

Circus and the Avant-Gardes **[Call for Papers](#)**

Symposium: March 5 & 6, 2020

Deadline for submissions: February 6, 2020

"Multimedia technologies and popular body machines" (Part 1*)

The performance practice of the circus in the early 20th century was formative for the avant-gardes. This symposium brings together for the first time researchers who are exploring this theme from various perspectives and different fields within the humanities. The aim is to examine how the aesthetics of circus arts affected and competed with the theatre of the Russian and Western avant-gardes, and to what extent the circus served as an inspiration for multimedia avant-garde productions, for example in film. In what ways did the aesthetics of the circus and related stage genres (such as vaudeville, variety, music hall, etc.) affect the body concepts and writing styles of avant-garde artists? How did stage concepts and technologies of the circus inscribe themselves into the works of the avant-gardes? How can the interplay between the performance practices of the circus and the theatre of the avant-gardes be defined?

The symposium is dedicated to the competing creative forces that demanded and designed the "theatricalization of the circus" and the "circensation of the theatre" (Bulgakova) around and after 1900.

Presentations could explore the following (and other) topics:

- Aesthetics and practices of circus arts in the works of avant-garde artists (and vice versa)
- The cross-fertilisation between 'popular', 'circus' and 'avant-garde' stage works
- The role or function of circus references in avant-garde theatre
- The (stage) technology transfer between circus and avant-garde artists
- Clowning and humour in the circus and in circus-related Bauhaus activities
- The role of Berlin's entertainment venues for circus and avant-garde experiments
- etc

The deadline for abstracts (max. 300 words) and short biographies (max. 200 words) is February 06, 2020.

Please send your documents to Dr. Anna-Sophie Jürgens (asjuergens@zedat.fu-berlin.de) and M.A. Mirjam Hildbrand (mirjam.hildbrand@itw.unibe.ch).

* A second symposium on "Circus and the Avant-garde" will take place at the University of Bern in May 2020. The call will be circulated separately.