

Performance, Protest, and Preservation (Los Angeles, 3 Apr 26)

Getty Research Institute; Performance Art Museum, Apr 03, 2026

Deadline: Dec 15, 2025

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Performance, Protest, and Preservation: New Scholarship on High Performance magazine.

The Performance Art Museum in partnership with the Getty Research Institute invites proposals for scholarly writing on High Performance magazine (1978-1997), to be presented at the convening Performance, Protest, and Preservation at the GRI on April 3, 2026. High Performance was the first international art magazine devoted exclusively to performance art, and was founded in Los Angeles by Linda Frye Burnham. The publication documented and theorized experimental performance practices during a transformative period in contemporary art, serving as both historical record and platform for discourse.

This call for papers is part of the broader High Performance: A 2-Year Conference, which examines the magazine's enduring impact through exhibitions, performances, and scholarly programming across multiple Los Angeles institutions. The convening at the Getty, which acquired the High Performance archive in 2006, will bring together established and emerging scholars, artists, and cultural organizers. We seek original research papers that examine High Performance and its lasting impact on American art, performance studies, and cultural discourse.

Papers from the conference will be considered for publication in a special issue of a journal or anthology being planned out of the GRI event.

Thematic Areas:

Papers may address but are not limited to the following areas of inquiry:

Archival and Methodological Approaches: Examine strategies for researching ephemeral performance through magazine documentation, considering High Performance as primary source material for performance art history. This might include investigation of the magazine's role in creating performance art discourse and criticism, as well as digital humanities approaches to the High Performance archive that might reveal new patterns or connections within this substantial body of performance art documentation.

Cultural and Historical Analysis: Focus on High Performance's documentation of feminist, queer, and activist performance practices, exploring the magazine's relationship to Los Angeles, national, and/or international performance art of the 1970s-1990s. This area includes examination of the magazine as a record for understanding artists performing in public spaces and operating as citizens engaged with social and political issues of their time.

Institutional Critique and Arts Advocacy: Investigate the magazine's role in advocating for performance art within institutional contexts, including High Performance's documentation of artist-run initiatives, as well as performance artists operating in traditional gallery and museum models. This area includes the publication's focus on cultural policy and arts funding debates, and relationships between High Performance and other arts publications that emerged during this period.

Contemporary Relevance and Legacy: Explore High Performance's influence on current performance art practice and criticism. Papers might offer comparative analysis with contemporary arts publications and digital platforms, or/and investigate pedagogical applications of High Performance in performance studies curricula and how the magazine could better inform scholarly and artistic practice.

Artists and Contributors: Provide in-depth analysis of specific artists and performances documented in High Performance, examining the magazine's role in launching or sustaining artistic careers. This area includes High Performance's editorial policies and curatorial vision, as well as investigation of relationships between High Performance and specific performance art communities across the United States and internationally.

Submission Guidelines:

Abstract Requirements: maximum of 300-word abstract, CV and brief author biography;

Final Papers: approximately 5,000-6,000 words for consideration in planned publication;

Paper Presentations for the convening at the Getty will be approximately fifteen minutes;

We encourage submissions from any interested contributors, including early-career scholars and graduate students; scholars from communities historically underrepresented in academia; interdisciplinary researchers working across performance studies, art history, cultural studies, and related fields; and international scholars examining High Performance's global impact

Submission Process:

Submit abstracts, biographies, and bibliographies to hey@pamuseum.org with subject line "High Performance CFP"

Key Dates:

Abstract submission deadline: December 15, 2025

Notification of acceptance: January 15, 2026

Final paper drafts due: March 15, 2026

Convening date: April 3, 2026

Revised papers for publication consideration: June 1, 2026

Research Support:

The Getty Research Institute acquired the High Performance archives in 2006, and provides access to the magazine's complete editorial files, correspondence, photographs, and documentation. Selected presenters will receive guidance on accessing these materials and may be eligible for research support.

All accepted presenters will receive a \$300 honorarium

Contact Information:

For questions about submissions or research access: hey@pamuseum.org

This convening is supported by the Terra Foundation for American Art and represents a collaborative effort to center historically marginalized voices in American art history while generating new scholarly frameworks for understanding performance art's cultural impact.

Reference:

CFP: Performance, Protest, and Preservation (Los Angeles, 3 Apr 26). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 28, 2025 (accessed Apr 2, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/50728>>.