Call for Proposals for the International Conference
Reinventing the Stage: Innovation, Creation, Dissemination
BAnQ's Grande Bibliothèque, Montréal, 1–3 June 2023

Historically, the performing arts have been defined by the encounter, in a specific location and for a limited period of time, between performers and their audience, a stage and a hall, a production and its reception. They normally presuppose a co-present, synchronous, and localized community, *live* and *on-site*. At the same time, theatre, opera, music, and dance have, ever since Ancient Greece, continuously interrogated the questions of shared space, performance, representation, mediation, and the positioning of the human and the non-human.

The goal of this transdisciplinary international conference is to bring together researchers, performers, producers, distributors, and creators involved in the performing arts and media arts to discuss what has for a long time epitomized the fundamental identity of theatre, opera, music, and dance: the stage. How does the shift from live, on-site performances to the many possible configurations — recorded and off-site (capturing, recording, and disseminating events and performances to be viewed at another time and place than that of the performance); live and off-site (radio, television or live Internet broadcasts, or remote presence, making it possible to attend an event or performance remotely); or pre-recorded and on-site (when an event or a performance is reprised at the same place but different time, as is the case with certain uses of virtual, augmented, or mixed reality) — transform the spectators' experience and the very nature of the event of which they are a part?

Alongside the various technological developments of our age — already with the telephone, cinema, radio, and television, but also more recently with virtual reality, the Internet, and social media — the COVID-19 pandemic has called physical space into question even more dramatically and, by extension, the art forms that appear to be inseparable from the places devoted to them. Notably, the pandemic has reinforced the impression of the gradual obsolescence of physical space and of the crisis of the performing arts. Nevertheless, the past few years have also made it possible to reconsider and rethink the very meaning of the stage, its materiality, its forms, and its sites. Numerous recent innovative initiatives allow us to see the pandemic as a catalyst for a reinvention of the stage through media and technological innovation that has made possible new relations and encounters between performances and audiences. From the production of works using augmented reality to live performances on Zoom, accompanied by the challenge posed by the "musical chatroom" and facilitated by, among other things, applications such as Endlesss, many explorations and experiments have aimed at breathing life back into performance, while using new modalities, each of which profoundly alters the traditional ecology of the stage. In a post-pandemic reality, with the increase of connected screens, ranging from giant fixed screens to mobile platforms, each with Internet access and a camera, with the possibility of motion tracking and geolocation technologies, we are witnessing a rediscovery of the physical space, but in a new, more complex form, hybrid or mixed. In this expanded field — named in turn "mixed reality" (Milgram et al.), "hybrid space" (Benford and Giannachi), "smart city" (Halegoua), "net locality" (Gordon and de Souza e Silva), or "geomedia" (McQuire) —, public space and communities, the stage and audiences, assemblies, events, and shows are reconfigured.

This conference proposes to examine the recent reconfigurations of the stage by various digital technologies that bring into dialogue connectivity and location, virtual online spaces and physical off-line spaces, in order to evaluate their impact on this new ecology of the stage and to fully grasp the inherent complexity of this technological and media renewal. We invite proposals for individual papers (20 minutes) that explore these topics, without chronological or language restrictions with respect to the corpus and phenomena under study. Papers may engage with the following topics, without being limited to them:

- The ways in which the "stage" is *expanded* by new technologies and their impact on the content, form, dissemination, or reception of performances.
- The social and sensorial extension of the spectator's experience through immersive, emersive, participatory, and interactive experiences.
- The political repercussions of reconfiguring the stage and the performance hall through technology, of the *skènè* though *technè*, providing a new "sharing of the perceptible," a different allocation of "places and roles," of powers and the *shared* (Lyotard, Rancière, Dardot and Laval).
- The redefinition and democratization of the performing arts through new technologies.
- The connection between recent transformations of the stage and past experiments.
- The question of *presence* in experiences on a reconfigured "stage."

Please send your proposal, in **English** or **French** (**500 words max**.), by **15 January 2023**, through the form available online at:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1vFHns3m0h7BithYG-7QNrXcdlmEfJ16KgK9Mo6bwRh8/edit.

Please address all questions to: reinventerlascene@gmail.com.

Scientific Committee:
Olivier Asselin (Université de Montréal)
Richard Bégin (Université de Montréal)
Josette Féral (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3)
Jean-Marc Larrue (Université de Montréal)
Colleen Renihan (Dan School of Drama and Music, Queen's University)

Organizing Committee:
Olivier Asselin (Université de Montréal)
Richard Bégin (Université de Montréal)
Thomas Carrier-Lafleur (Université de Montréal)
Zoey Cochran (Université de Montréal/McGill University)
Ana Sokolović (Université de Montréal)

Coordination :
Frédérique Khazoom (Université de Montréal/University of Amsterdam)
Anne Lévesque (Université de Montréal)