

IMPACT 2021 FAQs

How will the IMPACT festival be formatted?

The global pandemic has radically changed how we can safely make and share performance work. This year the IMPACT festival will be streamed online, as a series of synchronous events. How the festival is programmed and exact dates/times will be determined in conversation with the participating artists. Based on the number of participants, the festival may take place on more than one day during the month of April 2021. The process of producing the festival will be highly collaborative, and all participants will be asked to become familiar with their colleagues' performance plans and work together to determine the best format for a collective presentation of everyone's work.

Can I participate in IMPACT if I am not in Chicago?

Yes. If you are enrolled remotely and not physically present in Chicago, you are still welcome to participate in IMPACT. If you work with a proxy performer(s) who can be present in Chicago, you can have your performance live streamed from the SAIC Performance space. Please note, you are responsible for coordinating your performer(s), it will be required that you attend virtually all of the scheduled rehearsals and/or meetings.

Otherwise you can either live stream from wherever you are, or provide a pre-recorded performance to include in the festival.

Can I participate in IMPACT if I am not a grad student in the Performance Department?

Yes. The IMPACT Festival is a thesis presentation option for all MFA in Studio, MFAW, and MDes in Fashion, Body, Garment graduate students.

What if I am making durational work?

The IMPACT festival has always supported artists making durational work. By not yet designating the exact format of this year's online festival we seek to leave flexibility for designing a format that can support virtual durational work while fairly sharing the resources available among all festival participants.

How will presenting my performance online change what I can do?

Beyond the obvious differences of having your performance mediated by the presentation of the video online and whatever device the audience uses to tune in, there are some additional considerations that will have to be addressed. Major commercial platforms for live streaming video may have community standards that differ from or are more tightly regulated than the rules on SAIC campus. For example, Twitch does not allow nudity, and if a live stream is identified as containing copyrighted audio content, the sound will be automatically muted for the

live audience. At this stage we are still determining the best options for livestreaming with these sorts of constraints in mind.

What do you mean live stream from the SAIC Performance Space?

The performance classroom B-12 in the 280 building is already equipped with a single camera system to record live performances and stream them live to a remote audience. The goal for IMPACT is to increase these capabilities to have a multi camera system and a more sophisticated set of options for capturing live sound. Working with Open Broadcasting Software (OBS) a technician can mix the multiple channels of video and sound to produce a live video viewable online. As noted above, the platform and web location for making the live video available to audiences is still being determined. The chosen platform will also accommodate the streaming of live performances from other locations as well as pre-recorded performance videos.

How does sound work for the live stream of live performance in the SAIC Performance Space?

When thinking about the sound of your performance, consider these three categories: pre-recorded audio content (such as music or soundtracks that are played as cues), live amplified sound (talking into a mic, playing a live instrument, etc), and environmental sound (like the footfalls of movement based work, or objects that are manipulated during the performance). Pre-recorded and live amplified sounds will be fairly simple to transmit directly into the live stream broadcast. The IMPACT production team will work with you to try to capture environmental sounds if they are determined to be an important element of your work. All sound that is intended for transmission to your online audience should be considered and captured with microphones. Your amplification requirements will be planned in advance, in consultation with the IMPACT Production Team.

If I perform in the SAIC Performance Space for the live stream, can I have a small invited audience in the space while I perform?

Maybe. At this time, we are not able to guarantee that this will be possible. However, if you are interested in having a small invited audience, we are open to assessing the feasibility of this closer to the dates of the festival. We are prioritizing everyone's health and safety, and the festival production must abide by SAIC community standards, visitor policy, and all Chicago and Illinois COVID-19 safety regulations. Additionally, the production team will be focused on the transmission of the live performance to the online audience, and the spectatorship of an on site audience may not be able to be considered in a number of production choices.

Will I have access to the SAIC Performance Space for rehearsal?

Yes. IMPACT artists will get priority access to schedule personal rehearsal time in the SAIC Performance Space. This includes festival participants who are not part of the Performance Department.

How is SAIC ensuring that online programming is accessible?

One of the key ways that the accessibility will be addressed for the online festival is to ensure that all videos and live streams include captioning. Artists providing pre-recorded videos, will be asked to provide captions as part of their work.

Do I have to wear a mask while I am performing?

Currently, the only circumstances in which a performer can take their mask off during a performance on campus, is if they are in a closed room with no other people. Performances in the IMPACT festival will be subject to the current campus policies in place at the time of the performance.

If I am performing off campus do I still have to follow school policies?

Yes. SAIC policies, including the current shared responsibilities in response to COVID-19, apply to all school sponsored events whether or not they take place on campus. As per standard process for producing performance festivals on campus, all performances that are part of the IMPACT festival will be vetted for safety and security. Please refer to the [Art School Considerations checklist](#) as you develop your work.

Can I perform in the Graduate Exhibition at SAIC Galleries?

You may only register for one thesis presentation option, and you should select the one that best suits your work and the context in which you want to present. If you choose to participate in the Graduate Exhibition at SAIC Galleries (instead of IMPACT) opportunities for live performance will be very limited. The exhibition will not be able to support presentational performances that gather an audience and break social distancing guidelines. Durational work or one on one performances within your allotted exhibition space may be possible.

What will the audience be for the IMPACT performance festival?

Streaming the festival online will allow for the expansion of audiences for the IMPACT festival, especially as it becomes possible for many more out-of-state and international audiences to tune-in. Additionally, SAIC will be seeking out partnerships with other performance venues not only to promote the festival to their audiences but potentially to also stream through their own channels.

Are there Guest Curators for the IMPACT Festival?

Yes. Each year the Performance Department invites guest curators to attend the festival and share their professional experiences with the participating artists. This year this pedagogical aspect of the festival is being reimagined to take advantage of the remote nature of attending the online festival. Key programmers and professional performers will be invited to not only view the festival but to fully engage participating artists more directly about their thesis performances.

Additional Questions? Contact Lauren Steinberg lsteinberg@saic.edu