CFP: Performance making and the Archive

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CONFERENCE CALL

Performance making and the Archive

16th-17th March 2018

This conference is interested in a conversation on the nature of the archive and its transformation within the context of performance making. Theoretically performance has been understood as ephemeral, located in the present, bearing affective excess, having transformative powers, identified as disappearance etc. Its material absence has been at the heart of these theoretical formulations. On the contrary, it has also been understood as ‘circulation of representations of representations’ and the romanticism around its liveness has been argued over.

Within this gamut of arguments and counter arguments and epiphanies that mark human passion and obsession with performance making, how do we begin to look at performance (here used very broadly)? Especially performance which works with the archive and historical consciousness as its material – performance that is interested in the document. Do we consider such performances, a confluence of the past and the present? Against this background, we look forward to a dialogue between artists, archivists and researchers.

We aim at investigating intersections of past and present, archive and its relationship to the process of creating and showing a performance. Looking at how archival practice transforms to performing arts practice, we would like to study how it becomes a fruitful platform of stimuli or a provocation for artistic work (especially performance art and theatre) and theoretical discourse around practice of performance. Addressing intersection of pre production research work, engagement
with the team of performing artists, dramaturgical mediations and directorial perspectives and reception of performing arts, we plan to highlight the existing dialogue between archive, research and creation in the contemporary context.

Broad concerns:

- Performance, ephemerality and archive
- Performance design and archive
- Playwright, director, actor, audience and the document
- Archival practices and artistic processes
- Role of an archivist, archival practices, and dramaturgy
- History, archive and performance making
- Documentation as 'artistic' practice
- The ‘material’ of performance

We invite speakers from the disciplines of performing arts, art history, history and archiving as well as practitioners from artistic fields such as theatre, visual arts, performance art. Presentations will be a standard conference presentation of 20 minutes followed by discussion. Written papers from the conference would be considered for being published as a book on ‘Performance-making and the archive’.

Proposals are due on: 10TH FEBRUARY, 2018. Please submit abstracts of 250-300 words to: performingarchive@gmail.com. The conference is scheduled for the 16th and 17th of March at IIT Bombay, Powai, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.

This is an Inlaks Asia Art Archive funded project on Archive and the Arts and is supported by the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. The project has been conceptualised by Sharmistha Saha and Ashutosh Potdar.

Sharmistha Saha is a scholar and theatre director. She is assistant professor at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. Her research interests include performance studies, performance philosophy, theatre historiography, aesthetics and politics.

Ashutosh Potdar is a scholar and creative writer writing in Marathi and English. He is associate professor at the FLAME University, Pune. His research interests include colonial theatre history, narrative science, theatre and performance studies.
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