Call for Submissions

*Performance Matters* 3.2 (November 2017)

Special Issue on “Science & Performance”

Mimicking, replicating, enacting, figuring, speculating, staging, choreographing – these practices of making and knowing perform promiscuous crossings at the intersections of science and performance. This special issue invites contributors from the humanities, social sciences, biological sciences, and the arts to think science and performance with, through, and/or against each other.

Working with diverse material and narrative tissues, the lab and theatre are complexly commingled sites for generating a mimetic play of possibilities. How might the work of modeling, figuring, coordinating, sensing, groping in and across these experimental spaces enable unexpected elements to emerge, shift the terrains and objects of inquiry, or generate new possibilities for thinking and doing? Does a “diffractive reading” (Donna Haraway, 1997, *Modest Witness*) of the heterogeneous histories of performance in/andscience make differently visible the dissonances, resonances, and tangles of these disciplines? Does analyzing or doing science from the perspective of performance surface subjugated, embodied, affective, and alternate modes of knowing?

While many thinkers and makers have turned to the potentials of performance to think and do *otherwise,* there is nothing inherently radical about performance’s place in the sciences. Indeed, a range of uneasy compromises, ongoing complicities, and unruly connections crop up at the conjunction of science and performance. Historically, performance has played a central role in stabilizing dominant regimes of evidence and authority – from the laboratory as a “theatre of proof” (Bruno Latour, 1993, *The* *Pasteurization of France*) to the theatre as a laboratory of the social. What types of knowledge, expertise, and agency have these performances actively silenced, excluded, or foreclosed? Are the performing arts and experimental sciences non-innocent in regimes of power and knowledge, as likely to advance as to disrupt sociopolitical systems of inequality, exploitation, or extraction?

Such questions take on renewed urgency in a biocapitalist era, marked by unprecedented speculation into the futures of life. How are we to understand the work of performance in conjuring experimental futures in technoscience’s promissory economies? As a time-based medium, is theatre particularly suited to analyze the folded temporalities of speculative biocapital and technoscientific fabulation? How do collaborations among artists, scientists, and capitalists to craft novel lively objects in fields such as synthetic biology, tissue engineering, and artificial intelligence signal the pressing need to theorize the ethical, ontological, and epistemological stakes of experimental materializations that defy time-worn distinctions of real/fabricated, natural/culture, live/dead, copy/original, past/future? How do the interconnecting threads of DIY culture, crafting, biohacking, bioart, speculative fiction, or Afro-futurism fit into these thick polytemporal tangles of science fact and science fiction? Is theatre’s fundamental ontological instability as the “not-not” already at the heart of science’s boundary-muddying “naturecultures,” imbroglios, and material-semiotic melees? If so, can theatre offer us critical insights and tools to grapple with the rich contingencies and complex imaginaries of science and technology in the 21st century?

Contributions that address the relation between science and performance from various disciplinary, historical, and theoretical perspectives are encouraged. While articles are the standard format for submission, other experimental approaches, mediums, and genres such as scripts, protocols, poems, illustrations, and videos are welcome. This special issue of *Performance Matters* will be published in November 2017. Please send a short abstract of your proposed submission (350 words) to Coleman Nye (anye@sfu.ca) by December 1, 2016. Invited full submissions for peer-review will be due by January 15, 2017.