

Call for Proposals for “The Oral, The Written, and Other Verbal Media: Interfaces and Audiences”: A Conference and Festival

University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, June 19-21, 2008

With keynote speakers Angela Wilson (indigenous history, Arizona State University) and Mark C. Amodio (medieval English, Vassar College).

The organizers of the first international, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and trans-historical conference and festival focusing on the interface of the oral and the written invite proposals for participation. In keeping with the plenitude of modes and forms of oral and textual discourse, the organizers will welcome diverse modes of presentation, including, but not limited to, oral performances, academic talks and panels, readers’ theatre (dramatized readings of scholarly dialogues), workshops, and projects-in-progress sessions. Our goal is to generate conversations among performers, audiences, and scholars, including graduate students, from a wide range of academic disciplines, cultures, and historical periods, and to foster opportunities for collaboration among those interested in speech and other voicings on the page. Because Saskatoon is located in a territory highly populated with Indigenous peoples whose oral traditions are still vital and developing, the festival will highlight Aboriginal performers in a Crow Hop Café featuring storytelling, Indigenous Hip Hop, music, and other oral performances.

Are you studying legal contracts in medieval Europe as they move from the oral to the written, or Indigenous treaty narratives from decolonizing parts of the world? Are you asking what happens to oral stories when they are transmuted into fiction, drama, printed poetry, or visual media? Are you trying to reconstruct the oral delivery of sermons or epics on the basis of their printed forms? Are you working with Elders on the transcription of oral narratives, and would you like to discuss successes and obstacles in a workshop with others engaged or interested in this sort of work? Are you an oral storyteller/keeper or dub or spoken word poet interested in talking about your practice with scholars? Do you have other ideas for workshops related to the conference and festival theme? If you see your work reflected in these or related questions, please contact us.

Other issues and topics that might be addressed:

- aesthetics, ethics, & politics at the interface of the oral & the written
- the body &/or gender at the interface of the oral & the written
- contesting writing’s empire
- memory and commemoration at the interface of the oral and the written
- oral occasions, contexts, circumstances & modes of public address as represented in writing
- oral and written poetics & modes of meaning-making
- orality, textuality, & authority; orality, textuality, & modernity
- orature, writing, and genre: sacred narratives, proverbs, jokes, ballads, sagas, legends, folklore, sermons, oratory, & disputations
- recording oral narratives for community histories or school curriculum
- translation/transcreation of orature
- the oral and the written in visual arts
- strategies for textualizing the oral
- what audiences are well or ill served by textualizing the oral

Please forward inquiries and proposals (300-500 words) by 30 June 2007 to either of

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