Performing Publics
Spring 2017

Dr. Shilarna Stokes
Theatre 7899.07: Special Topics in Theatre History
Wednesdays & Fridays, 1:35-3:40 pm*
Drake Performance and Event Center, Rm. 2072

This graduate seminar introduces participants to the study of events featuring “the public” as both performers and spectators. Drawing on readings from across a range of fields including theatre, dance, performance studies, and cultural studies, we will consider how performance events and practices construct, contest, and attempt to transform collective subjectivities. We’ll look first at the “public-making” work of large-scale events such as festivals, pageants, protests, and flash mobs. Next, we’ll concentrate on contemporary performance works that address themselves to “intimate” or “ambient” publics. Examples include immersive theatre projects, site-responsive installations, and works associated with relational aesthetics. Throughout the semester, we will ask how “performing publics” negotiate questions of race, class, gender, ethnicity and nationality, and we will compare different methods of research and analysis. Final projects may be performance-based or writing-based.

* Class meeting times may be adjusted to accommodate the needs of students. Contact the instructor at stokes.217@osu.edu with questions or come to the first class meeting.