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Title: Performativity and its Institutes.

Course description

This course is elective, 4 credits, 152 hours course. The course explores the limits and borders of institutes involved in performative activity in culture, social relations and art. It aims not merely to define the contexts of performativity, but to explore the notion as it evolved in philosophic critique of aesthetics, in social semiology, gender theory, but as well to discover the epistemological ruptures in the way performative practices are exerted in various forms of art and social activity.

Special attention will be drawn to the philosophic approaches to performing as a practice of actualization (or conversely its ceasure) to investigate the division of modern artistic experience into the sensuous and the cognitive directions accordingly. Performativity will as well be researched in the context of de-colonial issues of coercion and post-humanist quests for the performance of non-human agencies. The students are supposed to pick one of the complex cases and prepare portfolios that will eventually put together into a final essay.

Prerequisites: students should be familiar with the basic provisions of the theories of modernity and aesthetics of Modern Time.

Learning Objectives:

- ✓ to acquire theoretical knowledge of principle contexts of performativity as critique of ontology.
- ✓ to learn to differentiate different contexts of performativity in sociology, cultural practice, art theory, anthropology, philosophy ;
- ✓ to be able to make epistemological analysis of versatile conditions of performativity in contemporary social context.
- ✓ to gain the knowledge of broad literature around the theme, including most recent publications.

Learning Outcomes

Universal competences and skills:

By the end of the class students will develop the following competences

1. Understand complexity of institutional logic of performativity
2. Present their analysis of cases from various performative contexts (practice/theory)
3. Provide Structural paradigms of social, cultural and artistic agencies and impacts of performativity.
4. Connect performativity theory with their research
5. Place performativity theory in the context of visual studies and cultural and art theory

6. Apply bibliography to the course themes as well as to their research

Methods of Instruction

Analysis and commentary of relevant texts by the lecturer and by students in form of presentations and guided discussion.

The course lectures, seminars, presentations. The students have to comply with the reading assignments (cf. Content and schedule) and take part in class discussions. Attendance is mandatory.

Content and schedule

Introduction. Understanding the paradigmatic ruptures between cultural institutes.

What is an 'institute' in the context of contemporaneity – its cultural and art paradigms. How to delineate cultural production and agencies. Why making watersheds between the institutes and featuring performativity as specific agency among them. What makes various modes of performativity incompatible.

Performative condition as the critique of ontology. Institutes of democratic agency. **Gender and Performance.**

How does performance intermingle with various modes of social subversion – gender representation as well as speech acts. Analysis of performativity theories of Austin and Butler. What is accidentality of performance in juridical speech acts, social practice and gender subversion.

Contemporary Art and Performance.

History of performance in contemporary art. Episteme of performative turn. What makes performance of contemporary art epistemologically different from other performative agencies as well as performing arts. Analysis of the notion of «conceptual» in art. The discourse of the end of art and its sublation in modernism and avante-garde.

Theatre and Performing in the context of performative turn.

What are performance practices in the frame of theatre. Why does theatre ignore the ruptures between the contemporary art performance and theatrical practices. What is the difference between *performing*, performativity and performance. What is the difference between mimesis and autopoiesis. The political goals as triggers of post-dramatic theatre. Students giving their comments and putting questions in the context of 4 lectures.

The Democratic Contemporaneity and its performative agonism. The issues of Coercion.

The case of Volksbühne (curatorial appointment of C. Dercon). Transformation of theatrical institution into art-space. What is political agonism. How does various sites of performativity manifest public agencies of democracy. The post-dramatic practice in relation to post-human

«Effectuation or its Ceasure. On the Two Approaches to Performing». (Deleuze/Derrida)

Description of two mutually exclusive attitudes to the act of performing. In one of the them performativity is treated not so much as the process, but the completion, formation, implementation (Nietzsche, Deleuze, Peirce). In the other any practice of representation can only exert the failure of expression or acting (Heidegger, Adorno, Derrida, Agamben). It was by this fundamental rupture that various interpretations of modernity and its modes of artistic behaviour had been constructed. In this lecture the notion of general performance as social agency is put to critique by means of 2 mutually exclusive strategies of performativity – complete recession of performance by Derrida and radical output of performative acting by Deleuze.

Adorno vs Nietzsche (Grotovsky). Subversive anthropologies.

What is Theatre of Cruelty. How to understand the concept of cruelty in the context of art and performance. Collapse of the art of acting, its reasons and the anthropology of acting and performing developed by Grotovsky in this context. Divergences in the interpretation of Artaud by Derrida and Deleuze. Affinities between Grotovsky, Deleuze and Stanislavsky.

Body and its physics and metaphysics.

Analysis of the post-foucauldian anthropology (Butler, Braidotti, Lepecki) and its performative forms of the social and artistic behaviour, that are engaged to evade the apparatus of power and subjugation. Critique of modernity and its temporality structures by A. Lepecki. Parallels between Lepecki and Butler in mapping power. Ideology of libertarian existentialism as the critique of classical forms of performing.

Event in the framework of radical aesthetics: Heidegger, Deleuze, Badiou.

What is event in performing practices. Interpretation of Event by Badiou, Deleuze, Heidegger, Derrida. The summing up reconsideration of the epistemological social and ethical ruptures in the way performative practices are exerted in various forms of art and social activity: in philosophic critique of aesthetics, in social semiology.

Post-human, post-dramatic, cybernetic.

Analysis of the tendencies, neutralizing the ruptures between performative practices. The influence of theories of the Post-humanism, of post-dramatic performativity in theatre and of cybernetic infusions into cultural production on such neutralization.

Exam. Oral exam or presentation of papers. 4 academic hours.

Assessment

In order to attain a final passing grade you will have to regularly attend classes, read texts, engage in class discussion, and pass the final test. Specifically, in order to attain a passing grade, you have to:

- 1) **attend at least 50% of the scheduled classes** (please note that if you are late, your delay will count as 1 hour absence) **and**
- 2) **read** the assigned texts and engage in **class discussion: 30%** of your final grade (cumulative assessment) **and**
- 3) pass a **final test** consisting of analysis, commentary, and contextualisation of texts studied during the seminar: **30%** of your final grade. In some cases to be discussed with the lecturer, the final test may be replaced by a presentation during the course.

Guidelines for Knowledge Assessment

The course is based on text analysis, discussions, commentary, oral presentations. In order to get a passing grade, students are required to **do their readings**, to **present the main theses and arguments** of each text whenever asked by the lecturer, and present their own view on the problem during presentations. Skills in discussing the relevant theses and arguments will be appreciated.

Grading:

As a maximum, each students gets 100 points,
including:
Class attendance and reading: 30 points
2 oral presentations: 30 points
Participation in discussion: 10 points
Final test: 30 points

Reading List:

a) Required

1. Deleuze, Gilles, *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. by P. Patton, NY.: Columbia Un. Press, 1995.
<http://topologicalmedialab.net/xinwei/classes/readings/Deleuze/Difference-and-Repetition/English/DifferenceRepetition01.pdf>
2. Butler, Judith. *Psychic Life of Power*. Stanford Univ. Press, 1997.
<https://web.education.wisc.edu/halverson/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2012/12/Judith-Butler-The-Psychic-Life-of-Power-copy.pdf>

b) Optional

1. Mouffe, Chantal, "Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism". In: Political Science Series. https://www.ihs.ac.at/publications/pol/pw_72.pdf. accessed 15.06.16.
2. Sven Lutticken. General Performance. <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/general-performance/>
3. Boris Groys. «Under the Gaze of Theory». E-flux, N35, 2012.
<https://www.e-flux.com/journal/35/68389/under-the-gaze-of-theory/>

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE SUPPORT (IF REQUIRED):

Laptop and projector. Power Point or similar software.