

# **Dance Dramaturgy: Catalyst, Perspective and Memory** **PLEASE SUBMIT PROPOSALS ON-LINE BY DECEMBER 1, 2010**

## **Society of Dance History Scholars Annual Conference**

York University's Masters of Fine Arts Graduate Program in Dance, the Graduate Centre for Study of Drama and UC Drama at the University of Toronto as well as the Toronto-based companies Dancemakers, Series 8:08 and Nightswimming

Toronto, Canada

**June 23 – 26, 2011**

For the first time in North America, this conference brings together an international body of scholars and artists to discuss the growing impact of the discipline, history and potential of dance dramaturgy<sup>1</sup>. We invite proposals for papers, panels, workshops and PERsentations<sup>2</sup> from a broad spectrum of dance scholarship and practiced-based research on dance dramaturgy, or any other topic in dance.

In the last three decades, the discipline of dance dramaturgy has evolved to facilitate creative and strategic engagement with a multitude of perspectives (including, though not limited to, historical, cultural, social, political, aesthetic, semiotic, perceptual and embodied) that are inherent within and acting upon dance practices. The dance dramaturg is often seen as an important catalyst for choreographic invention as well as dance preservation and audience appreciation. Both the independent and company-based dance dramaturg may be called upon to fulfill the roles of navigator, facilitator, catalyst, curator and documenter.

This conference brings together the resources of York University's Masters of Fine Arts Graduate Program in Dance, the Graduate Centre for Study of Drama and UC Drama at the University of Toronto as well as the Toronto-based companies Dancemakers, Series 8:08 and Nightswimming in an unprecedented collaboration between artistic practice and scholarly research. Toronto is one of the most culturally diverse cities in North America and it is a nucleus for numerous dance, theatre and performance artists, physical theatre companies, community arts organizations and arts-focused educational institutions.

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**Please direct questions and inquiries to [sdhs11@yorku.ca](mailto:sdhs11@yorku.ca)**

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### **<sup>1</sup> Our take on it (Dance Dramaturgy)**

When turning to dance and movement-based performance, conventional dramaturgical strategies, which focus primarily on either the development of a written script or its analysis and conceptual realization on stage, are of limited utility. Rather, in these forms of creation, development and production are often fully integrated activities. We regard this level of integration as an opportunity to combine the tools of established forms of dramaturgy and to gain a broader and more interconnected field of orientation. In addition to this expanding of the field, modern dance invites the dramaturg to develop tools to work with more complex performance materials than those that, for instance, cluster around a dramatic focus on structure, character, and meaning. Instead of striving to deliver a completed artwork for reception, movement-based and dance performances often become "events" that facilitate experiences both embodied and sensory. These events exist as performative products of the meeting between performance and audience and cannot be located within a compositional structure, or in such a structure's ability to evoke the recognition of a conventional theatrical frame. Of course, not all of these developments in practice are new; rather, the news lies in the significant increase in the involvement of dramaturgs and dramaturgical strategies in community and theatrical dance contexts.

(Dr. Pil Hansona)

### **<sup>2</sup> PERsentations.**

In the spirit of the "SHIFT" component recently adopted as part of *Performance Studies international's* annual conference, PERsentations (Performance-Presentations) are collaborative platforms – slots in the conference schedule that are reserved for non-conventional investigation related to the conference theme. PERsentations are designed to accomplish a higher level of interaction between the participants in the conference and especially between artistic and theoretical work.

(Dr. Bruce Barton)