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MÜNCHEN

INSTITUTE FOR THEATER STUDIES
SCHOOL OF ARTS
FACULTY OF HISTORY AND THE ARTS



WRITING THEATER

Qualitative methods, situated knowledge, and the making of performance

Call for Papers

Munich, July 5-7, 2023

Organized by Ulf Otto, Anna Raisich, Luise Barsch

The production of performance has gained renewed attention in recent years. Artistic processes in theaters have come into focus, as have their social foundations, institutional frameworks and material entanglements.

This has led to an increased adaptation of methodologies from the social sciences. In particular, qualitative methods, most prominently praxeological and ethnographical approaches, have opened up new ways of engaging with theater.

But the expansion of the methodological toolbox is not just that. It reinvents epistemological relations and has lasting repercussions for the subjects and objects of research. While theater scholars have traditionally found themselves within the dispositive of theater, as spectators confronting the performance, the move backstage and elsewhere equates to a loss of this privileged position and inevitably leads to an epistemological decentering of performance.

This in turn provokes a closer look at the practices of research: techniques of description (protocols) and inscription (photographs, recordings) come to the fore, as do the diverse social and material agents that are mobilized to turn fleeting observations into reliably defined and delimited subjects of knowledge.

Accordingly, the aim of the conference is, on the one hand, to discuss ethnographical strategies in the domain of theater studies, including their epistemological repercussions. On the other hand, it is to take a look back at established writing strategies, taking inspiration from the rich body of critical self-reflection in ethnography: What happens to theater when scholars move backstage, and what can we learn from there about our scholarly selves?

We welcome contributions from scholars at all career stages. Full-length papers of about 20 minutes as well as poster-style presentations of early-stage projects within a 10-minute timeframe will be considered. We are committed to opening an inclusive space for productive exchanges, in-depth discussions, and joint perspectives.

Please hand in short abstracts + bio (each 300 words max.)

Deadline for submissions: 15.12.2022

Notification of acceptance by: 15.1.2023

Contact: gewerke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

The conference will primarily take place on site in Munich, but we will offer streaming and fully online panels for participants unable to attend in person. Travel and accommodation will be covered for presenters. A subsequent publication is planned.

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