

Journal of Writing in Creative Practice



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Special Issue: 'With no mere will to mastery: Practices of Feminist Writing'

Guest edited by Dr Jude Browning

Deadline for Articles (3-5000 words): **29 June 2024**

'The public address', such as a lecture or political speech, appears outdated, even anachronistic, when viewed as a single speaker on a stage, behind a lectern, drawing from conventions of traditional Western oratory.

Across time, artists like Aristophanes, Bertolt Brecht, or Prem Sahib have challenged this form and linked public speaking with theatre to expose the underlying operations of language, delivery, and gesture. In what ways can artistic practices make strange and discombobulate these traditional orthodoxies of 'the public address'? How can disruption uncover a hidden authority within language, revealing the representation of ideological imperatives?

We welcome articles on the theme 'With no mere will to mastery: Practices of Feminist Writing'. Contributions are sought from artists and artist researchers exploring feminist writing practices involving public expression, postdramatic performance, embodied methods, media, technology, and the global circulation of images. This issue will be guest edited by Dr Jude Browning and published both online and in print by Intellect Books.

The phrase 'With no mere will to mastery' is drawn from Adriene Rich's poem *Transcendental Etude* (for Michelle Cliff). It contemplates Rich's call to envision hope not in surpassing mastery, but in striving to ask what new feminist modes of creative production might appear with some 'resistant political value'?

Public addresses occur wherever people want to share key issues with a larger audience, in almost any setting. Broadsides, radio, religious sermons, Instagram stories, WhatsApp threads, Telegram, message boards, pile-ons, generative AI flooded feeds, algorithms created via doom scrolling, political speeches, rolling news, educational lectures, theatre, protest songs, wearing badges in solidarity, high street soapbox oratory, live updates, corporate announcements, commencement speeches, social activism, community events, celebrity and ceremonial speeches, memorial services. Interpretive texts in museums and exhibitions also demonstrate a controlled use of language for providing supposedly neutral and informative explanations.

Across different platforms of assembly are questions of scale that reflect ways of handling knowledge. The materiality of the address can be collectively generated in public spaces, held in our hand, or occupied in city centres.

This issue looks to animate voices and styles of art studying the construction of trained, embedded, generated, decontextualized, and skimmed relationships appearing in political utterance, speech, and gestures. Whether appearing collectively or in private moments and spaces, different forms of media carry the performance.




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'No mere will to mastery' in Rich's poem offers an alternative. What approaches can artists use to go beyond mirroring? By engaging tools from performance, in an expanded sense, the congealing of operational language can be enacted, interrupted, and demystified.

We welcome written responses and provocations examining how the public address is form enacted across modes of speaking and writing (gestural, vernacular, rhetorical, and technologically mediated). Drawing together associated discussions that aim to create opportunities to explore diverse approaches with/in feminist theory, histories, intersectional representations across writing, sound, image, and performance.

Submissions from all backgrounds, regardless of nationality or residence, are encouraged, especially those from underrepresented artists and writers. Collaborations are encouraged.

- Contribution type [performance script, visual contribution, score, single-authored chapter, multi-authored chapter, interview, conversation, etc.].
- Images should be 300dpi.
- Orcid number, author contact details and contributor bio of 100 words.
- Check the style guide prior to submission: <https://www.intellectbooks.com/journal-editors-and-contributors#style-guide>

Call for Articles

Our call for articles welcomes, but is not strictly limited to the following approaches and topics, including those related to international contexts outside the UK, particularly those from the global majority:

- Forms of interdisciplinary writing can document alternative means to summon action or claim the right to indecipherability. How could structures of alienation employed as tools in performance help us examine both the limits of our awareness and the constraints imposed by society?
- How can art create intertextual connections, weaving together diverse voices through language, which simultaneously embodies disappointment and clings to hope for a collective body politic?
- In aligning seemingly contradictory impulses, how can uncertainty, instability, and ambivalence—themes prevalent in psychoanalysis—become politically empowering for feminism (Srinivasan 2023)?
- How can the act of self-portrayal, whether through writing or performance art, serve as a means of healing, redemption, or reclaiming agency through deliberate self-assertion (Ahmed 2014)?
- 'Mean images' (Hito Steyerl) reveal the manipulation of existing social relations, guiding them towards an ideological "optimum" influenced by market-driven forces and parameters. What implications does this




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revelation hold for feminist analyses of visual culture?

- How can art enable us to enact scenes of rebellious corporeal resistance against conforming to societal demands, disrupting inherited performances viewed as mastery (Mel Chen 2014)?
- What ways does artistic practice challenge norms or disrupt assumptions about the body; using breath and voice to express and enact what Anna Hickey Moody (2016) terms as 'being different in public', especially within the context of inclusive disability performances.

Submissions: both textual and visual works are accepted via PubKit (drop down submit button on the JWCP site via: <https://www.intellectbooks.com/journal-of-writing-in-creative-practice>)

Subject line: No mere will to mastery + NAME

by 11 pm (23:00) GMT Monday **29 June 2024**.

Participants will be contacted by early **September 2024**.

Final Contributions: **November 2024**



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PAPERS