

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

MODES OF PRODUCTION

PERFORMING ARTS AND THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

27 & 28 JUNE 2024
COIMBRA, PORTUGAL

MP

Call for Presentations

Deadline 25 March 2024

I.

[Modes of Production – Performing Arts in Transition](#) is a Research & Development platform that intercrosses the field of artistic studies with the hybrid field of arts management and creative production. Based at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Coimbra (CEIS20-UC), it is the result of a partnership with the Artistic Studies Programme at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the [Post-Graduate Diploma in Cultural Management and Sustainability](#) and the [Teatro Académico de Gil Vicente \(TAGV-UC\)](#). Its initiatives and studies are carried out in permanent and updated articulation with practitioners and institutions in the arts and cultural sector. It analyses the modes of production and management models of arts and cultural projects and organizations in the face of several contemporary transformations, namely those that are raised by the demands of fair practices and social and environmental sustainability. It hosts the scientific FCT-funded GREENARTS project, which pays attention to the implications of the ecological imperative upon the arts and culture.

After an encouraging launch in the end of 2021 – which resulted in an [edited volume](#) soon to be published by transcript - we are now organizing a second International Seminar, this time a face-to-face meeting in Coimbra: one and a half days with presentations, debates and performances. **Modes of Production – Performing Arts and the Ecological Transition** signals the culmination of the GREENARTS project and will thus present its main results and host a series of discussions fully dedicated to the critical junction between the arts, cultural policy, and the ecological emergency.

II.

The sense of urgency around ecological perils is growing unmistakably in the culture and creative sectors, including in the performing arts. The burgeoning mobilisation of the fields of theatre, dance and performance

materializes in a constantly expanding proliferation of manifestos, artistic and institutional projects, policy initiatives, publications, and practical tools. This effervescence is driven by the steadily alarming warnings from scientists and activists, but it is also, importantly, akin to the sector's heightened self-awareness. Artists, producers, and arts managers are more and more self-conscious about the environmental footprint of their own activities and increasingly invested in attuning themselves with the planetary emergency and its resulting inequalities. Importantly, they are also acutely aware of the overarching political implications of the 'green transition', and vigilant of the contradictions that such transformations entail when associated with specific geographical and historical circumstances (Rodrigues, 2024). Indeed, ecological distress is already impacting artistic and curatorial decisions, as well as challenging production, touring and management models (Janssens & Fraioli 2022; VoC, 2023; Vries 2021). **Modes of Production – Performing Arts and the Ecological Transition** argues that the environmental emergency can rightly be seen as a major disorganiser of the *modi operandi* of the arts and culture field, insofar it questions the assumptions of cultural policies, the underpinnings of funding mechanisms, and the routines of creating, producing, managing, distributing, and experiencing art (Rodrigues, Oliveira and Ventura, 2024). At the same time, the widening demand for sustainability dramatically exposes the arts and culture's overreliance on expansionist and productivist processes (Rodrigues, 2024) within a growth-oriented capitalist paradigm (Dragisevic Sestic, 2021).

III.

While approaches from eco-dramaturgy, ecological theatre and eco-criticism have been consistently explored since at least the 1990s (Chaudhuri, 1994; Buell, 1999; Arons and May, 2012;) - either from pragmatic, thematic or aesthetic perspectives (Sermon, 2021) -, it is undeniable that only in this millennium, and most decidedly after the pandemic crisis -“a powerful revealer of our ecological condition” (Sermon, 2021:8) - have the arts been more systematically challenged to take on the role of raising awareness around the severity of the environmental crisis, making use of their storytelling capacity and of their ability to illuminate complex relationships between interdependent ecosystems (Skolczylas, 2021; Banerjee and Shreedhar, 2021). This is a crucial moment to question the performing arts' willingness and capacity to take part in the great change in values inherent to ecological thinking, questioning anthropocentrism, redistributing agency, and establishing relationships with the more-than-human world. It is also an exciting time to look at the effects of the ecological challenge upon the artistic forms themselves: how are theatre, dance, or performance reinventing language and form to integrate an eco-responsibility? Could 'multi-scalar aesthetics' lead to a renewed 'biological imagination' and a 're-scaled' relationship (Campos, 2022) between life and performance? Can ecological theatre resist being absorbed into ever more sophisticated forms of greenwashing?

IV.

Modes of Production – Performing Arts and the Ecological Transition will reflect and debate these issues, paying attention to formats, materials, processes, contexts and decisions. Proposals for communications will be subject to peer-review before selection and organized in two strands: **a) *Artistic Practices, Eco-dramaturgy and Ecocriticism*** and **b) *Arts Management and Cultural Policies for Sustainability***.

Format:

In-person oral presentation on one of the strands a) *Artistic Practices, Ecodramaturgy and Ecocriticism* and b) *Arts Management and Cultural Policies for Sustainability* (20 minutes max).

Abstract submission

Abstracts should be no more than 500 words (excluding references). Please include:

- Title;
- Keywords (up to 5);
- References;
- Indication of the selected strand (A or B);
- Name/Affiliation/Contact details;
- Short bio (100 words) for all authors.

Submit your proposal – in ENGLISH - as a Word document or PDF to modesofproduction@uc.pt by **25 March 2024**.

All submissions will be peer-reviewed by the Scientific Committee, and all proposals will receive a response. The selection will seek to reflect not only scientific and intellectual excellence, but also disciplinary, social and geographical diversity. Interdisciplinary approaches are especially welcome.

Selected presenters are expected to register for the International Seminar in Coimbra, Portugal. Registrations will open on the 30th of April.

For inquiries or additional information, please visit our [website](#). Further information on registration, programme and fees will be provided shortly.

Key Dates:

25 March – Deadline for abstract submission

30 April – Information on selected presentations

30 April – 31 May – Registration Open – Early Bird Fee

1 June – 14 June - Regular Registration - Regular Fee

15 June – 24 June – Late Registration – Late Fee

27 + 28 June – Seminar in Coimbra