

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Building Reconciliation and Social Cohesion through Indigenous Festival Performances

Two-day interdisciplinary symposium, University of London Institute in Paris, 17–18 November 2011

**Keynote speakers:** Marie-Claude Tjibaou (New Caledonia) and Anton Krueger (South Africa)

This symposium seeks to explore contemporary indigenous performances as transformative strategies and praxes aimed at enhancing social cohesion. It focuses specifically on the role of festival performances in advancing reconciliation efforts and investigates how such events contribute to reimagining communities and rebuilding trust. With reference to the philosophical, historical and religious roots of reconciliation, the symposium will look at the tensions and affects involved in performances that engage with (hi)stories of colonialism and contemporary formations of injustice. We also seek to probe the conditions that enable festival arts to flourish in their own contexts and to be taken from local to national and transnational forums. The role, and limits, of festivals as resonant interfaces where emancipative strategies, wellbeing, creativity and indigenous cultural capital are promoted will be of particular interest here. Responding to current debates on the question of reconciliation and social justice, the symposium hopes to provide comparisons of various artistic, community-driven, cross-cultural and trans-local initiatives.

Papers might address the following questions in relation to contemporary performance in the Pacific, Australia, South Africa and the Americas, or in festivals in Europe that include indigenous arts:

- To what extent do reconciliation performances 'replace' and 'elevate' justice as Jacques Derrida argues forgiveness does?
- What sort of changes within indigenous communities and in public understanding of indigenous peoples can festival performances hope to promote?
- How do festival performances negotiate sociopolitical, economic and aesthetic agendas in the context of reconciliation agendas?

- In what ways can reconciliation performances take up Flora Devatine's challenge to traverse history – 'in a spirit of just memory' – so as to 'settle the past'?
- What types of performances or 'stories of healing' enhance trust or suggest the leaps of hope necessary for the resolution of conflicts?
- How do performances of reconciliation engage with what Katerina Teaiwa calls the 'place-based and spiritual dimensions of human relations' fundamental to indigeneity?

Performance here is interpreted broadly to include theatre, film, music, dance, spoken-word presentations and festival or community events. Papers are invited from, but not limited to, the disciplines of indigenous, performance and postcolonial studies, as well as anthropology, history, philosophy, music, geography and literature.

The documentary *Tjibaou – Reconciliation (Tjibaou-Le Pardon)* will be screened during the symposium.

This event is funded by the European Research Council project, 'Indigeneity in the Contemporary World: Performance, Politics, Belonging', led by Professor Helen Gilbert and based at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Send 250 word abstracts for 20-minute papers and a short bio to Estelle Castro and Helen Gilbert at [Estelle.castro@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:Estelle.castro@rhul.ac.uk) by **21 May 2011**. Acceptance of proposals will be communicated by 12 June 2011. Papers can be delivered in English or French. Further details will be posted at: <http://www.indigeneity.net/>



Indigeneity in the Contemporary World: Performance, Politics, Belonging

[www.indigeneity.net](http://www.indigeneity.net)

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