

## Call for Proposals for concurrent issues on 'Hunger' in the journals:



*Global Performance Studies (GPS) Vol. 5 No. 2 (Oct/Nov 2023)*

and



*Performance Research: Vol. 28, No. 7 (Oct/Nov 2023)*

### Editors:

Laurie Beth Clark, University of Wisconsin–Madison, United States

Jazmin Llana, De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines

Michael Peterson, University of Wisconsin–Madison, United States

### Deadline for Proposals: 1 November 2022

*(NB: This CFP discusses topics such as food, hunger, famine, starvation, and body image.)*

Following the online Performance Studies international conference #27, 'Hunger', based in Manila, Philippines in July 2022, the journals *Global Performance Studies (GPS)* and *Performance Research* invite proposals for contributions of scholarship or artworks to concurrent issues on 'Hunger'.

Attending to the urgency of the hunger situation that calls for action on all fronts, *GPS* and *Performance Research* make this joint call as a form of hunger action. The decision to work collaboratively represents a significant step for the two journals, placing our common scholarship and activism at the heart of this endeavour. The goal is to set in motion a call-and-response structure between two influential allies.

According to the United Nations (UN), roughly 690 million people (9 per cent of the world's population) live with hunger ([www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger)). Yet hunger is not natural and it is not an accident. Hunger is caused by both malign and inadvertent actions, as well as collective inaction; at the same time hunger can be addressed through collective action. Action is needed to end hunger and to oppose global economic regimes

that condemn millions to hunger and poverty as if this is inevitable. Essential work has been done by many who feel the call to act in response to the ongoing crisis. While critical thinking must not be an obstacle to doing something about hunger, both hunger-causing and hunger-alleviating actions deserve critical analysis. As theorized action, the arts are in a unique position to disrupt such binaries.

At the heart of this concurrent action by the two journals must be troubling of the opposition between corporeal and metaphorical hungers. The P*Si*#27 conference powerfully and productively insisted that physical hunger and efforts to combat it must remain present in any effective performance studies approach to the topic, but to understand how hunger is produced, reproduced and represented in the world we must also grasp how 'actual hunger' is imbricated in desires and motivations that are not reducible to biological nutrition. And there is no hard and fast line between the two. Clearly, hunger constrains the fundamental human right to life in a way that is brutally material, but it also stifles the fundamental human right to thrive.

Corporeal hunger is exacerbated by other kinds of hunger that cannot be easily located in the body and yet are experienced as material reality. Perhaps because of this reach, hunger also has a long history of deployment in politics and weaponization in geopolitics. Self-starvation and other agential hungers have historically played a significant role as responses to violence, trauma and injustice, from the hunger strikes of political prisoners to the self-denial of sustenance by adolescents seeking ways to cope in a world that is beyond their control. 'Disordered' eating intertwines in contemporary works of fat activist politics that challenge social stigmas and discrimination. Where does the hunger for comfort reside? Where do we locate the hunger and thirst for activity and circulation? The hungry gut or the hungry feet? Grief for all the deaths suffuses the entire body as a desperate hungering for hope and agency.

In the 1999 *Performance Research* issue 'On Cooking', Enzo Cozzi (1999) described the impossibility of theatrical representation of hunger. In the intervening period, much groundwork has been laid for the discussion of hunger in the arts, humanities and social sciences; twenty-plus years later, we re-open this conversation to ask: What now can performance and performance studies contribute to hunger action?

How are the arts useful in the fight to reduce or eliminate hunger? Artists have worked to raise money (as in the benefit concerts of the 1980s) and to represent or dramatize hunger

(in novels, photographs, films, plays). Artists are often called upon to aid in communication and in making emotional appeals to the public. Sometimes people turn to the arts to carry us through periods of deprivation. The arts do not typically feed people (although some artists do) and cannot by itself create the structural changes in society that the UN Global Reports on Food Crises show are needed to meet Sustainable Development Goal #2, to eliminate hunger as 'a trap from which people cannot easily escape' and that thus limits all other human rights and potentials.

But it is a very limited understanding of the arts (and of hunger) to suggest that it provides only surplus rather than core value. If hunger is simply a failure of food production, then perhaps artists do not have a particular role in response. But if we understand hunger as a failure of imagination (about how society could be shaped), then artists have a crucial role in devising creative and resilient strategies. The arts can ally itself with politics, activism and scholarship to witness, remember and re-imagine social structures. As the designer-activists of the Design Studio for Social Intervention write, 'ideas are embedded within arrangements which in turn produce effects' (2020). Performance can both challenge ideas and experiment with new arrangements. This is what this joint endeavour aims to do.

This call invites elaborations on how intersecting forces of (de)colonization and economic (in)justice, as well as race and gender violence, are integral to both hunger and poverty. While building on crucial literature on the dynamic intertwining of physical and other hungers, we hope to instigate the production of new scholarship that moves away from Western critical paradigms and/or science-centred perspectives. While there is no question that the gnawing demand of hunger on a body draws us relentlessly into the present, the role that the commemoration of hunger plays in allowing us to imagine nourished futures should not be underestimated.

We solicit contributions that analyse hunger and its mitigation as performance. We seek celebratory description and critical analysis of hunger action strategies, from Uruguayan *ollas populares* to Filipino rice hubs, from long-standing food pantries to spontaneous performances of mutual aid. We are interested in the temporality of hunger as well as its putative unrepresentability. We are interested in essays that revisit narrative engagements with hunger (both literary and theatrical). We encourage analysis of the anti-hunger work of celebrity chefs to feed the poor in creative and nutritious ways, as well as the work being done by cooks who are less well known but more community-based; we also welcome work critiquing the economies of celebrity, philanthropy and development.

Proposals are solicited for essays, critical, analytical and creative articles, artist pages, manifestos, position papers, multi-media productions, performance texts, scores, scripts, digital art and performance archives that take up this challenge with explorations of some of the following evocative questions and others of your own devising:

- What creative interventions are already underway that directly address hunger?
- What kinds of critical frameworks are productive for understanding hunger?
- What does hunger look like and how is it represented?
- What does the end of hunger look like and how is it represented?
- How does Performance Studies understand the causes, experiences, responses and representations of hunger?
- What role can the arts play in responding to hunger?
- Why is hunger often 'feminized' in representation?
- How is hunger manifested differently across factors like race, gender and disability?
- How do we understand the interplay between metaphorical and literal deployments of hunger?
- Is it productive to differentiate hunger of need from hunger of desire?
- Where does the hunger for comfort reside? Where do we locate the hunger and thirst for activity and circulation?
- How can performance disrupt patronizing logics of philanthropy and reductive conceptions of poverty while at the same time honouring the genuine relief that hunger mitigation can bring?
- Why are models of hunger relief so often built on austerity and efficiency?
- Can we devise hunger mitigations that integrate pleasure, humour, song and dance?
- When is hunger? How is its past remembered and how is its end imagined?

## References

- Cozzi, Enzo (1999) 'Hunger and the future of performance', *Performance Research* 4(1): 127.
- The Design Studio for Social Intervention (2020) *Ideas Arrangements Effects: Systems design and social justice*, Brooklyn, NY: Minor Compositions. See also [www.ds4si.org/](http://www.ds4si.org/)

## **Format**

The editors will collaboratively curate submissions with the goal of crafting two strong and coherent collections that together further the critical work engendered by the conference, while following each publication's editorial goals and practices.

### **By submitting a proposal to this call, you agree to have your work published in either journal.**

Submission of a proposal will be taken to imply that it presents original, unpublished work not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Proposals should be 300 words (maximum) and be accompanied by a 50-word biography for each contributor. Submission of images and other visual material is welcome provided that all attachments do not exceed 5 MB, and there is a maximum of five images.

We welcome a range of media and intermedial submissions. However, any digital media content should be carefully curated and associated with a proposal of a scholarly and/or creative project, and the purpose and use of digital media elements be clearly defined in the proposal, including obtaining rights and permissions to publish. For articles or reviews that involve any digital media please include an additional 100-word (max) description of the scope, purpose and format of the associated media. Please do not send media files with any initial proposal. Examples of media may be solicited as needed.

The rough timeline for the volumes will be:

Proposals: November 2022

Decisions: December 2022

First drafts: March 2023

Final drafts: July 2023

Publication: October/November 2023

## **Issue Contacts:**

All proposals, submissions and general enquiries should be sent direct to the *Performance Research* team at: [info@performance-research.org](mailto:info@performance-research.org)

Issue-related enquiries should be directed to the issue editors:

Jazmin Llana – [jazmin.llana@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:jazmin.llana@dlsu.edu.ph)

Laurie Beth Clark and Michael Peterson – [spatulaandbarcode@gmail.com](mailto:spatulaandbarcode@gmail.com)