The IP and its Partners

The programme is designed to provide a forum for discussion where (doctoral) students can share their ideas and research projects among themselves and with experts from various fields. Intensive seminars and workshops constitute the core of the Summer School which will be framed by a wide range of supporting events.

The aim of the IP’s Summer School is to establish a tight network on both an academic as well as a social level which will serve as fertile ground on which to continue one’s own as well as joint academic efforts.

The Summer School offers a diverse mixture of - Seminars & Workshops - Evening Lectures - Excursions - Presentation Panels & Working Groups

Concepts of Holiness
Rethinking the Religious in Theatre, Cultural Performance, and Media

From the perspective of the late 20th century, religion in Europe could still be conceived as a waning entity: Religious practices had increasingly become invisible through their dissociation from religious institutions and by their banishment to the realm of the private. Simultaneously they seemed to have been succeeded by “the spirit of capitalism” (Max Weber) or to have found their new place within this “spirit,” as in Walter Benjamin’s claim that capitalism was not beyond religion, but a form of religion itself. However, the global events inaugurating the 21st century, such as the terror attacks on September 11, 2001 and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the near collapse of the capitalist financial markets recently, have brought the Religious back into public discourse: While Philosophers such as Alain Badiou and Giorgio Agamben use the figure of Saint Paul in order to question the hegemony of Capitalism, the rhetoric of the former US-President George W. Bush employed an ideological discourse laden with religious metaphors, thus positioning the United States as “God’s own country” against the “axis of evil”.

Against this background, and according to Agamben’s notion of religion not derived from religare but from relegere in a sense which points at the cautious hesitation, the re-reading, in the face of forms and formulas that are to be followed when the separation of the holy and the profane is to be respected, the three year IP Programme “Concepts of Holiness” proposes an operational approach to the Religious that allows to revisit diverse concepts of holiness in a broader sense and to reevaluate the role of religion(s) in Theatre, Cultural Performance, and Media.

The IP is divided into three research units that are investigated at three subsequent Summer Schools:

2013: The Religious in Performance
2014: Performing Belief: The Religious as Critical Practice
2015: Intercultural Europe(s): Return of the Religious?
Performative Reflections of Holiness in the Theatre of the Neo-Avantgarde in the 1960s

Friedemann Kreuder (Mainz) / Sharon Aronson-Lehavi (Bar-Ilan)

The seminar focuses on the historical Neo-Avantgarde in the 1960s and performances of the mentioned artists of the historical Neo-Avantgarde. The seminar will examine the use of the theatre to present various kinds of ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century. The goal of this seminar is to investigate the rhetorical link between religious and ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century. The seminar will also consider recent performances that demonstrate the rhetorical effectiveness of a faith-based approach to engage an audience such as in the case of Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Richard Schechner, Joseph Chaikin, as well as Klaus Michael Grüber, searched, together with the “Grotowski reception” of the female members Maud Richards as well as with the “Grotowski reception” of the female members Maud Richards and Augusto Boal, which are part of the process of creating the saint-actor in the theatre and the saint-revolutionary in the church of social-political activity as well as forming a new societal and religious community.

Rhetoric of Faith in Cultural Discourse

Steve Willmer (Dublin) / Mariusz Bartosik (Łódź)

The goal of this seminar is to investigate the rhetorical link between religious and ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century. The seminar will examine the use of the theatre to present various kinds of ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century. The goal of this seminar is to investigate the rhetorical link between religious and ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century. The seminar will also consider recent performances that demonstrate the rhetorical effectiveness of a faith-based approach to engage an audience such as in the case of Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Richard Schechner, Joseph Chaikin, as well as Klaus Michael Grüber, searched, together with the “Grotowski reception” of the female members Maud Richards as well as with the “Grotowski reception” of the female members Maud Richards and Augusto Boal, which are part of the process of creating the saint-actor in the theatre and the saint-revolutionary in the church of social-political activity as well as forming a new societal and religious community.

Profanation and Play: Negotiating Ethics in Contemporary Performance

Alan Read (London) / Michael Bachmann (Mainz)

Taking its starting point from Romeo Castellucci’s 2010 production volto nel Figlio di Dio / On the Concept of the Face: Regarding the Son of God, Vol. 1 (a recording of which we’ll watch together in class), this seminar discusses contemporary performance practices that play on notions of profanation and sacredness. Our general focus is on the question of ethics in performance, in particular with respect to the use of profanation as a strategy for negotiating ethics or the ethical within and outside a theatrical frame. Castellucci’s controversial performance based on the life and death of Jesus Christ provides an exemplary point of entry for the face of Christ and its dynamic relationship to various stage actions – opens up multiple ways of thinking through this question: as far as for instance with regard to notions of spectatorship (Barthes), the relationship between profanation and play (Ekberg), an ethics of the face (Jahoda), and – drawing on Richard Schechner’s understanding of “sacralization” as an action that sacralizes the object it tries to deface (Agamben), an ethics of the face (Lévinas), and – drawing on Michael Taussig’s notions of spectatorship (Rancière), the relationship between profanation and sacredness, the seminar will examine the use of the theatre to present various kinds of ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century.

Holy the Circle: Transcendence, Ritual, and the Void in Ensemble Performance

Nick Johnson (Dublin)

Taking its starting point from Romeo Castellucci’s 2010 production volto nel Figlio di Dio / On the Concept of the Face: Regarding the Son of God, Vol. 1 (a recording of which we’ll watch together in class), this seminar discusses contemporary performance practices that play on notions of profanation and sacredness. Our general focus is on the question of ethics in performance, in particular with respect to the use of profanation as a strategy for negotiating ethics or the ethical within and outside a theatrical frame. Castellucci’s controversial performance based on the life and death of Jesus Christ provides an exemplary point of entry for the face of Christ and its dynamic relationship to various stage actions – opens up multiple ways of thinking through this question: as far as for instance with regard to notions of spectatorship (Barthes), the relationship between profanation and play (Ekberg), an ethics of the face (Jahoda), and – drawing on Richard Schechner’s understanding of “sacralization” as an action that sacralizes the object it tries to deface (Agamben), an ethics of the face (Lévinas), and – drawing on Michael Taussig’s notions of spectatorship (Rancière), the relationship between profanation and sacredness, the seminar will examine the use of the theatre to present various kinds of ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century.

Assigning the Sacred – A Performance-Installation

Regina Fichtner (Frankfurt / London)

Taking its starting point from Romeo Castellucci’s 2010 production volto nel Figlio di Dio / On the Concept of the Face: Regarding the Son of God, Vol. 1 (a recording of which we’ll watch together in class), this seminar discusses contemporary performance practices that play on notions of profanation and sacredness. Our general focus is on the question of ethics in performance, in particular with respect to the use of profanation as a strategy for negotiating ethics or the ethical within and outside a theatrical frame. Castellucci’s controversial performance based on the life and death of Jesus Christ provides an exemplary point of entry for the face of Christ and its dynamic relationship to various stage actions – opens up multiple ways of thinking through this question: as far as for instance with regard to notions of spectatorship (Barthes), the relationship between profanation and play (Ekberg), an ethics of the face (Jahoda), and – drawing on Richard Schechner’s understanding of “sacralization” as an action that sacralizes the object it tries to deface (Agamben), an ethics of the face (Lévinas), and – drawing on Michael Taussig’s notions of spectatorship (Rancière), the relationship between profanation and sacredness, the seminar will examine the use of the theatre to present various kinds of ideological belief in cultural discourse in Europe from the nineteenth century.