race, class, etc.) be conveyed through costume and set design?
- What strategies might be used to portray the post-human (hybrid / ambiguous / cyborg) body in performance?
- In cases where artists double as scenographers, do the bodies they create on stage replicate the bodies they depict in their other work, and what is this impact of this?

As such, papers may address topics including but not limited to:

- Costume design which alters / destabilises bodily norms
- The inter-relationship of the performers' and audiences' bodies
- The body as scenographer
- The use of technology, puppetry, sound, lighting, or other devices to augment or create bodies on stage

- Scenographers' subversive approaches towards to the body, especially women, non-white, and/or non-'Western' scenographers and designers
- Conveying undefined, ambiguous, or changing bodies
- The use of the body as a symbol

A core aim of this symposium is to help establish a network of academics, professionals, and practitioners united by an interest in scenography and the body.

Please send abstracts of 200-300 words for 20-minute papers and a short CV to r.v.grew@lboro.ac.uk by Monday 19th December 2016.

Reference:

CFP: The body in 20th-century stage design (Loughborough, 26 Jan 18). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 3, 2016 (accessed Jul 5, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/14114>>.