

**PhD Forum 23-27 March 2015
in the context of the Salzburg Easter Festival 2015**

Feasting and Fasting – Carnival Cultures
I Pagliacci and Cavalleria Rusticana

Ruggero Leoncavallo's and Pietro Mascagni's operas, habitually performed together, constitute two landmarks of the Italian verismo tradition. Verismo marks the departure from Romantic conventions and their generic/formal restrictions, and as such, it is characterised by an emphasis on everyday life and seeks to encapsulate the fates of the lower classes. The two operas present violent emotional dramas driven by their characters' jealousy and desire for revenge. Both plots reveal the darker sides of human nature in different formats: as a rivalry for honour or in terms of a scorned lover's rage. At the same time, the strong religious overtones in *Cavalleria rusticana* are juxtaposed against the carnivalesque atmosphere in *Pagliacci*. Despite Mikhail Bakhtin's definition of carnival as a temporary escape from conformism, these operas demonstrate how both settings, religious and liberal, equally further the emerging tragedies.

Both operas will be staged at the 2015 Salzburg Easter Festival. The director Philipp Stölzl aims at exposing their similarities while retaining each opera's unique character. Moreover, his goal is to highlight the continuing relevance of their thematic focus in our society ("Musik als Inspiration", 2014. <http://www.osterfestspiele-salzburg.at/de>).

The aim of this PhD forum, organised within the framework of the Austrian Research Association ÖFG (www.kulturelle-dynamiken.sbg.ac.at) and the Salzburg-based project PLUS Kultur (www.sbg-plus-kultur.at), is to explore various cultural traditions of feasting and fasting, the theatricality of carnival and the carnivalesque, its ritual character, as well as the connections between deprivation and excess, purgation and renewal, order and subversion.

PhD-students and advanced MA-students are invited to explore the following topics for a 20-minute paper and a poster presentation:

- **the theatrical aesthetics of the two operas (similarities, differences, carnivalesque implications, communal character, performance history, cultural relevance)**
- **forms of carnival in the students' own culture, both in everyday life and in the creative arts**
- **the role of festivals, their ritual, religious and communal implications**

Participants are expected to prepare the two operas in advance by studying the libretti as well as selected essays on carnival and festival culture, which will be sent to them upon notification of acceptance. It is not required that the individual topic for presentation corresponds to the participant's PhD or MA dissertation focus. The PhD forum comprises students' presentations, discussions, lectures, a poster exhibition and workshops on arts management, marketing and leadership ("Festival Futures").

If you are interested in contributing a paper and poster, please submit a motivation (500 words) and an abstract (300-350 words) to Professor Sabine Coelsch-Foisner (contact: Tanja.Deinhamer@sbg.ac.at), Department of English and American Studies / PLUS Kultur, Unipark, 5020 Salzburg, Austria, **by 5 December, 2014**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent before Christmas. The deadline for poster submission is 5 February, 2015.