

**2020 Annual International Conference of African Theatre Association
Conference (AfTA)**

**Ageing, Old Age, and Disability in African and African Diaspora
Performance, Film and Festival**

<http://www.africantheatreassociation.org>

**The Department of African Studies,
Institute of Asian and African Studies,
Humboldt University Berlin, Germany
July 23rd-25th, 2020**

Call for Papers and Performances

Critics of performing arts in Africa and its diaspora have engaged with a wide range of topics in their writing, but there is limited critical engagement with ageing, old age, and disability. It is this dearth of critical discourses and debates on old age in African literary and theatre studies that has inspired the theme of the 2020 annual African Theatre Association Conference. The conference invites scholars, practitioners and activists of performance to focus their contributions on three areas which are mutually exclusive, yet incredibly inclusive, namely: ageing, old age—age(able)ism embodied—and disability. AfTA 2020 aims to create a platform on which these contributions will reflect critically on the role, representation, status and significance of elderly people in performing arts (theatre, oral performance, community theatre, drama, spoken word, epics, films, festivals, dance, music etc...) that are connected to Africa and its diaspora. Further, the conference invites contributions that investigate how ageing is entangled with elderly characters, performers, play directors/directing, dramatists and audiences in the debate of ageism, old age and disability in a bid to explore our understanding of performance, its production and reception. Further, the conference aims to engage critical discussions based on varied understandings, perceptions and definitions of old age, ageing and disability, as well as whether there should be any intersection between these categories in African performances, film and festivals. Employing old age, ageing and disability as conceptual frameworks, the conference will provoke debates on how performances articulate these subjects at critical moments of artistic production and performance. The conference seeks to ask questions including: what are the nuances that either shadow or empower the production of performance based on ageing, old age and disability? What are the cultural and transcultural underpinnings espoused when subjects related to ageing, old age and disability are evoked in the performance culture? How do class, sexuality, gender, ethnicity and nationality affect our understanding of these classifications in the context of performance, film and festival? What are the theoretical and methodological conceptualisations that one might draw from to provoke scholarly debates related to ageing, old age and disability in performance, film and festival?

We invite proposals, which focus, but are not limited to the following topics;

The representation of ageing, old age and disability
Understanding of ageing, old age and disability
Ageism and ableism
Resilience and performance
Gender dynamics and masculinities
Queer identity ageing, old age, and disability
Intersectionality
Space, time and ageing, old age and ableism
Migration, performance and ageing, old age and disability
Questions of existence and ageing, old age, and disability
Identity construction
Colonial and postcolonial entanglements
Medialisation of ageing, old age and disability in performance, film and festival
Corporeality and materiality of ageing, old age and disability
Imagination of ageing, old age and disability
Authority and generational conflict
Gerontocracy
Politics, legislature and the notion of ageism and disability
Customary practices on ageing and performance culture
Intangible mobility of performances: past, present and future
The performance of ageism in African culture

Researchers, scholars, performing artists and theatre activists are invited to submit an abstract of 300 words and 150 words biography to: **conferences@africantheatreassociation.org**
For questions and inquiries about the conference, please contact the conference convener, Pepetual Mforbe Chiangong, at: **aftaoldage@gmail.com**
Abstract submission deadline is 14 February, 2020

