

Disruptive bodies (online, 21-24 Jun 21)

Jun 21-24, 2021

Deadline: Nov 26, 2020

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Please consider submitting a paper to our panel "Disruptive bodies: transgressive encounters in law, art and performance", that is part of the annual meeting of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore under the general theme "Breaking the rules".

In recent years instances of dissent and resistance have been increasingly permeated by performative gestures which stage self-inflicted harm or risky exposure for political purposes. There is an obvious continuum that connects these actions with carceral hunger strikes, collective self-mutilation, public suicides of unpaid employees or self-immolations by Tibetan monks. These actions of ordinary subjects demonstrate the extraordinary metaphoric and affective reach of the suffering or 'misbehaving' human body which simultaneously enacts and interrogates injustice, making it public.

This panel brings together reflections about performative responses to social suffering from a wide range of subjects: activists, artists and vulnerable populations. What do these seemingly irrational gestures of denunciation and despair mean in contemporary culture? What are they symptoms or metaphors of, not only individually, but also socially? What are their direct and tangible legal and social consequences?

As social anthropologists, we argue that these performances belong to the universal grammar of justice-making. We suggest that they should be seen as socially meaningful avenues of making injustice visible. These are actions that break the rules of political enunciation within the liberal public sphere which normally only attributes political voice to citizens acting as 'rational' subjects.

The proposals, consisting of a long abstract (max. 250 words), and a short abstract (max. 300 characters) can be submitted via the online platform <https://www.siefhome.org/congresses/sief2021/panels>

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Reference:

CFP: Disruptive bodies (online, 21-24 Jun 21). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 19, 2020 (accessed Mar 23, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/23942>>.