

IN CAHOOTS

Disciplinary Crossings & a Future for Performance Studies

02/15/2023 — 02/17/2023

Online Graduate Student Conference presented by UCLA Department of
Theater & the Center for Performance Studies

Call for Papers

Due 11/10/2022

Like performance studies, ‘in cahoots’ is a phrase with “murky origins”¹ – etymologies have been traced without a clear beginning, perhaps from cohort or cahute (adjacent to cabin or hut). Meaning partnership, colluding, or working together, often in secret, the term itself is in cahoots: cahoots is rarely if ever used as a stand alone word. Similarly, performance studies is never stand alone, but in constant relations with a constellation of fields, from linguistics and anthropology, to queer and critical race theory. This type of conceptual entanglement drives UCLA’s Center for Performance Studies Graduate Student Conference: “In Cahoots: Disciplinary Crossings and a Future for Performance Studies.” Following our 2021 conference theme of ‘Contact,’ we invite graduate students to reflect on the promises and challenges of being “In Cahoots” with multiple discourses, fields, and methods.

New research trends have seen many scholars bringing together odd bedfellows that raise new challenges: How might a keyword track across fields? Is it possible to reconcile the goals of humanities and science? Where is the department “home” for this new brand of research? Performance studies has already positioned itself as a tempestuous and unruly younger sibling amongst longer standing fields. Interdisciplinary by nature, it is an elastic framework that can pierce holes in academic silos. This conference aims to build alliances for interdisciplinary performance scholars working between and across fields. Though our research projects may vary dramatically (and we hope they do) we still grapple with many of the same murky obstacles. This is a unique and intimate conference that will give a platform to these discussions for exciting new scholars working on the bleeding-edge of interdisciplinary research. We will be in cahoots.

¹ Zimmer, Ben. n.d. “Cahoots’: A Term For Hidden Scheming Has Murky Origins.” WSJ. Accessed September 2, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/cahoots-a-term-for-hidden-scheming-has-murky-origins-11579885683>.

What to Submit

Bring your research that is 'in cahoots' as an abstract for a 7-10 page paper of your interdisciplinary research, wherever it is. The paper should somehow reflect an approach that blends/incorporates/weaves performance studies + _____.

We will use our research papers as a starting point for conversations around working between fields. Some of our interests include: the challenges and opportunities of interdisciplinary research in performance studies, whether that is practice-as-research, working across multiple departments, or even across methods. Additionally we hope this brings together discussion of potential futures for performance studies from graduate student perspectives, including applying to jobs in outside departments or working with scholars in other fields. (Note: the paper does not have to be about working interdisciplinarily, but rather your experience as the author will fuel such discussions).

Topics & Key questions:

These questions are not for the paper to specifically address, but rather the papers will be a jumping off point for these discussions:

- State of the field
- What does your performance studies methodology include?
- How do we define performance studies as a field (key terms, methodologies, etc). And how can this discipline inform other fields? Which keywords extend across fields?
- How do other fields inform your understanding of performance studies (and its role in the landscape of the humanities)?
- How does interdisciplinarity shape your methodology and key terms? *To neologism or not to neologism?*
- Problems and possibilities with bringing sciences and humanities together? Other methodological chaos?
- What are the implications of job market materials when applying outside of theater and performance studies? How do you work across fields, departments, methods?

Apply with an abstract (300 words or less) by 11/10/2022

Submit online @ <http://tiny.cc/CPS2023>



Contact Devon Baur (dbaur@ucla.edu) or Elizabeth Schiffler (eschiffler@ucla.edu) with any questions