

Under Construction. Performing Critical Identity

Guest Editor

Dr. Marie-Anne Kohl
Managing Director and
Research Fellow,
Research Institute
for Music Theater Studies,
University of Bayreuth,
95349 Thurnau, Germany

*Please send an abstract for
your proposed contribution
of approx. 300 words by
January 2nd, 2019, to*

marie-anne.kohl@uni-
bayreuth.de.

*The selected articles shall
be handed in by
March 31st, 2019
for peer review.*

Message from the Editor

While, currently, identitarian ideologies and essentialist notions of identity that tend to simplify and reduce life experience to simple factors are globally regaining massive attention, it becomes inevitable to recollect the thorough discussions of identity concepts of the past three decades. It also calls for an ever keener awareness of and capacity to deal with the complexity and diversity of the world we live in. Artists play a major role in the potential reflection and transformation of perceptions and conceptions of the world—musicians, dancers, choreographers, spoken word artists, performance artists, actors, and also fine art, installation, media artists and photographers. “Performing critical identity” points to performative practices of artists that bring to the fore a critical (self-) awareness and (self-)positioning concerning identification and belonging. Social identities such as gender, sexuality, race, class, dis/ability, age, or non/religiosity are closely linked to the historical, social, regional, and political dimensions of their formation. From this perspective, identities are hardly one-dimensional, but complex and intersectional, and are to be thought of as a process of identification and belonging rather than as a consistent essence. As different, maybe contradictory among themselves, as they are, the performative works of artists such as Lerato Shadi, Liad Hussein Kantorowicz, Nora Chipaumire, Shu Lea Cheang, Zanele Muholi, Ohno Kazuo, Anohni Hegarty, Neo Hülcker, “We’re Muslim. Don’t Panic”, or of theatre collectives such as RambaZamba and Thikwa Theater in Berlin or Theater Hora in Zurich, to name but a very small, quite random selection of artists, share a critical approach towards hegemonic norms or stereotyping of identities and their representations and empower diversity.

This Special Issue puts a specific focus on the performativity of the aesthetic practices and wants to explore different artistic approaches, strategies, tactics, and perspectives of artists when they address identity issues, when they target power relations and structures of oppression and inequality, when they empower concepts of diversity. This Call for Papers invites academic as well as artistic contributions that delve into case studies of artists performing critical identity or into more general theoretical reflections on the subject.

Dr. Marie-Anne Kohl, Editor

