WEDNESDAY, 09/07

	JES (Junges Ensemble Stuttgart)
17:00	Registration opens
17:30 18:30	**Conference Opening** (JES)
19:00	**Performance** (JES) Fatma Aydemir: Dschinns

Wed, 09/07/25, 19:00
Junges Ensemble Stuttgart (JES)

Fatma Aydemir
Dschinns.

Hüseyin is dead. His children Sevda, Ümit, Hakan and Peri travel to Turkey for his funeral. The four very different siblings mourn the loss of their father - and are confronted with their parents' silence, the gaps in their stories and the secrets that have long been part of their family. They come together and rummage through their own memories and those of their parents. The four want to break the silence and allow the audience to share their past, their thoughts and questions about their origins and their relationship to their family.

'Dschinns' gives space to unheard voices and deals with grief, post-migrant realities, Kurdish identity, the gaps in our narratives and what we don't want to or can't say in front of our parents. Yeşim Nela Keim Schaub brings Fatma Aydemir's novel 'Dschinns' to the JES stage with four young people. Together, they invite us into a space of remembrance, mourning and empowerment.

THURSDAY, 10/07

	Keplerstraße 17/KII
09:00	Registration opens
09:30 11:15	**Film Screening** (17.72 │ Webex 1) Javier López Piñón: Ogoni Opera. With discussion.
11:15	Coffee Break
11:30	**Keynote** (17.92 │ Webex 1) Nashilongweshipwe: Archival F(r)ictions Between Museum Theatre and Digital Performance on the Namibian Genocide.

	Panels	
	Keplerstraße 17/KII	Breitscheidstraße 2.03
14:00 16:00	AWPN I: Gendered Storytelling across Digital Spaces (17.14 │ Webex 1)	Between the Virtual and the Physical (Webex 2)
16:00	Coffee Break, Walk to Dreigroschentheater	
17:00	**Performance and Discussion** (Dreigroschentheater) Tosin Tume: Spinning Tales, Weaving Futures.	
19:00	Dinner Break (Catering)	
20:00	**Performance and Discussion** (Theater Rampe) Julian Warner: Der Soldat. With Aftershow discussion.	

Film Screening

Javier López Piñón

Ogoni Opera.

The Ogoni Opera I staged, had originally been conceived as a videofilm project by Barry Wugale the (chosen) leader of the Ogoni community living in exile in Bénin.A feature film scenario had already been written and the performers already had experienced a workshop on camera acting by my Liberian-Dutch colleague Bright Richards. Besides this film, the need arose for a theatre project that would inform the inhabitants of the city where they have been living since the beginning of the century. The Ogoni community speaks its own language, Bukhana, besides the English spoken in Nigeria, but the younger generations, born and raised in Bénin speak French. Barry asked me to adapt the existing scenario and to stage an English as well as a French version for the live stage with music and dance. The original film scenario treats specific incidents caused by the ravages the Shelloil company has wreaked in Ogoni country at the end of last century. Their exploitation of the oil fields has destroyed the means of subsistence of the Ogoni people in the Niger delta by polluting water and soil to an irreparable state and the struggle for indemnity/compensation continues to this very day. In the meantime, the community, stuck in Ouidah, has turned to artistic products to draw attention to their plight under the

capable guidance of Barry Wugale. Professional videographer Uche Andrew followed the process and shot a videofilm of the finished music theatre piece, that was performed in the theatre hall of theJohn Smith Heritage centre in Ouidah. But the original film project continues as well and production has been planned ahead for coming spring/summer. Andrew is actually working on the film material as we speak, in order to create publicity clips and possibly a short version of the film for educational purposes. Everything needed for the project is provided for by the community itself. The whole production has been prepared and rehearsed in the refugee camp itself. All the participants are performing on stage for the first time in their lives.

KEYNOTE

Thu, 10/07/25, 11:30-13:00

Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.92 | Webex 1

Nashilongweshipwe

Archival F(r)ictions Between Museum Theatre and Digital Performance on the Namibian Genocide.

Namibian contemporary artists are increasingly doing memory work that specifically deals with Germany's colonial genocide of Nama, Ovaherero and San people in 1904-1908. This can be attributed to the current political moment in which calls for reparations have brought this history to the front. This turn to memory work in Namibian cultural production also reveals that contemporary artists in Namibia are experimenting

with form and structure of performances, transgressing conventions of theatre and spoiling 'neat images' of realism and the linear story. This paper reflects on two site-related performances The Mourning Citizen and Ondaanisa yo pOmudhime (Dance of the Rubber Tree), as bodies of work that have been performed as museum theatre and digital performance. The presentation highlights how these two works of art staged in Namibia, Cameroon, Germany and online simultaneosly put various archives into conversation with each other in ways that are generative. The forms of museum site-relatedness and digital performance emphasise the rubbing together of embodied, spatial and institutional archives in productive ways. As such, these approaches offer alternative perspectives to memory work that are often lost in the margins and cracks of 'official memory practice'.

Between the Virtual and the Physical

Thu, 10/07/25, 14:00-15:45

Breitscheidstraße 2.03 | Webex 1

Moderation: Sven Kilian

Emmanuel Tsadu Gana

From Virtual to Physical Space: Interrogating the Efficacy of Whatsapp Posts in Audience Engineering for Theatre Performances in Nigeria.

There is no doubt that the convergence of media technologies facilitated by the internet has transformed human communication and interaction world over. The proliferation of social media platforms and applications introduced a world of boundless interaction with potentials for social marketing and great implications for theatre. This paper therefore, interrogates the effectiveness of WhatsApp status as a strategic channel for publicizing theatre performances in Nigeria. The paper uses the Ahmadu Bello University studio theatre as well as the Bayero University Theatre located in different cities as prototypes to unravel the potentials of online audience engineering in bringing audiences to performances spaces. Although the theatres exist within the college space they offer a huge resource for interrogating the phenomenon at hand. The paper therefore contends that online audience engineering/ publicity through WhatsApp status has the potentials of bridging virtual and physical spaces to enhance audience engagement with theatre performances in Nigeria. As such, by interrogating the ways in which the Ahmadu Bello University studio theatre as well as the Bayero University Theatre theatre utilize WhatsApp status as a promotional tool, the paper aims to evaluate its impact on audience perception, attendance, and interaction. Through a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews with both theatre practitioners and audiences, the research seeks to understand the potential of WhatsApp status posts in transforming digital engagement into tangible audience experiences, and to identify best practices for leveraging social media platforms in the context of Nigerian theatre. The findings are expected to provide insights into the integration of digital communication strategies with live performance,

offering practical recommendations for the effective use of social media in enhancing the performance as well as cultural space in Nigeria.

Carla Springer-Hunte

Inside the Box, Outside the Boundary: Creating Theatre for Social Media Audiences.

In 2012, I presented a paper entitled "Creating Theatre for an iPad Generation" at the 2nd Annual Critical Caribbean Symposium Series, held at the University of The Bahamas, in Nassau, The Bahamas. In 2017, my paper with the same name was published in the Caribbean Quarterly: A Journal of Caribbean Culture, Volume 63. So much has changed in the last 13 years, as our young people navigate the world of the Internet and very popular social media and communication sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat and WhatsApp.

But where do theatrical performances on a Black-box or Proscenium theatre stage stand in all of this? How can we continue to boost interest in theatre with its two-hour plays, when technology has seemingly shortened the Gen Z attention span to 30-second reels and fast-paced do-it-yourself-at-home programming, albeit creative, with characters who may or may not have been created using Artificial Intelligence? How do we compete when the computer age with stories from the internet and social media pages have totally overshadowed the significance of presenting our stories of our Barbadian societies on stage? This paper will continue on from my 2017 journal to understand the reason behind the dying age of theatre.

Janine Lewis

Takes one touch: An interactive performance between a performer, a podcast and live digital mixing.

As part of warping (re)conceptual theatre making (Lewis, 2018) this performance as research project explores the use of digitally pre-recorded material as an additional performer through live digital mixing superimposed on the performer. A performance piece entitled Takes one Touch was devised for participation in the annual My Body My Space Festival 2024, held in Mpumalanga South Africa. The performance piece was a collaboration between four artists – voice, physical theatre, digital mixer, and a director. A voice over provided by Dr Katlego Chale taken from podcasts entitled A Stream without End served as inspiration for this collaboration and was used as the voice over layered in the live performance. This gave rise to the theme of a man's story as he reflects on what validation from a father figure brings. Determinedly countering social conditioning's bombardments, yet still, we "fumble, we crumble, we may fall apart". Offered as a stream of audible visual consciousness "It's a question of being… believing in yourself… it starts with being yourself". The performer Gifter Ngobeni explored the non-verbal interpretation through physical theatre, where he further added the engagement of experiencing an absent father, by performing with a chair to represent the void of his presence. Finally, Emil Lars brought an expressive layer of interpretation by pre-recording abstract emotive performance by Ngobeni with objects in trapped spaces. Lars then performed with Ngobeni by live mixing the

digital AV recorded snippets superimposed onto Ngobeni's performing body and the performance space, in conjunction with the voice over. These three juxtaposed media – physical, visual, auditory – all blended into forming the performance. As the director/researcher I was fascinated by the wit(h)nessing that could emerge from the three men with the subject matter which translated the commentary about father-son relationships into a uniquely vulnerable performance offering that focusses on the effect of touch.

Praise Zenenga
Revolutionizing the Small Screen in the Digital Era: Creating Theater for the Mobile Space in Zimbabwe.

The theater industry in Zimbabwe has not been spared of the transformative and disruptive technological innovations that came with the advent of the digital age, also known as the information age in the mid-20th century. This paper particularly examines how the advent of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok have revolutionized the theater audience/viewer experience in Zimbabwe on the small screen – tablet, smartphone, phablet, smartwatch or such similar gadgets. While generally focusing on the rise of new Zimbabwean theater creators during the current social media era, this paper will also highlight the pioneers and key players who blazed trails that not only created these new artistic trends, but also shaped and improved those novel digital experiences while simultaneously striving to create more sustainable digital theater and performance traditions. The geo-political and socio- economic environment in which this digital culture has evolved in Zimbabwe

significantly impacts digital theater and performance trends and is crucial in comprehending their emerging thematic, stylistic and aesthetic trajectories. As such, this paper will further explore how the current digital revolution has created avenues for content writers, creators, directors and designers to adopt new skillsets and aesthetic choices especially over the last one and half decades. In conclusion, the paper also looks at the continued rise and proliferation of digital theater and performance trends that continue to develop alongside emerging virtual immersive and interactive experiences evolving simultaneously with newer digital spaces or platforms for distribution and engagement.

AWPN I
GENDERED STORYTELLING
ACROSS DIGITAL SPACES

Thu, 10/07/25, 14:00-15:45

Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.14 | Webex 2

Moderation: Yvette Hutchison

Josephine Doofan Gande

Dismantling Myths, Rewriting the Narrative: Digital Storytelling as Cultural Justice in Tarlumun's 'Not Who We Are'.

Digital storytelling is a transformative tool that enables individuals and communities to amplify their voices, preserve cultural heritage, and advocate for social change. Tarlumun's

documentary "Not Who We Are" exemplifies the power of digital storytelling as a tool for cultural justice, challenging harmful stereotypes and reclaiming the narrative of the Tiv, an ethnic group in central Nigeria. The film directly confronts the pervasive myth that Tiv men historically offered their wives as hospitality to guests, a damaging falsehood that has long misrepresented Tiv culture. Through interviews with Tiv elders, cultural experts, scholars and youth, Tarlumun presents an authentic counter-narrative, blending oral tradition with modern technology to preserve and promote Tiv heritage. By sharing it on YouTube and other social media platforms, she ensures accessibility. This study examines how "Not Who We Are" leverages digital media to achieve three critical goals: refuting historical misrepresentations; archiving indigenous knowledge through participatory storytelling; and fostering cultural pride among Tiv youth. The study concludes that the documentary transcends mere myth-busting; it is a celebration of resilience. The project shows digital storytelling's potential to rectify historical disinformation while offering a model for other cultures grappling with misrepresentation. In an era of information overload, Tarlumun's strategic use of technology proves that preserving truth is not only about correcting the past but also empowering futures.

Aliyu Yakubu Abdulkadir

Echoes of Audacity: The Digital Afterlife of Barmani Choge, Gendered Performance and Shifting Receptions in Northern Nigeria.

The digital afterlife of Hajiya Sa'adatu Aliyu (1945–2013), the iconic Hausa singer popularly known as Barmani

Choge, reveals a compelling paradox at the intersection of gender, culture, and media in Northern Nigeria. Despite having lived and performed in a deeply conservative society, Barmani's music, unapologetically addressing female sexuality, autonomy, and economic agency within the bounds of purdah, now thrives across YouTube and other social media platforms. Her songs, once considered provocative even if popular, are today consumed and celebrated widely in digital spaces. This paradox raises critical questions about the transformation of cultural sensibilities and the enduring power of performance as gendered storytelling. This paper seeks to address three interwoven questions: What accounts for Barmani Choge's widespread digital popularity in contemporary Northern Nigeria? What has changed in musical reception, given that her themes remain audacious by today's moral standards? And what lessons can present-day female performers learn from Barmani's strategic negotiation of cultural norms and moral boundaries? Using a netnographic approach, the paper investigates audience interactions with Barmani's online performances, analyzing comments, shares, and other digital engagements to uncover how her legacy is refracted through the lenses of nostalgia, resistance, and admiration. It argues that the shift from analog obscurity to digital prominence is not only a testament to her artistic boldness but also indicative of evolving cultural attitudes and the growing power of mediated memory. Drawing on Sadiyya Shaikh's Feminist insights into women in Islamic societies, the paper situates Barmani as both a cultural icon and a gendered storyteller whose work challenges and expands the discourse of femininity in Northern Nigeria. Ultimately, the study contributes to ongoing debates

on African creative expressions of gender identity, emphasizing how digital platforms reshape the reception of female voices once relegated to the margins of public discourse.

Yvette Ngum

Politics of the Female Image: A Reflection Triggered by the Films Muna Moto and Ninah's Dowry.

The representation of female images in certain media reflects stoicism, and their representation is of a specific cultural position, relevant and relatable in today's global society. The image of the female character is often influenced by the socio-cultural and traditional structures observed through the dominant patriarchal order of the society in which the films originate. This perspective opposes the male, observed as 'active' in looking at the female from their viewpoint of voyeurism. In other words, the viewing is the pleasure derived from identifying with the female image on the screen and, both modes of deriving pleasure in this context set a cinematic expression of the films in question; connoting the female image passive object without any form of agency. Hence it is in this context that I seek to examine the politics surrounding especially female images in the films Muna Moto (1975) and Ninah's Dowry (2012), written and directed by Jean-Pierre Dikongue Pipa and Victor Viyuoh. Their modes of communicating the female bodies reflects stoicism; images heavily dominated by the patriarchal order of their society. Using Laura Mulvey's famous "Male Gaze" (1975) concept in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", this article selects these two films to focus on the way the female body is being viewed in films, and the pleasure derived from identifying with

their image on the screen. I argue that the modes of deriving pleasure in this article is political and it sets a cinematic expression of the films with contradictory ways of connoting the female as a passive object without any form of agency. This article delves beyond the physical copies of the films use for home entertainment to identify aspects of tradition, power, class and marriage to be determinants of the female image. It further proposes a shift from these manipulative ways of films' satisfying visual pleasure to a more subtle way in expressing the female image in this digital age.

Chika Euphemia Asogwa and Odunewu Stephen Femi

Framing Gender Issues in Nigeria's Digital Public Sphere: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Narratives on X (Twitter).

In the 21st century, social media has emerged as a crucial site for shaping and contesting gender narratives. In Nigeria, X (formerly Twitter) serves as a digital public sphere where conversations on gender identity, feminism, patriarchy, and gender-based violence unfold in real-time. These discussions, often fueled by hashtags and viral trends, shape public opinion and influence socio-political discourse. This paper employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the framing of gender issues in Nigerian social media conversations. It explores how language, power dynamics, and digital activism intersect to redefine gender identities and challenge societal norms. By analyzing key discussions, such as debates on gender roles, online gender-based violence, and feminist movements, the study highlights how digital storytelling

functions as a tool for both advocacy and resistance. The study also investigates the role of influencers, media personalities, and everyday users in amplifying or distorting gender narratives. To ensure a structured analysis, this study will select X narratives using a purposive sampling technique, focusing on tweets from trending hashtags, viral discussions, and high-engagement threads within a defined period. Data selection will prioritize tweets that have sparked significant public debates, gained media attention, or influenced policy discussions. The study will also incorporate digital ethnographic observations and multimedia elements, such as screenshots of viral tweets and video clips from online debates. Drawing on African feminist theory and digital media studies, this paper reveals how the digital age has reconfigured traditional storytelling forms, allowing new voices and perspectives to emerge. It contributes to the growing body of research on gender and digital culture in Africa by showcasing the innovative ways Nigerians engage in gendered storytelling online. Additionally, it raises questions about the sustainability of digital activism in a socio-political environment where online expression is increasingly scrutinized.

Performance and Discussion

Thu, 10/07/25, 20:00

Theater Rampe

Julian Warner

Der Soldat. With Aftershow discussion.

Whether in politics, business or war, the soldier has risen to become the social figure of the present, and military strategy has become its dominant logic. The question of the necessity and legitimacy of the use of force is omnipresent. Few have written as lucidly about violence in a fragmented world as Frantz Omar Fanon. A psychiatrist and Marxist from Martinique, he was convinced that the dehumanisation caused by European colonialism could not be overcome through negotiation and compromise, but only by destroying it. Fanon's justification of anti-colonial violence was received by leftists worldwide, from the Black Panther Party to the RAF, and is still the subject of controversial debate today.

When and in what context is it necessary to organise violence or its defence? A body enters the stage and becomes a soldier. At the mercy of the physical drill of the percussion, it questions the historical situation and seeks its relationship to violence.

FRIDAY, 11/07

	Keplerstraße 17/KII
08:30	Registration opens
09:00 11:00	**Video Screening** (17.14) Jan-Christoph Gockel: Wir Schwarzen müssen zusammenhalten **Panel** (17.15 │ Webex 1) Theatre and Education
11:00	Coffee Break
11:30	**Keynote** (17.21) Antje Budde: Human Skin. Digital Mask: Exploring A/I (artistic intelligence), building decolonial allyships and queerly knowing otherwise.
13:00	Lunch Break (Mensa Central)
14:00 16:00	**Visit of 3D Visualisation Lab (CAVE) at HLRS** Registered Participants only
	or Virtual Panels Online attendance in town at KII, 17.21
14:00 16:00	Théâtre Numérique (Webex 1) Digitization and Storytelling (Webex 2)
16:30 17:30	**Reading and Discussion** (Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.21) Oladipo Agboluaje: Crown of Blood.
18:00	Dinner Break
	Keplerstraße 17/KII
19:00 22:00	**Film Screening and Discussion** (17.02) The Man Died, funded by NYU

Video Screening

Fri, 11/07/25, 09:00-11:00

Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.14

Jan-Christoph Gockel

Wir Schwarzen müssen zusammenhalten (Münchner Kammerspiele).

Developed in an exchange between Togolese artists and a team from the Münchner Kammerspiele, this docu-fictional mash-up of drama, puppetry, comics and film tells of a futuristic ghost hunter's time travels. Colonial phantoms are unmasked and followed into the minds of today.

Theatre and Education

Fri, 11/07/25, 09:00-11:15

Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.15 | Webex 1

Moderation: Annette Bühler-Dietrich

Tochukwu J. Okeke

'Let Us Play on Their Turf': New Technologies and Performances in the Educational Theatre.

The Nigerian theatre, in the recent past, has been threatened by the combined forces of the film/cinema and the new technologies that have been introduced into the entertainment industry. This has given rise to varied

experimentations in performances in a bid to keep the live theatre alive. These experiments range from live streaming of theatrical performances to the deployment of multimedia staging techniques in productions all in a bid to make theatre's audience have a semblance of what the new technologies offer. Amidst all these challenges, the educational theatres have consistently trained new theatre practitioners. Consequently, using the productions and experiences at the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (UNIZIK) as an example, this study interrogates the efforts of the students at meeting the challenges posed by the New Technologies through the application of these New Media in their productions. It was observed that by taking the 'game to their turf', the students were able to find a point of convergence between the live theatre and the new technologies and thus were able to sustain their performances and maintain patronage.

Friederike Heinz

Unscripted Dialogues: Negotiating colonial Pasts in Virtual Tandems and Theatre.

The potentials of Blended Mobilty formats such as Virtual Exchange in Language Learning Context are supposed to create meaningful intercultural learning environments while advocating for a sensitive, equity-oriented approach to global academic exchange (O'Dowd 2018).

This presentation explores how digital and performative formats facilitate transcultural dialogue and critical reflection on colonial legacies in the context of a blended mobility project

between students from Benin and Germany. Over the course of several months, participants engaged in both virtual tandems and in-person exchanges, including theatre workshops, to examine themes such as multilingualism and the lasting imprints of colonialism in their everyday lives.

Focusing on the question of construction of meaning, the project demonstrates how digital technologies—particularly in the form of unguided tandem conversations—enable the articulation of personal and collective memories. At the same time, these spaces expose participants to vulnerability, as linguistic negotiation and the sharing of trauma unfold without real-time pedagogical scaffolding and in the context of unequal access to the digital world. In contrast, the guided theatre workshops—based on Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed—provided a structured yet creative space to critically engage with what Bauerkämper (2012) describes as "knots of memory."

Drawing on video data from two theatre workshops and a digital tandem session on Zoom, this study employs multimodal video analysis (Deppermann 2013; Mondada 2014) to examine how students collaboratively navigate issues of power, trauma, and reconciliation both performatively and discursively. Special attention is paid to the ways language becomes a site of both empowerment and conflict in these interactions.

The presentation argues that digital and performative methods offer unique affordances for confronting historical injustice and fostering postcolonial and multilingual awareness. However, it also critically reflects on the risks of digital

inequality and the implications of the "digital divide" (Rellstab 2023) for inclusive participation in cooperation projects at Higher Education Institutions between the Global North and the Global South.

Taku Victor Jong

Reviving the Art of Dramatic Storytelling as a Pedagogical Tool in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The storytelling event, in most African communities, provided and continue to open new avenues for parents to commune with their children and other members of the community to discuss pertinent issues that provide answers to their worries and solutions to their plight. This paper will focus on the role of dramatic storytelling as a pedagogical tool, the reasons put forthby some educational experts why we witnessed its decline in the classroom, the importance of storytelling in the teaching and learning process, and novel ways of integrating artificial intelligence (AI) geared towards innovating and revitalizing the storytelling event in this digital age. With the aid of the Performance Context Approach, Process Drama and different techniques of adaptation, we will discover different avenues open to the classroom teacher while integrating storytelling in the teaching and learning process. With the aid of some tales about common happenings in society, myths, legends etc, we will explore how issues raised in the tale can enhance the learner's mastery of subjects such as History, Literature, Civic/Citizenship Education, Environmental Education, Moral Education, Health Education and Human Rights. Proposals will be made on how the

classroom teacher can contribute in adapting some of these tales to plays (stage and radio), film scripts, comic strips and documentaries.

Kai Padberg

Community Theater in times of changing public spheres: On the fluidity of audiences/publics at the My Body, My Space: Public Arts Festival (Emakhazeni, South Africa).

In Community Theatre1, the distinction between performer and audience is often questioned. Likewise, the separation between the public and the audience, as it is primarily diagnosed for Western art theatre, 2 does not apply in this context. Rather, the fluid concept of the audience in Community Theatre itself contributes to the formation of (acting) communities and local publics. What are the implications for Community Theatre when the public sphere is increasingly transformed by digitization and the rise of social media? In reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic, the My Body, My Space Festival (MBMS), organized by the Forgotten Angle Theatre Collaborative (FATC), was held entirely via WhatsApp for the first time in 2021 in the rural municipality Emakhazeni. Since 2016 the festival annually showcases artistic and dance productions in public spaces for several days, with the participation of local, marginalized communities. Beyond the festival, FATC primarily organizes artistic training programs for young people in Emakhazeni. While digital communication practices and social media use are part of FATC's everyday life and an integral part of the festival's PR strategy, the festival's temporary move to WhatsApp produced ambivalent results.

The festival significantly increased its visibility within transregional and international publics while simultaneously losing local audiences.

This paper explores fundamental considerations regarding the relationship between transformative theatre practices, such as Community Theatre, and audiences and publics, situating them within the South African context. Using the examples of FATC and MBMS, it highlights both the emancipatory potentials and practical challenges that the global transformation of the public sphere presents for community theatre practitioners at the local level.

Mervin Claasen
Storytelling and its Use in the Digital Age.

My academic speech will still explore the transformation of storytelling in the digital era and highlight how the digital technologies have reshaped narrative forms, platforms, and audience engagement. It will explore the advantages and limitations thereof as well. To add, i will also explore the impact of AI on creative writing. While it may enhance productivity it, may come with some challenges.

Keynote

Antje Budde

Human Skin. Digital Mask: Exploring A/I (artistic intelligence), building decolonial allyships and queerly knowing otherwise.

Multi-media workshops/performances/courses are focused on building agency, literacy and transferrable skills based on A/I (artistic intelligence), queering the Brechtian apparatus and multi-modal embodied learning, collective creation, social labor, materiality and making, critical creativity, and dialectical perfections of queer failure. Works are based on principles of togetherness (respect, relationality, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural), laughter (self-reflection, de-centering, dialectics, curiosity, play, silliness), and radical slowness (labor, accepting that human learning takes/gives time). Recent projects focussed on media anarcheology, collective creation, imagination/imaging, artful engineering, AI, ecology, sustainability, student mental health, multi-linguality, and Indigenous anti-colonial collaborations.

Artistic research (multi-media performances, videos, installations, lecture performances) was presented at international festivals, praxis-based conferences and art educational institutions in Brazil, Canada, Germany, Latvia, Serbia, Singapore, USA. Student involvement as creative and

organizational partners is very important and students have collaborated in many capacities both in arts and research projects as well as publications and were invited to international travels, continuing a praxis Budde experienced when a student back in the day.

Visit to the CAVE

Fri, 11/07/25, 14:00-16:00

HLRS, Nobelstraße 19

Registered Participants only!

Visit 3D Visualisation Lab (CAVE) at Höchstleistungsrechenzentrum Stuttgart (HLRS)

Théâtre numérique

Fri, 11/07/25, 14:00-16:00

Online, Webex 1

Moderation: Sven Kilian

Gabriel Kombassere

Théâtre, numérique & néocolonialisme: une réflexion sur 'Wir Schwarzen müssen zusammenhalten (2021)' et 'Les Statues rêvent aussi - Vision d'un retour' (2022/23) de Jan-Christoph Gockel et Serge Aimé Coulibaly.

Dans le théâtre postcolonial- The trial of. Dedan Kimathi (1976), I will Marry, when I want (1977) et productions

cinématographiques You Hide me (1970), Les statues meurent aussi (1953) jusqu'à Black Panthers ou Wakanda Forever (2018/2022), le potentiel utopique de la fiction dans la culture de la mémoire du (néo)colonialisme est indubitable. Les deux formes (théatre et film) ont plutôt été longtemps pratiquées séparément.

Les nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication ont transformé la pratique théâtrale au cours des dernières années. Le metteur en scène Jan-Christoph Gockel (*1982) associe la production de marionnettes, la musique, le film, le jeu d'acteur et l'improvisation pour faire un théâtre expérimental, au-delà du théâtre postdramatique (Hansen, 2021:35).

L'analyse de la performance de ses deux spectacles examine la construction performative de la relation et des différences spatiales dans le contexte d'une production théâtrale interculturelle. L'utilisation d'enregistrements vidéo et audio réalisés simultanément à Munich et à Lomé permet de créer une structure dialogique qui abolit la distance physique entre les lieux de représentation et défie donc la notion des arts de la scène. Grâce à l'utilisation de la transmission vidéo en direct, Wir Schwarzen müssen zusammenhalten (2021) et Les Statues rêvent aussi - Vision d'un retour (2022/2023) abolissent les frontières spatiales et temporelles entre Munich et Lomé ou Burkina Faso, créant ainsi une expérience simultanée pour le public. L'analyse de la performance examine comment les récits historiques sont déconstruits et recomposés par des stratégies performatives et des moyens technologiques.

Cette communication met en lumière le rôle de la technologie en tant que moyen d'aborder l'histoire et l'identité. Elle soulève la question de savoir comment le numérique peut contribuer à élargir les discours postcoloniaux et à créer des récits alternatifs. L'étude montre, par le biais de l'analyse de la représentation et d'entretiens empiriques avec les acteurs* et le metteur en scène, comment la représentation ouvre la possibilité d'initier un débat dialogique au-delà des traumatismes historiques et des réalités actuelles et de remettre en question la construction de la mémoire collective.

Fernand Nouwligbèto

Le trône de Behanzin, une comédie musicale, 'numérique' victim de son surfinancement.

Spectacle total de plus de 2 heures, Le trône de Béhanzin est une production au carrefour de tous les arts (théâtre, danse, musique, cinéma, arts plastiques...) dont la première a eu lieu en juillet 2024 à Cotonou (Bénin). Mobilisant plus de trente acteurs, toutes disciplines artistiques confondues, il fait aussi une large part au numérique comme le révèlent les éléments scénographiques (décors, accessoires de scène) voire les composantes du paratexte théâtral, axé autour des outils de communication digitale mobilisés par Amir El Presidente Alli, le producteur de cette œuvre gigantesque, haut en couleurs, qui a bénéficié d'un financement colossal de la Banque mondiale et de l'Agence nationale pour la promotion du tourisme (Anpt). Au regard de l'importance par trop surdimensionnée du numérique dans cette production mise en scène par Didier Nasségandé dans une chorégraphie de Rachelle Agbossou , on est incité à s'interroger sur ses enjeux, ses implications

esthétiques et ses significations dans la production et la réception de ce spectacle, qui continue d'être diffusé à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur des frontières nationales. A l'évidence, la disponibilité financière explique l'enflure du numérique et l'aspect surfait d'un spectacle en mal de simplicité et de profondeur. L'objectif de cette étude est de lever un coin du voile sur la place du numérique dans Le trône de Béhanzin, ses enjeux et ses implications tant esthétiques qu'idéologiques, en nous appuyant sur les démarches et les concepts de la sémiologie théâtrale, de l'intermédialité et des champs littéraires.

DIGITIZATION AND STORYTELLING

Fri, 11/07/25, 14:00-16:00

Online, Webex 2

Moderation: Annette Bühler-Dietrich

Hairat Bukola Yusuf

Interrogating Social Media Strategies of Select African Dance Companies.

This study critically examines the social media strategies of Imagneto Dance Company and Qdance Company, two leading Nigerian dance companies founded by Kafayat Oluwatoyin Shafau (2007) and Qudus Onikeku (2014) respectively. Anchored in Arts Marketing Theory, this research investigates the effectiveness of their social media strategies in

achieving marketing objectives, including brand promotion and audience engagement. Through a qualitative approach combining content analysis and in-depth interviews, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the companies' social media strategies, revealing strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. The findings offer actionable insights and recommendations for African dance companies seeking to optimize their social media presence and leverage digital platforms effectively. This study contributes significantly to the advancement of Arts Marketing Theory, African dance studies, and the understanding of social media strategies in the creative industries.

Vincenzo Straface

Narrating Stories Through Online Voices: The Case of Edwin Chiloba.

This talk examines how digital platforms shape and perform gender identities within contemporary African activism, focusing on Edwin Chiloba, a Kenyan LGBTQ+ rights advocate and fashion icon, whose tragic death in 2023 sparked global discussions on queer visibility and violence.

Through qualitative analysis of posts and narratives on platforms like X, Instagram, and JamiiForum, this presentation highlights how online storytelling becomes a form of performative (non)activism. These digital stages not only empower common citizen' voices and online gossip but also create virtual spaces where narratives of identity and resistance unfold. Drawing on the concept of cyberbaraza (Topan, 2006; Brunotti, 2019), I frame digital platforms as virtual forums

fostering belonging and critical dialogue—akin to a modern-day theatre stage.

In line with Leeker et al. (2016), who argue that digital cultures are inherently performative and shaped by techno-social processes, this study situates Chiloba's digital presence within a broader regime of digital performativity. Chiloba's own words encapsulate this vision: "My mission is to change the narrative into bringing diversity into inclusion through art" (2022). His online presence becomes a theatre of activism, transforming personal expression into collective resistance and fostering global solidarity.

However, as Winkler (2019) and Tagudina (2012) highlight, while social media can amplify marginalized voices, they also perpetuate harmful stereotypes and homophobia, often reducing LGBTQ+ people to one-dimensional portrayals. This dual nature of digital platforms—as both spaces of empowerment and vulnerability—complicates their role in shaping public discourse. So, how do digital spaces act as arenas for the (in)visibility and (mis)representation of LGBTQ+ identities in homophobic socio-cultural contexts? In my contribution, I will illustrate how digital storytelling reshapes the aesthetics, accessibility, and impact of contemporary activism, positioning digital platforms as pivotal tools for social change in the digital age.

'Lanre Qasim Adenekan

Trailer on Social Media: A New Approach to Theatre Marketing in a Conservative Space.

This paper examines the effectiveness of trailer as a promotional tool for stage performances in Kano. As a predominant Muslim-Hausa community, Kano is guided largely by cultural and religious sentiments that appear antithetical to theatre, thus posing the challenge of low audience attendance at theatre productions. Responding to this challenge, my students in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Bayero University Kano, Nigeria, devised the use of trailers on social media platforms like Whatsapp, Instagram and Facebook as a strategy to drive audience into seeing their stage performances. By employing case studies and participant-observation, this paper investigates how packaging trailers on social media offers a strategic way of ushering audience into the theatre while respecting their cultural dispositions. It also assesses how social media expands the reach and visibility of theatre productions, providing insights into how the aforementioned platforms enabled theatre marketers (the students) to create compelling content that resonate with conservative audience.

Lilian A. Okoro
Highlights on the use of AI in Nigerian Theatre: A glimpse into female perspectives.

It is common knowledge that artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming every aspect of life and the Nigerian theatre is not exempted. AI brings new opportunities and challenges, such challenges include overindulgence and reduced creative ingenuity. This calls for caution.

The theoretical framework of this study is supported by Darren G Lilleker Amplification Theory of 2019. The theory explains that technology can greatly amplify human capabilities. The technical area of theatre practice has over the years been dominated by male practitioners, the new possibilities in AI creates more room for female practitioners. Focus group discussions with female students and lecturers at the Department of Theatre and Media Studies at the University of Calabar aided data collection. The findings of this study show that AI enhances storytelling, staging techniques , and insights into theatre education and resources. It has been observed that women in theatre face unique challenges, including discrimination in handling technical theatre tasks Developing creative skills is crucial for maximising this new AI's opportunities . This research concludes with highlights on the need for enhanced AI literacy and responsible use of AI generated content. It is recommended that balanced collaboration is vital for unlocking new possibilities for Nigerian theatre, empowering more women to take their rightful place in the spotlight of theatre practice giving rise to more innovative, inclusive, and vibrant theatre.

FILM SCREENING AND DISCUSSION

Fri, 11/07/25, 19:00

Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.02

Awam Amkpa, Femi Odugbemi, Makin Soyinka and Jahman Anikulapo

The Man Died. Feature Film, 2024.

Based on the harrowing prison memoir by Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, this film chronicles Soyinka's imprisonment without trial by a brutal military regime determined to silence his voice (quoted from IMDb).

Screening of the film and discussion with director Awam Amkpa and producers Femi Odugbemi, Makin Soyinka and Jahman Anikulapo. Supported by New York University.

SATURDAY, 12/07

	Theater Rampe
09:30 10:20	AfTA AGM (Eckladen)
10:15	Coffee Break

	Panels	
	Atelier	Eckladen
10:30 12:30	AWPN II: Gendered Storytelling across Digital Spaces (Webex 1)	Esthétique et Numérique (Webex 2)
12:30 13:30	Networking and Archiving (Webex 1)	Digital Attention Economies (Webex 2)
13:30	Lunch Break	
14:30 15:30	Round Table (Atelier) Open Access Publishing in African Theatre Studies	
15:30 16:30	**Keynote** (Saal) Jan-Christian Gockel: Global Theater Total.	
16:30	Coffee Break, Walk to Dreigroschentheater	
17:00 18:00	**Performance** (Dreigroschentheater) Mervin Claasen: The Dungeons	
19:00	**Performance...** (Theater Rampe) Kagayi Ngobi: For my Negativity.	
20:00	**...and discussion** Meinungsfreiheit und Friedenssicherung in Afrika (with translation)	
21:00	Informal get-together, Catering	

AWPN II
GENDERED STORYTELLING
ACROSS DIGITAL SPACES

Sat, 12/07/25, 10:30-12:30

Theater Rampe, Atelier | Webex 1

Moderation: Pepetual Mforbe Chiangong

Emmanuella O. Bakare

On Flying too close to the sun: A Visual Exploration of Female Resistance in the Face of Stifling Gender Expectations. A Proposed 5-7 minute long Short Film on Culturally Endorsed Sexism.

This film will be made with the intention to have it screened at the African Theatre Association (AfTA) 2025 Conference as the researcher's contribution to the panel on 'Gendered Storytelling across Digital Spaces: Exploring African Creative Expressions of Gender Identity in the Digital Age'. The film will examine the question of female self actualization as it contrasts with cultural gender obligations specifically in Nigeria. Traditional expectations of womanhood in Nigeria have observedly featured a male-centric undertone, whereby, young women are trained from an early age to structure their every desire around the male gaze and their eligibility for marriage. The yardstick of eligibility is usually based on such male-serving standards as the woman's; sexual purity, fertility, penchance for subservience and self-sacrificing. Qualities like; self-realization, independence, personal

achievement, ambition, etc are frowned upon and encouraged only in men. By employing tight framing techniques and wielding the camera as a silent observer, this film will explore via narrative fiction, what happens when the innate desire for self-actualization and quest for personal identity clashes with cultural expectations of gender identity and responsibility. The film will serve as an academic resource for broader discussions on gendered storytelling in the current digital age.

"On Flying too Close to the Sun" follows the story of Abewa (19) a young woman living in a rural Nigerian community with her parents. She desires to go to a higher institution somewhere in the city and make something of herself, but after barely finishing her secondary education, she has been mandated by her parents to get married. A virginity testing is prerequisite tradition for the bride before the commencement of any wedding. After Abewa fails her testing, she is verbally lashed at by her parents for disgracing the family by not remaining pure. She is commanded to grovel and beg for her suitor's forgiveness, in hope that he agrees to continue with the wedding plans. The story culminates with Abewa opting instead to run away from home and take her chances in the city rather than stay back to be someone's sympathy wife.

Ruth Epochi-Olise

Cross-Dressing and Drag Culture: A Reinvention of Storytelling in Nigerian digital comic space.

With the rapid rise of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, some Nigerian skit makers,

digital performers and comedians like Cute Abiola, Zics Aloma, Steve Chuks, Kenzy Udose, Warri Mama, and Cleopatra, among others, have increasingly turned to cross-dressing and drag as creative tools for storytelling, humour and social commentary. Beside comic relief, cross-dressing and drag in this context emerge as complex narrative devices that blend indigenous performance traditions and modern aesthetics to negotiate visibility in a heteronormative society. Using performance analysis and digital ethnography, this paper examines how cross-dressing and drag serve as a creative strategy for reinventing storytelling within the Nigerian digital comic space, foregrounding the gender politics embedded in these performances. It investigates how these performers negotiate gender roles, play with cultural stereotypes, and challenge or reinforce existing social hierarchies situated within the fluidity of Nigeria's digital space. The study further explores how digital platforms provide new spaces for the circulation and reception of these gendered performances, shaping both popular culture and the evolution of Nigerian comic storytelling. Finally, this work argues that cross-dressing in the Nigerian digital comic space is not merely a performance of humour but a dynamic site for the reinvention of narrative strategies and cultural expression in the 21st century.

'Tosin Kooshima Tume

Performing Alabodo and Yoruba Womanhood on Social Media: Sexual Taboos and Liberation in Kofo Ibadan's Instagram Contents.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, theatre creators across the world found refuge in digital spaces for the

production and distribution of their works. During this period, the Zoom app was a particularly useful site of engagement for theatrical activities. It was also during the period that the South African- based Twist Theatre Development Projects facilitated an online residency for creatives across Africa. The online workshop which took place on Zoom, brought together five writers, three directors, and seven actors from Sub-Saharan African countries in a dynamic professional writer's development programme. The two-week online Novel-Script Workshop residency culminated into the production of six ten-minute plays which were performed online for the Virtual South African National Arts Festival (NAF) in 2020. In this paper, I present the Boluwatife: As the Lord pleases? being one of the virtual theatre pieces that was devised during the online residency in 2020. The paper examines the various stages of the virtual creative process. It also considers the outcomes of the collaborative experience in terms of benefits and challenges.

Palesa Matabane

Senohe: Effigy of a Prophetess.

Senohe is a physical theatre experimental production that explores the objectification of black Southern African women in history. These women are figures, icons; unknown outside of the idea of them as a token of inclusion. In particular it was a commentary on the story of the Prophetess 'Mantsopa. 'Mantsopa was a prolific woman in Lesotho's history but little is known about her and what is known is contested by Basotho and South African Historians. Each lay claim to her, but none

has consistent information on the events of her life let alone who she was as a person.

The original piece is an existing work that was not recorded. A 6 scene 30 minuet play that unfolds by the role of a die(dice). The episodic nature of the piece is Brechtian with banners to help audiences understand the multilingual delivery of historical information, songs and commentary. The production is delivered through Southern African childhood games, movement and poetry, interspersed with skits to help contextualize the show. Senohe: the efigy of a prophetess is not a story, it is a question.

The prophetess 'Mantsopa has been collectively claimed, so I ask: how do we collectively tell a story? A story we know, a story we don't, a story we remember but is entirely new.

For this conference the performance is an invitation to the collaborative re-making of Senohe into the effigy of a Prophetess. The black female audience members are asked to re-make the narrative through the act of documentation and participation as spec-actors. The aim is to recontextualize the piece and the narrative of 'Mantsopa by remolding her through the eyes of other black females. The performance artifacts are to be collected and structured into the comment on 'Mantsopa Makhetha. If she as a person cannot be known let the multi-perspective interpretation of the historic female figure be herstorified digitally. The digital and immortal effigy of a prophetess.

The work speaks to the multiplicity of perspectives in the history of black female historical figures. The presentation is a

re-mediated performance, an online participatory performance. This means that some elements of the work are pre-recorded, while others are virtually live.

Simply I am not presenting a paper but a performance research piece, created in part by the digital participation of the audience (conference attendees).

Esthétique et Numérique

Sat, 12/07/25, 10:30-12:30
Theater Rampe, Eckladen | Webex 2
Moderation: Brian Valente-Quinn

Mahamadou Diol
Le dramaturgie Wolof defie l'intelligence artificelle.

Pingdewindé Issiaka Tiendrebeogo
L'atelier théâtre burkinabè: entre archivage et diffusion numérique de spectacle.

L'Atelier Théâtre Burkinabè est l'une des structures majeures dans l'univers théâtral au Burkina Faso. Crée depuis 1978 par son géniteur, Prosper KOMPAORÉ, cette structure s'est montré être un véritable incubateur de talents dans le monde du théâtre en général, et du théâtre d'intervention sociale en particulier. Aujourd'hui, l'ATB a été une des structures pionnières dans l'utilisation du numérique dans l'archivage et la diffusion de ses représentations théâtrales. L'objectif de notre communication est de montrer l'apport des

nouvelles technologies de l'Information et de la Communication (NTIC) dans l'archivage et la diffusion des spectacles théâtraux. Notre méthodologie de travail consistera à travers une enquête sociologique de recueillir des données qualitatives et quantitatives auprès de l'Atelier Théâtre Burkinabè afin de mesurer la portée de cette pratique à l'aune de l'utilisation du numérique.

Sibdou Nelly Maria Belemgnygré

Esthétique numérique du théâtre: Les usages dramatiques de l'écran.

Cette étude est une exploration des transformations esthétiques et relationnelles dans les arts de la scène à travers l'intégration des technologies numériques. A partir du concept du métatexte chez Pavis, texte non écrit regroupant les options de la mise en scène prises au cours de la création, il a été possible d'observer la transformation de l'expérience théâtrale.

En admettant qu'« au niveau de la représentation théâtrale numérique, le jeu de l'acteur intervient sous une autre forme » (S. R. Traoré, 2022), l'on reconnait que l'usage du digital implique des changements esthétiques significatifs. Les artistes contemporains s'aventurent sur ces nouvelles voies de création en puisant dans les imaginaires collectifs actuels sur le numérique, modifiant la relation entre l'artiste, son art et le spectateur.

Philomaine Natama : Création de Communauté Virtuelle

Philomaine Natama investit Facebook pour diffuser ses sketchs, créant une communauté de 34.965 abonnés en

moyenne. Ses spectacles comme "Ma copine", "La viande" ou "Test de grossesse" illustrent une nouvelle Relation Artiste/Public. Ces sketchs, dont l'esthétique est associée au style du cadrage, des angles de prises de vue et des mouvements de la caméra, sont aussi caractérisés par une virtualité des relations artiste/public, tout le moins, durant la diffusion des capsules humoristiques. Les spectacles sont créés, filmés puis rediffusés en différé. Ce qui modifie la relation de l'artiste à son art dramatique/vivant et de celui-ci à son spectateur.

Noël Minougou: Dialogue Entre Théâtre et Écran

Dans le spectacle "Les frasques d'Ebinto" (2025), Noël Minougou intègre la projection vidéographique, créant un dialogue entre le théâtre traditionnel et l'écran sous toutes ses formes. Le metteur en scène transforme les échanges épistolaires du roman original en échanges virtuelles entre les personnages d'Ebinto et Murielle. Il se sert d'un écran géant pour faire entrer cette dernière en scène. Ses émotions sont ainsi très perceptibles. L'image projetée de Murielle devient un véritable partenaire de jeu, présente par le dialogue mais absente physiquement, créant une tension dramatique unique. La transformation du Médium entre les deux personnages constitue un "métatexte" (Pavis, 2021, p. 12).

Sidiki Yougbaré: Théâtre des ombres, Sous-titres et Bilinguisme

Dans "Beogo", Sidiki Yougbaré propose une approche du multiculturalisme en intégrant un sous-titrage qui met en dialogue écran, humains, cultures et langues. Le spectacle joué

en mooré est traduit en français sur une toile en fond de scène, faisant de l'écriture projetée un actant à part entière de la représentation.

En somme, une nouvelle relation spectateur-œuvre s'inscrit dans une coconstruction du sens entre le numérique et le vivant. Ce sont des espaces hybrides faits d'interactivités et d'hyperproximité. Ces artistes ont « cultivé le numérique » (P. Robert, 2015, p. 352) pour s'approprier sa « fertilité » et augmenter le pouvoir d'agir de leurs créations. Ils ont actualisé l'expérience traditionnelle su spectateur pour l'aligner à l'expérience du numérique.

En conclusion, le spectateur se découvre dans une mise en parallèle, vivant/numérique qui modifie sa relation au spectacle.

André Somé

Satire coloniale et postcoloniale dans Le Crocodile du Botswanga (2014) de Lionel Steketee et Fabrice Eboué sur YouTube.

Le Crocodile du Botswanga est une comédie satirique de 90 mn qui propose de rire de certaines niaiseries de la dictature militaire en Afrique noire. Une décennie après sa réalisation, ce film retentit comme une approche critique du fait colonial, de la farce que représente les indépendances dans de nombreux Etats, mais aussi comme une excellente synthèse des axes du combat souverainiste en Afrique : l'évocation de la colonisation, l'allusion aux multinationales françaises qui exploitent les ressources naturelles à vil prix et qui ont tendance à s'imposer comme partenaires privilégiés, la prison

monétaire que représente le franc CFA, les frustrations liées aux difficultés d'acquisition de moyens de défense militaires, la récupération des ressources humaines africaines de qualités par d'autres continents sont autant de situations qui caractérisent une Françafrique persistante et alimentent le désir du Botswanga de s'émanciper de l'ancienne puissance coloniale avec, parfois, des allures de vengeance raciale, mais aussi de références interculturelles.

Toutefois, l'autoritarisme du président Bobo, sa volonté de se réapproprier les ressources naturelles et humaines de son pays s'opposent à des défis internes au Botswanga, au président Bobo lui-même et à son entourage immédiat. La corruption, le népotisme, la gabegie, la volonté de conserver le pouvoir le plus longtemps possible, etc. sont autant d'obstacles à l'atteinte de la souveraineté et sources potentielles de coups d'Etat.

La comédie quasi caricaturale apparait dans Le crocodile du Botswanga comme une stratégie à travers laquelle certaines exactions politiques peuvent être dites ou suggérées tout en atténuant le risque d'une éventuelle censure. La présentation de nombreuses courtes séquences sur les réseaux sociaux contribue de façon décisive à la diffusion de l'œuvre.

NETWORKING AND ARCHIVING

Sat, 12/07/25, 12:30-13:30

Theater Rampe, Atelier | Webex 1

Moderation: Oladipo Agboluaje

Yvette Hutchison

Networking and collaboration on and off-line: analyzing the African Dance Disability Network project (ADDN) via the African Women Playwright Network (AWPN).

This paper will trace key factors that impact when creating a network both online and via live networks that are designed as spaces for artistic and critical engagement both within Africa and beyond. I will analyse how we draw on what we learned from setting up and working with the African Womens' Playwright Network (2015-2025) https://africanwomenplaywrightsnetwork.org/, in the UKRI-funded African Dance Disability network (2023-2025, https://africandancedisabilitynetwork.org/). I and Dr Loots are engaging with participants in the ADDN to trace the relationship between disability dance and citizenship with specific dance companies and choreographers in East and South Africa. In this paper, I will consider how we can acknowledge the materiality of the processes and relationships involved in these kinds of networks, which as Stephansen argues, also involve the making of new publics. In this analysis I engage how we need to acknowledge legacies of colonialism via Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (1999/ 2012) approach to

decolonising indigenous research methodologies when creating a cross-cultural network. I will trouble some of the assumptions about the 'democracy' of digital technologies, particularly regarding disability. I will also reflect on the specific challenges and advantages the online and real time spaces bring to networks and collaborations.

Veronica Baxter
Breathing life into dusty files: digital archiving of applied theatre.

This paper will offer insights into the development of a digital archive of applied theatre in health projects and theatre companies in South Africa. In particular, the paper will evaluate the choices made regarding what to digitise and make accessible, the ethics of data stewardship, and what best serves ongoing scholarship and education. Far too much valuable research documentation sits in dusty files and boxes, inaccessible to researchers, policy makers, and educators. Other research exists behind paywalls which disproportionately affects scholars in the global south. This paper will discuss the curation of an open access digital archive.

Starting with the theatre company, Puppets against AIDS which became arepp: Theatre for Life (1987 – 2023), the archiving process seeks to document the principles and practices that informed the company's approach to health education. The repository of documents, videos, photographs, reports and funding proposals is well-organised, but is in boxes and on hard drives, inaccessible to international researchers and educators. Yet the theatre company was highly successful

delivering large scale projects in several provinces of South Africa, influencing thousands of educators and pupils, and training cohorts of actors, scriptwriters, designers and puppeteers.

Digitisation and data stewardship is a complex process if the archive is to become useful to ongoing scholarship in the field, as well as to reveal the legacy of the organisation. The selection of materials that will tell the over-arching story of the company over 36 years is informed by the internationally accepted FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) for digital archives. At this point, the digital archive is hosted by the University of Cape Town ibali (story) site where significant performance-related archival material is already available to scrutiny.

DIGITAL ATTENTION ECONOMIES

Sat, 12/07/25, 12:30-13:30
Theater Rampe, Eckladen | Webex 2
Moderation: Sola Adeyemi

David A. Donkor

Fugu on the Runway: Sports, Aviation and Theatricality of Ghanaian Fashion in a Digital Attention Economy.

In 2022, when Ghana's national soccer team, Black Stars, arrived in Doha Airport, Qatar for the FIFA soccer World Cup

final, they walked out of the aircraft onto the tarmac in fugu, a smock woven from narrow strips of dyed, handspun cotton. As a form of globalized public performance, the stages of the 2022 World Cup exceed the field of soccer play to include the arrival of teams at the airport. The Black Stars' sartorial choice for the team's arrival at the mundial, unprecedented in the history of Ghanaian sports, got affirmative and negative responses from the Ghanaian public. In this presentation I explore the significance off fugu on the bodies of the disembarking Black Stars. I explore this significance in the context of three histories: that of fugu itself; that of dress, fashion, and the spectacle of airport arrivals in aviation; and that of Black Stars in Ghanaian national aspirations. I show that the Black Stars' "modeling" of fugu on the Doha airport "runway," exposed lingering contentions about the status of the dress in Ghanaian popular imaginations. At the same time, in the hypervisibility brought about by social media coverage and the digital attention economy that fuels it, something ordinarily as banal as arriving at the airport in fugu, became an opportunity for the team to perform both hautre couture and national identification to a global audience.

Owen Seda, Ngonidzashe Muwonwa and Patience Fadzai Maforo

'Digi' show-offs: identity and social media representation in contemporary Zimbabwe The case of traditional marriage rites.

The phenomenal rise in social media and Web 2.0 during the last three decades has revolutionised the propagation and consumption of cultural images in ways not seen before across

many parts of the globe, including contemporary Zimbabwe. Because of recent considerable growth in internet connectivity among Africa's urbanised populations, the relative ease of access to social media has gradually rendered these platforms as veritable sites on which to document and circulate aspects of lived culture. Interestingly, this development has come with two things. First, social media is now implicated with the ostentatious public propagation and consumption of cultural heritage, and secondly social media now serves as a platform to present performance in everyday life.

Our interest is two-fold. First, we seek to analyse the opportunities and challenges that have arisen from the upsurge in the use of social media to transmit the hitherto relatively private cultural rite of traditional marriages (roora or lobola) as a form of mediated public performance. Secondly, we analyse this as presentation of the self in everyday life. We borrow from on-going studies in media and performance studies to explore the upsurge in the use of social media as a repository of performed lives where a hitherto private traditional rite previously shared through oral communication has been ruptured in ostentatious ways using the wide reach of digital media to become a form of mass circulation public performance of the everyday. We use the twin lens of representation under Identity 2.0 and performance theory to interrogate the transitioning and commodification of traditional marriage rites into the realm of the profane on digital media using extravagant sets, décor, delectable catering, lighting, and sound in ways that intersect with contemporary performance theory and the construction of identities.

We draw data from selected YouTube videos to outline potential implications and transformations in the identity and representation of Zimbabwe's cultural landscape as ostentatious and performed presentation(s) of the self.

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Sat, 12/07/25, 14:30-15:30

Theater Rampe, Atelier

Sola Adeyemi, Oladipo Agboluaje and Brian Valente-Quinn

Open access publishing in African Theatre Studies.

Scholars in the field of African theatre studies are closely familiar with the challenges of unequal access to publishing outlets. Leading scholarly journals often host their content behind pay walls with prohibitive fees that can only be covered by well-resourced university libraries. Such restrictions have meant that most Africa-based scholars and artists do not have access to publications concerning their own work and communities and are limited in the content that they can use in their courses. Moreover, emerging African theatre scholars, and especially those based on the continent, frequently struggle to find established scholarly venues for their work.

This panel aims to facilitate a discussion of the new possibilities made available by the growing field of open access publishing. Not only do new open access journals appear regularly, but many longstanding established publications have migrated their content and now operate

exclusively in an open access format. The new option comes with its own specific benefits and challenges. This podium proposes a brief presentation and discussion of the goals, possibilities, and lingering difficulties of open access scholarly publishing today. Representations of African Performance Review, the scholarly publication of the African Theatre Association, which has recently transitioned to an open access format, will present alongside a representative of a new open access publication, La Revue Internationale des Inventions Théâtrales Africaines, to discuss their experience in creating and promoting open access content. In the subsequent discussion, attendees will be invited to share their own questions, feedback or suggestions.

Keynote

Sat, 12/07/25, 16:30-17:30

Theater Rampe, Saal

Jan-Christoph Gockel
Global Theater Total

Theater seems to be a local thing, an art that only works in the direct presence and togetherness of performers and audience. In his workshop report, Jan-Christoph Gockel will explain how this fact can be combined with a global reality, how his plays become visible to audiences on several continents. A theater connected to the world.

PERFORMING CHANGE

A series of performances and discussions funded by Universität Stuttgart and Engagement Global.

Thu, 10/07/25, 17:00
Dreigroschentheater

'Tosin Kooshima Tume and Emmanuella O. Bakare
Spinning Tales, Weaving Futures.

A Gift from Yesterday tells the story of two women who have been invited for a storytelling project in a studio. On one side of the studio waiting room is Iya Agba, a 60-year-old Yoruba female storyteller. Iya Agba is a strong believer in the power of live performance for children and the community at large. The other side of the waiting room is occupied by Aduke, a young woman in her 20s. Aduke is a digital artist who creates stories for children using images, computer graphics, sound design, and streaming platforms. While Iya Agba prepares to perform a Yoruba folktale with her voice, memory, and a shekere (beaded gourd), Aduke also prepares to create and showcase a digital story with her laptop. Inevitably, Iya Agba's Shekere music clashes with the sounds coming from Aduke's laptop and this results in a heated exchange between the two storytellers. Iya Agba believes that digital technology dilutes the passion and emotion which animates storytelling, while Aduke thinks live performance is too slow and limited. As they argue back and forth, they begin to make sense out of each other's points. They ultimately reach a compromise to collaborate on their storytelling projects.

Discussion

Thu, 10/07/25, 18:15

Dreigroschentheater

Moderation and Translation: Annette Bühler-Dietrich

'Tosin Kooshima Tume and Oladipo Agboluaje

Feminism in Nigeria and other African countries – how to forward it in the arts?

Reading and Discussion

Fri, 11/07/25, 16:30

Keplerstraße 17/KII, 17.21

Oladipo Agboluaje, Mervin Claasen and Students
Crown of Blood.

Crown of Blood reimagines Macbeth set during the Yoruba civil wars of 19th-century Western Nigeria. Much like the original, Crown of Blood tells the tale of ambitious General Aderemi and his wife Oyebisi as they plot to usurp the throne of the current king of the Oyo Empire, Iwalagba.

Aderemi's path to the throne seems impossible. He is a commoner, the son of a blacksmith and is not a member of the royal houses from whom kings are chosen. Oyebisi is of royal birth, but was taken as war booty during the Oyo Empire's war of expansion and is thus considered to be a slave. She was

about to wed her king when the Oyo soldiers invaded, killed her family and damaged her womb so that she could never give birth. She harbours these resentments. Killing Iwalagba and taking the throne of Oyo will be her revenge.

The constitution of destiny in Yoruba cosmology plays a major role in the play. The gods and Ifa divination are inextricably linked to the characters' destinies. This allows Crown of Blood to deviate fundamentally from the original play in ways that align with Yoruba culture. Through Oyebisi, the Lady Macbeth role is substantially upgraded in line with the role of women in Yoruba society. The play deals with leadership, ambition, fate and tradition.

Performance

Sat, 12/07/25, 17:00

Dreigroschentheater

Mervin Claasen

The Dungeons.

Many Namibian lives were lost during the liberation struggle against South African rule (1966-1990). During this liberation struggle Namibians not only experienced human rights abuses and executions from the South African regime, but also suffered brutality in the hands of SWAPO (SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLES ORGANISATION).

The struggle for independence was a long and a thorny road for many. The SWAPO Party operations were led from

exile with many of its bases located in Angola and Zambia. Hundreds of Namibians, including SWAPO members, fighters, activists and civilians fled from the South African regime, most of them ending primarily in Angola. Internal suspicions of spies and traitors led to brutality within the SWAPO movement. Many Namibians were detained in secret prisons that were referred as THE DUNGEONS.

The detainees were subjected to severe torture, starvation, and also experienced inhumane conditions. Many Namibians were brutally executed while some of the members disappeared with no trace to answer the hollow cries of many family members who anxiously waited for their return home after Namibia gained its independence in 1990. The voices of the survivors testified to the experienced horrors and the brutal interrogations they endured but were silenced with denied allegations by the ruling party. This is a dark chapter of the true Namibian heroes who sacrificed their lives during the liberation struggle but were silenced by those who denied accountability and justice. The solo performance will bring the voices of this repressed part of Namibian history to life.

PERFORMANCE

Sat, 12/07/25, 19:00

Theater Rampe

Kagayi Ngobi

For my Negativity. Directed by Axel Brauch, performed by Ismael Boerner.

'For my Negativity' is the title of a long poem written by Ugandan author Kagayi Ngobi. The performance takes the audience into a society that restricts human rights and undermines democratic values. The production sheds light on the lack of prospects and on the oppression of young people and marginalised groups in Uganda and relates them to current social tensions in Germany, such as the resurgence of queerphobia and xenophobia. The German production, staged by Axel Brauch and based on the translation by Annette Bühler-Dietrich, Beat Dietrich and George Seremba, makes us reflect on universal struggles for self-determination and identity.

PODIUM DISCUSSION

Sat, 12/07/25, 20:15

Theater Rampe

Moderation: Annette Bühler-Dietrich

Kagayi Ngobi, Mervin Claasen and Axel Brauch

Meinungsfreiheit und Friedenssicherung in Afrika (with translation).

POSTERS

Wed, 09/07/25-Sat, 12/07/25

Various locations

Marlene Mast

Hello reader! I'm a 22-year-old Design student from Stuttgart. Designing for humans is my passion. I care deeply about political and social justice for people, animals, and the environment, and I reflect this in my work.

Simone Perandones

Ich heisse Simone Perandones und habe das Plakat von Marsha P. Johnson entworfen. Nebenberuflich gestalte ich Plakate oder Flyers für Firmen, jedoch ist es am schönsten für ein Thema ein Plakat zu gestalten, dass mich selber auch bewegt.

Yves Ndagano

Yves Ndagano est un metteur, acteur et musicien congolais vivant et étudiant à khm Köln. Sa vision est de changer le monde par l'art.

Malin Meyer and Asha Muhumed

Organization of the Conference: Annette Bühler-Dietrich and Sven-Thorsten Kilian

Cover Design by Axel Brauch

Programme and Layout by Annette Bühler-Dietrich and Paul Sziel

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