

Theatre Dance and Performance Training Journal

Call for contributions to *Digital Training: a Special Issue*

Guest coedited by Professor Paul Allain (University of Kent), Stacie Lee Bennett (University of Kent and freelance film-maker) and Professor Frank Camilleri (University of Malta) with blog and Training Grounds editor James McLaughlin.

Call Outline

From BBC Bitesize to YouTube tutorials, MOOCS to online MAs, animations to digitally enhanced films, PREZIs to interactive audio visual websites, DIY DVDs to instructive podcasts: how is the performer training of today evolving digitally to become that of the future? Will holograms one day do our work for us? Might 'yogabots' replace the teacher, the fitbit the health worker? What are the limits for embodied experience in a digital world, for trainees, for trainers and for the untrained, whoever or wherever they might be? How will we not only digitally do training, but also show, articulate or reflect on it whilst doing? In performer training, where does the digital begin and end?

This call for papers invites submissions in writing and practice that explore the wider implications that digital tools, software and hardware, platforms and resources have for performer training today. We are interested in papers and projects that use the digital within training or to enable dissemination in innovative ways. We are curious to understand how ubiquitous the use of the digital is and whether the practices of training (or, more broadly construed, the teaching of performing) are changing, given such rapid technological advances that impact on us all every day: from the alarm beep that stirs us, the phone that connects us, to the sentient processes that track and chart our every waking (and sleeping) move. We are keen to receive proposals that explore such issues and examples that in themselves demonstrate the integration of digital media in embodied training practices.

Submissions can include pieces either for the journal itself, across its three sections "Articles", "Sources" or "Training Grounds" or for the online blog. The blog also has three sections: "The Studio" is for sharing audiovisual training materials; "Comeback" invites previous contributors to return to an idea they discussed in a *TDPT* article or new contributors to respond to an idea from their past. In "My Training", individuals can reflect on personal experiences of training. Given the theme of this special issue, contributors may wish to consider a piece that crosses the print/digital divide such as an article that references audiovisual material in "The Studio" or a Training Grounds piece that simultaneously initiates an open conversation in "My Training". Such innovative print/digital formats are encouraged.

We in particular welcome work from academics and practitioners outside performing arts disciplines with technical or digital expertise. We are also interested to hear from those working cross-culturally or in parts of the world where access to digital fora and media can make a real difference: in terms of accessibility, connections to others, learning support, or other performative training-based possibilities.

Possible Areas of Interest

- How have digital possibilities changed notions and practices of instruction and training, from celebrity 'how to cook' guides to personalized programmes? How do such regimes mesh with or enhance performer training practices?
- Are open access platforms (e.g. youtube, vimeo) with their global performances, workshops, stunts and pranks altering training practices? What part do they play in the studio?
- What are the political implications of the digital for performer training? Is online accessibility as democratic or enabling as some might avow? Or does 'monetising' practice dominate, as Frank Camilleri discusses in his writing on training's 'institutionalization'?
- Are new digital platforms encouraging interdisciplinarity and breaking down walls? Are disciplines moving together in time or are some left behind in the great digital 'space race'?
- Do we simply have more data to process or are we learning more about how we work, rest and play? What might 'big' data mean for human performance in general and the performing arts and training in particular?
- Are digital modes changing our experience of live performance? How do NT Live, opera live streamings and instantaneous sports coverage influence our performance practices as they relate to training? Can training be instant, 24/7 and on demand?
- How are digital platforms changing the global profile, marketing and wider representation of performer training? What new spaces for reflection on process does the digital provide? Have social media platforms reshaped access to training and community formation?
- Is computerization changing the way we view the body and, as a consequence, notions of body-based training? How has miniaturization (e.g. of cameras, audio recording equipment, sensors etc.) altered accessibility to and techniques and possibilities of and for training?
- How do human-nonhuman connectivities reflect and shape our twenty-first-century humanity, perhaps regarding hybrid characteristics or the posthuman? To what extent can this form of transhumanism be aligned with metaphors of human-as-machine or man-as-marionette in theatre, dance, and performance history?
- How does a posthuman reappraisal of the performer-in-technology or performer-and-technology affect our understanding of human-centred perspectives and question established paradigms such as psychophysicality and phenomenology?

- Might the digital in its broadest manifestations train the untrained, or is the live teacher/trainer relationship sacrosanct? What might AI and VR mean for the performer and how they learn or change? Can the trainer be digital alone?
- Bloggers, vloggers, snapchat, memes and twitter. How is performer training being articulated and expressed today? Where next for the trainer/trainee's voice? Is paper the past?
- Does a focus on digital technologies in performer training also spotlight the role of technologically-saturated environments, including the conception of *objects as technology* in the studio? Is there 'good technology' which 'facilitates' and 'bad technology' which 'alienates' the performer at work?

Background and context

This will be the ninth Special Issue of *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* (TDPT) following those on sport, Michael Chekhov, politics, Feldenkrais, showing/writing training, interculturalism, popular performance and immersive, interactive and participatory performance. TDPT is an international journal devoted to all aspects of 'training' (broadly defined) within the performing arts. It was founded in 2010 and launched its [own blog](#) in 2015. Our target readership is both academic and the many varieties of professional performers, makers, choreographers, directors, dramaturgs and composers working in theatre, dance and live art who have an interest in and curiosity for reflecting on their practices and their training. TDPT's co-editors are Jonathan Pitches (University of Leeds) and Libby Worth (Royal Holloway, University of London).

Contacts

To signal your interest and intention to make a contribution to this special issue please contact Paul Allain for an initial exchange of ideas/thoughts **or** email an abstract or proposal (max 300 words) to Paul Allain: paa@kent.ac.uk Questions about purely digital propositions can be sent to Stacie Lee Bennett: slb73@kent.ac.uk Ideas for the blog and/or Training Grounds can be sent to James McLaughlin: jimmyacademy@gmail.com. Firm proposals across all areas must be received by Paul Allain by 30 November 2017 at the latest.

Issue Schedule

Spring 2017: Call for papers published

30 November 2017: abstracts and proposals sent to Paul Allain

February 2018: Response from editor and, if successful, invitation to submit contribution

March to End August 2018: writing/preparation period for writers, artists etc.

Start Sept to end October 2018: peer review period

November 2018 – end January 2019: author revisions post peer review

End March 2019: All main articles into production with Routledge

Mid April 2019: Training Grounds articles into production

April-June 2019: typesetting, proofing, revises, editorial etc.

July 2019: publication as Issue 10.2.