

IFTR 2025: Cologne, Germany. 9 – 13 June 2025.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 15 January 2025

Deadline for bursary applications: 22 November 2024
(<https://iftr.org/conference/bursaries>)

In line with this working group's established practice, we have identified three loose strands that reflect the recent work of scholars in the wider field of political performances, and that also align with the 2025 conference theme: **Performing Carnival!**

The **Political Performances Working Group** therefore invites proposals for papers that explore the following topics:

(A) Epistemologies

Political theatre, performance or dramaturgies in relation to: revolting subjects; transgressive pleasures; the aesthetics of disruption, carnival and the carnivalesque (taste, sensuousness, style, etc.); surplus and abundance; carnival, capital and commodification; carnivals and colonisation or decolonisation; carnival and the State; carnival and cultural activism; gender, carnival and/or the carnivalesque; queer carnivals / queering carnival; carnival and transition (trans, transness and transformation); carnivals and animality; and ritualistic carnivals of death, the dead, or the dying.

(B) Place

Political theatre, performance or dramaturgies in relation to: local, regional, national or international manifestations of carnival and the carnivalesque, including the concept of the festival as a site of communal activity and transgression; carnival and the commons and/or enclosure; occupations of public and private space; protests, resistance and marches as carnivals; the transformation or subversion of space and place; carnival's role in imagining community (national, local, cultural, or subcultural); carnival and the utopic imagination; and the wider conference's focus on 'Ekstasis', meaning 'the sense of being out of place in an "exalted state of feeling"'.

(C) Temporalities

Political theatre, performance or dramaturgies in relation to: carnival and carbon (carnival's carbon footprint, or carnivals against the climate crisis); pleasure and exhaustion (the exhaustion of pleasure, or the pleasures of exhaustion); temporal distortion; carnivals at the end of the world; and the transformative power of carnival and/or its limitations.

Working Methods

The group takes a capacious approach to ‘political performances’ and welcomes abstracts from scholars and/or practitioners addressing a wide range of political theatres, political performances and performative activism rooted in different political, cultural and geographical contexts , and that may be past, present, or hypothetical.

Presenters are also free to propose presentations in a range of formats, noting any technical requirements.

Please also note that the working group pre-circulates work-in-progress/paper drafts in advance of each conference. This allows more time for critical response and discussion from members of the group, who will have read the papers in advance. The work of the Group relies on the exchange of ideas building over the course of the conference and beyond. We therefore expect participants to attend **all** PPWG meetings at the conference. We aim to make reasonable adjustments for members whose circumstances do not allow this level of commitment but **strongly recommend** that colleagues unable to attend the majority of WG sessions apply to the General Panels.

Abstract Submission

Please submit abstracts through the Cambridge Core website. In order to make a submission you will need to be a member of IFTR: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/membership/iftr>. When you submit your abstract, please make sure to indicate you are submitting to the ‘Political Performances Working Group’.

The Political Performances Working Group often receives a large number of proposals. Where it is not possible to schedule a paper into the time slots allocated to the working group, the convenors will propose papers to the organisers for inclusion in General Panels or the New Scholars Forum instead. In order to help working group convenors curate the panels, we therefore ask all contributors to address the themes of the call for papers directly in their abstract.

**Deadline for abstract submission: 15 January 2025
(exclusively through Cambridge Core)**

Working Group Convenors

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