

Symposium Cultural Festival Studies

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Estrella Sendra

Estrella Sendra is a researcher with extensive experience in the media and film sector, as a festival organiser, filmmaker and cultural journalist, and with a particular interest in Senegal. She has been involved in different African film festivals and directed the Cambridge African Film Festival in 2014 and 2015. She holds a Masters in Critical Media and Cultural Studies from SOAS University of London, where she is currently a third-year PhD candidate in the Department of African Languages and Cultures. After a year of fieldwork in Senegal, she is writing up her thesis, under the supervision of Dr Lindiwe Dovey. Her PhD research focuses on festivalisation in Senegal, and its main case focuses on a festival in Louga, a rural region in the north of Senegal, named Festival of folklore and percussion (FESFOP). She is currently also a Teaching Assistant of Research Approaches in the MA Creative Industries and Cultural Studies at King's College, University of London.

The International Festival of Folklore and Percussion of Louga (FESFOP). Sustainability and local impact year-round.

The International Festival of Folklore and Percussion (FESFOP) is located in Louga, a rural region in the northwest of Senegal. Launched in 2000, it has celebrated fifteen editions, which take place annually from 28 December to 2 January. Since festivals are multifaceted events, in this presentation about FESFOP I will focus on different facets of the Festival's engagement with the local population and ultimately consider the sustainability of the Festival. I seek to unveil the importance of the rural nature of FESFOP in its conception and sustainability. I first shed light in the way in which FESFOP operates, through a structure with projects for local development year-round. I then look at the 'decentralisation' of the festival programme. Finally, I suggest that the sustainability of FESFOP is marked by a negotiation of endorsement. If FESFOP needs the local population as endorsement of their Festival in order to achieve a sustainable place in the region, once FESFOP is endorsed as a cultural and social structure, it also becomes an entity that operates as endorsement for any other cultural initiatives in the region.

Note: The presentation will be supported by visual examples (film and photography).