

Roundtable: Video Could: Building an Online Video Archive of Canadian Performance
Table ronde : Le vidéo pourrait ? La construction d'une archive vidéo en ligne de la performance au Canada

Organizers/Organisateurs : videocan (Patrick Blenkarn, Milton Lim, and Peter Dickinson)
Contact email/Coordonnées : videocan (videocan.archivist@gmail.com)

Languages: While the primary language of our conversation will be English, we welcome French-speaking participants and will do our best to accommodate all attendees at the roundtable.

Languages : La conversation aura surtout lieu en anglais, mais le groupe accueille les participants de langue française et tentera d'accommoder tous les spectateurs de la table ronde.

We invite participants to join us in a roundtable discussion to interrogate and produce action-based outcomes for addressing the rift within Canadian theatre communities concerning performance video documentation and its dissemination.

In the summer of 2019, we created **videocan**, an online video archive for Canadian performance using a basic website catalogue and a Vimeo account. Selected artists were invited to submit archival recordings of their work to the initial catalogue and the provisions under which videocan operates continue to be iterated upon, including rotating password protection for catalogue access. Many of the artists we approached were enthusiastic about an accessible database that housed an *ensemble* of Canadian theatre recordings; just as many saw our efforts to dismantle the *partition* between live performance and its documentation as troubling.

Using videocan's successes and failures as a jumping off point, as well as participant reflections, our roundtable will focus on the stakes of video documentation's public dissemination. This roundtable is not a debate about whether or not archival recording should happen; it is about what we should do with an archival recording once it exists.

The specific objectives of the roundtable are to discuss: 1) ways in which working artists from across the country can see and learn from the work of their peers through video; 2) ways in which students of performance can see and learn from the work of Canadian artists through video; 3) ways in which all artists, especially early career artists, can forgo the need to have paid subscriptions to video providers (such as Vimeo); and 4) tactics for changing the current video documentation status quo.

Our roundtable will be a 90-minute open forum moderated by members of the videocan team. By the end of the conversation, we hope to have addressed the following questions: What is the state of video documentation practices in Canada today? In what ways could video documentation of contemporary performance influence your classrooms and practices as pedagogues? What are the fears some Canadian theatre artists have concerning documentation? What are the policies in place restricting the dissemination of archival recordings of theatre productions? How can the academic/university community support and encourage changes to those policies?

To fuel our conversations we encourage interested participants to submit to videocan.archivist@gmail.com by 1 February 2020 a short (max 300-words) position statement out- lining their own relationship to video documentation and how they think video documentation should be treated/cared for. These statements will be posted to a shared Dropbox folder, along with a set of questions for your consideration and some background reading, by 1 March 2020. Having reviewed these materials, participants will then post by 30 April 2020 a max. one-page list of bullet points relating to strategies (local and national), provocations, and questions that we will discuss in Montreal.