

## PPP 2017 Manifest

Addressing the question 'How Performance Philosophy Acts' requires engaging with it not just theoretically or in the standard format of academic conferences. It calls for that very format to be questioned and critically challenged. We propose that the conference itself be considered *as a performance* and that the ethos of its performativity be investigated as a first instance or case study.

If Performance Philosophy seeks to promote an exchange between disciplines, its first basic principle must surely reside in a dehierarchization of various cultures of knowledge and their respective formats. Instead of simply placing these different formats (e.g. artistic workshops and philosophical lectures) next to each other, we propose that the conference test their permeability. The usual structure of academic conferences is frequently bemoaned, but there is often a lack of initiative or time to try out alternatives. Performance Philosophy seeks to offer a space in which, together, we experiment with new formats and thus train our sense-for-alternatives.

It is in this spirit that the conference dramaturgy has been conceived as an experimental setting which all participants are invited to experience as such, and engage with, over the course of the event. In order to help us become aware of our own blindnesses we call upon you to act as ethnographers yourselves and to engage with various parts of the conference as participant observers, with a view to exploring and describing the specific form of performativity at play in each instance. The aim is to practice taking on a distanced gaze with regard to one's own habitual culture in order to sharpen one's perception of its aesthetical and ethical dimensions and thereby foster reflection upon how we act, and also identify as yet unprobed opportunities for experimental action to be explored.

With regard to the ethos and ethics of Performance Philosophy, our concern has also been to seek a democratization of output/input and encourage real dialogical exchange by facilitating maximum space for thinking and talking *together*. We don't just want to consume knowledge, but we hope to interactively generate it! This is why we have introduced so called "Fields" into the programme.

Within a Field, various disciplines and formats are brought together around a mutual theme/complex. Each Field opens with a lecture. The group in attendance then splits into two tracks. One half follows a more theoretical, the other half a more practical trajectory. Within each branch, chair and delegates may decide to include an informal coffee break for more personal exchange. Afterwards, the whole group comes back together for a collective discussion about what happened (and what was missed) in each track. This is where the ethnographers share their observations with a view to encouraging the recognition of lines of connection between the more theoretical and the more artistic/practical forms of research. (There will be a briefing for chairs and ethnographers every morning at 9AM). For all these reasons, we kindly request and encourage all participants to remain within their chosen Field or panel for its entire duration, and not to hop between Fields or panels. Please note: in the cases where workshop enrollment is required in advance, your registration counts for the whole respective Field.

The other formats of the conference include panels combining performances and theoretical contributions, lecture panels and 'Artistic Dinners'. In the case of lecture panels, the focus is on facilitating collective exchange, not only the delivery of individual research. There will be no 20 minute

lectures followed by 10 minutes for questions. Instead, a generous amount of time will be dedicated to the discussion of all papers with a view to encouraging dialogue and cross-mapping. We encourage the ready-made panel proposals to adopt a similar process.

On the Friday evening, Artistic Dinners will be introduced, as an alternative to the more ubiquitous, and sometimes quite anonymous and detached 'gala' event, and offering instead a taste of Prague's cultural and artistic life and heritage to small groups of participants. You will thus have the chance to visit Franz Kafka's *Café Arco* with experts on his work; to go for a performative walk through Prague-by-night; to break into the apartment of Rehor Samsa's family and enjoy an opulent dinner at the Institute of Philosophy; to visit a co-housing artistic community in the old-fashioned Prague 3; to spend an evening in the apartment of Czech political happening organizers; to take part in the celebration of the socially engaged experimental dance and theatre Studio ALTA in the industrial Prague 7; to paint, draw, create and eat with the Czech painter Antonin Střížek in his own atelier; or to sing and experiment with your own voices on the magnificent Petřín hill and its surroundings.

The dramaturgical principle of the conference is a collective experiment, so please be brave and don't worry: failure is also a result! Or, in the words of Samuel Beckett: 'All of old. Nothing else ever. Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better! Worstward Ho. 1983)

We wish you and us all an inspiring, productive and memorable 2017 Performance Philosophy Conference in Prague!

Your dedicated programming committee:

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