

CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Pre-recorded PechaKucha Presentations

**“Reimagining Intimacy: Immersive and Participatory
Performance in the Era of Covid-19”**

**School of Creative and Performing Arts, University of Calgary
Alberta, Canada**

14 - 17 December 2022

Partner Institutions:

Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London

Concordia University, Montreal

University of Greenwich, London

Proposal Deadline: 4 November 2022

Presentation Date: 17 December 2022

For much of the world’s population, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 necessitated heretofore unimaginable levels of restricted activity and social distancing. Individuals of every age, culture, vocation, and educational background saw their lives transformed by voluntary or imposed interpersonal restrictions and/or lockdowns, by direct and potentially life-threatening health impacts, and by the devastation of social, cultural, and commercial economies (Evans 2020; Yang 2020). Specifically, the pandemic had a devastating effect on artistic performance, both economically and culturally, in terms of training, production, exhibition, and consumption. In this sense, live performance became an immediate and explicit reflection of a broader societal schism in daily behaviours and expectations (Canning 2020).

A great deal has changed over the past two years. After an initial period of shock, and even paralysis (Berger), artists and arts organizations around the world have demonstrated resurgent resourcefulness and innovation in pursuit of flexible, multifarious, and emergent routes forward *within* and *through* the ongoing pandemic. This

process of adaptation has, of course, included rapid advancement in the adoption, development, and refinement of digital and virtual performance strategies (Saville; Thompson) . However, emergent strategies related to immediacy, co-presence, and intimacy in live performance—in particular, immersive and participatory formats—are revolutionizing processes of creation, production, and participant experience. Moreover, for many artists, the abrupt disruption of traditional educational, compositional, and production processes represents a valuable opportunity for much-needed reflection and reassessment of sedimented industries and attitudes. From this perspective, Covid-19 has offered a chance to reconsider who has been systemically excluded—in terms of audiences, as well as creators and performers—in past practices and frameworks, and how a corrective to greater inclusivity may, in fact, be accelerated within current conditions (WeQuitTheatre).

“Reimagining Intimacy: Immersive and Participatory Performance in the Era of Covid-19” (Ril) will be held over four days and in four separate locations between 14 – 17 December, 2022. Hosts include the **University of Calgary** and **Concordia University** in Canada, and the **Royal Central School of Speech and Drama** and the **University of Greenwich** in London, UK. Combining live and virtual performances, public workshops, artist laboratories, creator and scholar panels, and a one-day symposium, the event will approach its primary preoccupation from a wide and diverse range of perspectives. At the centre of all this activity is the **key question**,

“What are the present conditions and future possibilities of intimacy in Immersive and Participatory Performance in a world transformed by the Covid-19 pandemic?”

Prominent artists and scholars from across Canada, the USA, the UK, and northern Europe will convene to exchange, explore, and collectively vision around this shared preoccupation.

THE CALL

Ril will conclude with a **one-day hybrid symposium on Saturday, December 17** , virtually connecting in-person gatherings at the four host institutions and an international audience via the conference web platform. In addition to a keynote presentation, a Scholars Panel, and a series of virtual performances, the final-day symposium will feature

a selection of online **PechaKucha**-style presentations addressing the **key question** posed above.

The event organizers invite proposals from artists, scholars, and artist-scholars for presentations following the PechaKucha format (6 minutes and 40 seconds in length; 20 slides exhibited for 20 seconds each). All accepted presentations will be pre-recorded and submitted in advance of the event. The presentations will be presented online during the conference and remain viewable on the event website after the event. More information on the PechaKucha format can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Submissions must be received no later than **Friday, November 4** and include the following information:

Name(s) of applicant

Academic or professional affiliation (if relevant)

Proposed title of presentation

A 200-word description of the presentation topic/focus/content

Please submit proposals and/or any questions about the event to info@reimaginingintimacy.ca.

Ril is made possible by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Connection Grant and the generous support of its four host institutions.

Event Convenors:

Bruce Barton, University of Calgary

Gareth White, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama

Natalia Esling, University of British Columbia

References

Berger, Nicholas. "The Forgotten Art of Assembly." *Medium* 3 April 2020.

Canning, Charlotte M. "Theatre and the Last Pandemic." *American Theatre*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2020, 41. 38-41.

Evans, Lloyd. "The death of theatre." *The Spectator*, 1 Aug. 2020.

Saville, Alice. "What Could Socially Distanced Theatre Look Like?" *Exeunt* 14 May 2020.

Thompson, Selina. "Post Pandemic #Work." *Exeunt* 29 April 2020.

WeQuitTheatre. "The Forgotten Art of Disassembly." https://tinyletter.com/WeQuitTheatre/letters/the-forgotten-art-ofdisassembly?fbclid=IwARotePL2Oc-1FrlnuXGFWmvjcX5nWZLNolqPomww3gJSyAOV3KPTj_I.

Yang, Lola. "Intimacy Denied: Reopening theaters during a pandemic." *UWIRE Text*, 4 Oct. 2020, p. 1.

