

Call for Papers

Embodied Visions: Performativity, Visuality, Materiality (1960s–1980s)

27-28 May 2025

Riga

The interdisciplinary conference "**Embodied Visions: Performativity, Visuality, Materiality**" invites scholars, artists, and curators to explore creative strategies employed in visual and performative arts from the 1960s to the 1980s, with a particular focus on how space, form, materials, and movement shape artistic expression. This period often saw radical shifts in artistic practices, including the expansion of performance art, conceptualism, experimental theatre, kinetic art, and site-specific interventions, all of which challenged conventional modes of artistic production and spectatorship.

A particular focus of the conference is the **Soviet period**, where artists navigated complex ideological, material, and institutional constraints while developing new performative and visual strategies. From unofficial artistic movements to state-supported experimental practices, the conference aims to explore how artists working in the socialist context engaged with embodiment, materiality, and performativity. How did artists negotiate censorship and control while experimenting with form and process? What role did alternative spaces, unofficial networks, and pedagogical structures play in shaping these artistic developments? How did these movements intersect with or diverge from artistic trends on the other side of the Iron Curtain?

We welcome papers and artistic contributions that engage with the interconnections between embodiment, performativity, and materiality across different artistic disciplines.

We encourage submissions on (but not limited to) the following topics:

- **Materiality and Materialism** – The role of materials in artistic production; shifts in material engagement from traditional to unconventional, ephemeral, or industrial materials.
- **Agency and Performativity** – The role of the artist's body as a medium; the politics of performance; feminist, queer, and postcolonial perspectives on embodied agency.
- **Costume and Stage Design** – The materiality of costume in performative contexts; scenography as an expanded field of artistic production; the interplay between the performer, costume, and audience perception.
- **Object and Installation Art, Kinetic Art** – The performative and interactive dimensions of objects; the role of movement, light, and technology in shaping sensory experience.
- **Performance Art, Music, and Time-Based Arts** – The rise of body-based practices; experimental and performative approaches to music and sound art; documentation and archiving of ephemeral works; strategies of site-specific, participatory, or interventionist performances.

- **Theatre and Experimental Drama** – Intersections between avant-garde theatre, performance art, and expanded cinema; the role of dramaturgy in visual and performative experiments.
- **Dance and Movement Theatre** – The aesthetics and politics of body movement in performance; improvisation, choreography, and somatic practices in avant-garde dance and physical theatre.
- **Puppet Theatre** – The role of puppetry in avant-garde and experimental performance; materiality and gesture in animated figures; intersections between puppet theatre, performance art, and political critique.
- **DIY and Amateur Culture** – The aesthetics and politics of DIY art, self-organized performances, and amateur creative practices; alternative networks of production and distribution.
- **Pedagogical Contexts and Alternative Education** – Experimental art schools, informal pedagogical methods, and the role of performance in educational settings; art as a site of knowledge production and collective learning.
- **Soviet and Socialist Contexts** – Non-conformist art networks; state-sponsored experimental practices; artistic resistance, censorship, and survival strategies within socialist cultural policies.

We invite proposals for scholarly papers (20-minute presentations), panel discussions, artistic interventions, and lecture-performances. Interdisciplinary and practice-led research contributions are especially welcome.

Submission Guidelines

Please submit a 300-word abstract and a short bio (max. 150 words) by **21 March 2025** to **embodiedvisionsconference@gmail.com**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by **28 March 2025**.

For any inquiries, please contact **Laine Kristberga** at the following email address: **Laine.Kristberga@lulfmi.lv**

We look forward to your contributions!

The conference “Embodied Visions: Performativity, Visuality, Materiality (1960s–1980s)” is organised by the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia within the framework of the project “Cultural and Creative Ecosystem of Latvia as a Resource of Resilience and Sustainability” / CERS (No. VPP-MM-LKRVA-2023/1-0001) and is funded by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia within the framework of the State Research Programme “Latvian Culture – a Resource for National Development” (2023–2026). The State Research Programme is administered by the Latvian Council of Science.

Selected conference papers and their respective authors will be offered the opportunity to publish articles in the SCOPUS-indexed journal *Letonica* (Q1, Q2).

The conference venue – Pauls Stradiņš Medicine History Museum.