



PERFORMANCE
PHILOSOPHY

EDITORIAL

LAURA CULL Ó MAOILEARCA UNIVERSITY OF SURREY
THERON SCHMIDT UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
DANIEL WATT LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

We are pleased to present the second volume of Performance Philosophy—the online peer-reviewed journal for the interdisciplinary field of Performance Philosophy. Whilst the first volume was composed of invited contributions, this one is the result of an open call for submissions—and indeed, we plan to oscillate between these modes for future issues, developing collaborations with guest editors and continuing to circulate calls for articles open to all researchers. The scale of the response to this open call took us by surprise; we received an unexpectedly large number of articles and it took us longer than we had hoped to put them through the peer review process. This response has been encouraging and testifies to the strength and diversity of this field, and we would like to thank all of our authors for their patience during this period—and acknowledge our deep gratitude for the anonymous acts of care and generosity undertaken by the numerous peer-reviewers upon whom we have depended.

We would also like to take this opportunity to announce that—in order to accommodate more of the high-quality research being undertaken in the field—we will now be moving to the publication of two issues of the journal per year. As such, a second issue (2.2), also made up of articles selected from last year's open call, will be published in December 2016. Volume 3.1 (April 2017) will be a guest edited issue, and Volume 3.2 (December 2017) will be special themed issue—edited by Eve Katsouraki and Theron Schmidt—on the topic of 'crisis', with an open call for articles being released in October 2016.

Another welcome surprise of the submissions we received was that a number of authors had chosen to respond to articles in the first volume of this journal. This is most explicit in **Caroline Wilkins'** text, for instance, which conceives itself as an echo of Freddie Rokem's piece on eavesdropping in that inaugural issue. Indeed, Wilkins stages her article as a series of 'echo chambers' that allow Rokem's thoughts to reverberate through a *Panacousticon*—an architectural design by the 17th century inventor, Athanasius Kircher that enables a form of aural surveillance (pre-dating its better known visual counterpart designed by Jeremy Bentham). In her article, Wilkins describes this historical echo-machine and its thematic resonances, but more than this, her article enacts its own aural performance by dramatizing its various players in a multitude of dialogues to which we, as readers, are also cast as part of a network of eavesdroppers.

Other resonances echo across the wider field of Performance Philosophy activity. **Rüdiger Rimpler's** article articulates a series of responses to a provocation by Arno Böhler that appeared in the first volume of the Performance Philosophy book series, *Encounters in Performance Philosophy* (2014), and Rimpler also considers the kinds of debates that have occurred on the Performance Philosophy online network (<http://performancephilosophy.ning.com>), which now has over 2,300 members around the world, as well as other activities that have taken place 'in the name of' performance philosophy. With further reference to Julian Klein, Rimpler argues (in a mode of writing that is itself performative) for the potential of a method distinct to performance philosophy for apprehending what he describes as 'the all-embracing presence of immanence'—and what's more, for the facilitation of such apprehension in, and *as*, a network.

Phenomenology remains a popular source of concepts and methods, represented in this issue by **Jodie McNeilly** and **Adam Loughnane**. In McNeilly's essay Sartre's account of the relationship between body and consciousness is invoked to challenge the premises of certain somatic approaches to movement practice. Loughnane's aim, in turn, is to draw from Merleau-Ponty to illuminate aspects of a performance by the choreographer Natalie Heller—*First Impressions* (2013–14)—made in response to her relocation to Istanbul. Via both performance and philosophy Loughnane emphasizes the synaesthetic nature of perceptual experience and the extent to which a cityscape actively expresses itself in and impresses itself upon the body. Of course, Loughnane's article appears here, now in the context of the coup attempt against President Erdogan, and the resulting arrests and purges of perceived opponents, including in academia. It appears here, now only weeks after the devastating gun and bomb attack on Istanbul's Ataturk airport at the end of June, which resulted in the deaths of 41 people and injuries to more than 230—the largest incident following on from other fatal bombings that had already taken place in the city in January, March and earlier in June of this year.

In his contribution to this issue, **Esa Kirkkopelto** also considers corporality in performance, but approached through the more recent discourses of so-called 'speculative realism' or 'object-oriented-ontologies' ('OOO'). Working carefully through analyses of two pairs of practical experiments that concern the manipulation of 'bodies' or 'object actors'—that might, in other contexts, be described as 'marionette theatre' or 'stage animation'—Kirkkopelto likens corporality to a kind of language (in the structuralist sense) as a ground for the possibility of equality.

The exploration of the body as a means to conduct philosophical enquiry is continued by **Eric Mullis** who uses two forms of improvised dance, Gaga and Contact Improvisation, to examine how the dancer in the studio enacts an investigation into human embodiment through practice, becoming aware of the different states of bodily tension that reveal other flows and organic forms within the moving body, or begin to elaborate culturally embedded forms of movement, proximity and touch within relational bodies. Mullis offers the work of the dancer in the studio, rather than the resulting performed work, as a process of philosophical reflection that describes the possibilities of practical Performance Philosophy succinctly.

The practical aspects of philosophy are taken on further by **Beth Savickey** who introduces us to the origins of Wittgenstein's philosophy in the playful, humorous and anarchic games of *commedia* and slapstick. She illuminates Wittgenstein's enquiries by examining the stock characters of his language examples, presenting us with a kind of silent film version of his thinking, through which the importance of action is highlighted, pointing us to the simplification and clarification that attendant practice can bring to ideas, revealing hidden elements that strike us, perhaps sometimes rather literally, with original insights.

It remains the case that most of the work undertaken within the field of Performance Philosophy follows that tradition described as 'continental', but we are always happy to see engagements with analytic methods and indeed those that work across analytic/continental divides. In this issue, **Hetty Blades** extends the idea of the 'work-concept', developed by philosopher of music Lydia Goehr, to consider the ontological 'resistance' (in all its meanings) in dance practices that blur distinctions between making and performing. In the improvisational practices of UK dance artists Katye Coe and Charlie Morrissey, and in the embodied transmission of 'scores' by American choreographer Deborah Hay, Blades argues that 'a work' need not be a stable object over time, yet can still be recognized as 'work'. In turn, **James Tartaglia** takes an analytically-informed approach to consider the relationship between jazz and philosophy. Specifically, he argues that music requires vocals in order to express philosophical ideas; or again, that vocal music is capable of a greater degree of conceptual precision than the purely instrumental. Tartaglia develops this argument by drawing from his own experience of developing a practice of 'Jazz-Philosophy Fusion'—and indeed, readers are invited to listen to his work alongside their engagement with the text.

Anna Street and Ramona Mosse's text provides both documentation and development of *Thinking Through Tragedy and Comedy—Performance Philosophy and the Future of Genre*—a symposium held in Berlin in December 2014 by the Performance Philosophy working group, Genres of Dramatic Thought. Their report and its closing manifesto challenge potential perceptions of genre as an outdated means of literary categorization in favour of an expanded understanding of genre as 'a core layer of aesthetic memory embedded into any given performance or text'.

Finally, this volume also sees the launch of a dedicated section called [Margins], edited by Kéline Gotman. [Margins] is dedicated to publishing creative, non-standard approaches to the manifold

relationships that may arise out of the conjunction between performance and philosophy, including (but not limited to) ficto-criticism, aphorism, forays, manifestos, and visual essays. In this issue, this section hosts **Ioana Jucan's** performance text 'The Deaths of Pan,' which blends classical myth with critical riffs. As a half-remembered, half-fabricated text, it both comments on the distortion of memory in capitalist hyper-technologized times, and also is itself symptomatic of the fractures—and the hope—that it describes.

Biographies

Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca is Reader in Theatre & Performance at the University of Surrey and Director of the Centre for Performance Philosophy—a new research centre launching in September 2016. Her books include *Encounters in Performance Philosophy* (2014) co-edited with Alice Lagaay and *Theatres of Immanence: Deleuze and the Ethics of Performance* (2012).

Theron Schmidt is a Lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies at UNSW Australia, and works internationally as a writer, teacher, and performer. He is one of the founding co-conveners of the Performance Philosophy network, and in addition to being an editor of *Performance Philosophy*, he is also editor of *Contemporary Theatre Review's* online *Interventions* and on the editorial boards for *Performance Research* and *Akda: The Asian Journal of Literature, Culture, Performance*.

Daniel Watt is a Senior Lecturer in English and Drama at Loughborough University. His research interests include fragmentary writing, ethics and literature and philosophical and literary influences on theatre and performance in the 20th century. He is a founding core-convenor of the *Performance Philosophy Network*, and was co-investigator in the AHRC funded research *Object Theatre Network*. He is author of *Fragmentary Futures: Blanchot, Beckett, Coetzee* and has co-edited *A Performance Cosmology*, *Theatres of Thought*, and *Ethical Encounters*. His other work includes book chapters on Tadeusz Kantor, Samuel Beckett, Deleuze and Performance, Edmond Jabès, Jacques Derrida, Puppets, and Glossolalia, and journal articles in *Performance Research*, *Polish Theatre Perspectives*, *Puppet Notebook*, *RIDE, Journal for Cultural Research* and *Wormwood*.

© 2016 Laura Cull Ó Maoilearca, Theron Schmidt, Daniel Watt



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).