

***Theatrescapes –  
Global Media and Translocal Publics (1850-1950)  
International conference***

Sponsored by Fritz Thyssen Foundation

Time: 19-21 June, 2014

Venue: **IBZ, Amalienstrasse 38, 80799 München**

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Concept:

In the century between 1850 and 1950 theatre experienced an unprecedented expansion in all its dimensions. Performers, theatrical genres, new buildings, and, most importantly perhaps, new publics emerged which both responded to and enabled such flows. The notion of 'theatrescapes' proposed here responds to Arjun Appadurai's famous formulation of various 'scapes' marking the emergence of globalized cultural flows after the end of the Cold War.

This conference asks whether we shouldn't speak of globalization and global cultural flows a century earlier. As many historians now argue the massive migration of the nineteenth century, which still dwarfs current migration flows in sheer numbers, ushered in a fundamental reorganisation of existing geocultural certainties. The same period also sees the emergence of global media – press, photography, cinema, radio – which all interacted with rapidly expanding theatre infrastructures. The dislocation engendered by migration led to the creation of theatre publics who were increasingly geographically separated from their home cultures. The new theatrical public spheres that emerged in this period were therefore almost invariably 'translocal': while European spectators in Calcutta or Shanghai remained mentally aligned with their home countries, indigenous publics were still becoming accustomed to a new medium.

This conference wants to investigate the intersection of these two major flows: media and migration – as they impacted on and in the theatre in

the century between 1850 and 1950. Papers could address any of the following subtopics:

- 1) Theatre and global media (how did performers, entrepreneurs, directors interact with global media and how did global media foster the global dissemination of theatrical material (plays, formats, institutions, etc.)
- 2) Translocal publics (the emergence of theatrical public spheres in situations of cross-cultural contact)
- 3) The press and globalized theatrical reading publics
- 4) Networked stages (transnational interconnections of producers and productions, impresarios and agents)
- 5) New urban centres as theatrical contact zones
- 6) Theatre-building as a (inter)cultural act

The invited speakers represent 14 countries and 10 disciplines, among them history, cultural history, Japanese studies, comparative literature, geography, art history, media and theatre studies.