

Call For Papers
Canadian Association for Theatre Research (CATR) conference, Fredericton, NB
May 28-31, 2011

Curated Panel A: Border Crossings and Territory without Boundaries: Exploring the Body as Place

Organizer: Judith Rudakoff, York University

Deadline: December 1, 2010

This panel will re-focus the Congress theme of “Exploring People and Places” to “Exploring People as Places” and in so doing invite proposals for papers dealing with the human body as a site of performance, with a particular interest in work that reflects the diversity of the Canadian cultural identity. In this instance, “cultural” should be interpreted as widely as possible, bridging and expanding such bounded territories as geographical, ethnic, political, sexual and linguistic identities.

In creating work in this mode, artists have and continue to confront notions of natural versus authentic, real versus fake, assumed versus inherent, and art versus nature in a continuum that offers scholars a wealth of material to theorize, problematize, analyze and, ultimately, canonize.

Explorations of one type might examine how the human body, in its biologically original or technically enhanced and surgically altered state, might serve as a type of terra cognita/incognita for the artist to explore. Further, explorations might engage with the distinctions, in particular with respect to the creative interpretation or re-imagination of existing form or bordered territory from a personal or an external perspective.

Topics for proposed papers might include but not be exclusive to

- performing the body,
- body as a site of conflict or conundrum and how/why that is performed,
- crossing boundaries or mapping uncharted territory as theatrical metaphors for body modification,
- the body as event.

Papers may examine one performance or the body of work of a specific artist or a series of complementary or contrasting performances. As with analysis of any site specific performance, work examined should not simply use the body as a backdrop, but rather exemplify the inextricable relationship between human form and the content, theme and artistic goal of the particular performance.

Those interested in presenting on the panel should submit a 300-word abstract. Papers, if accepted should conform to CATR guidelines for length.

Abstracts, along with a short bio, should be sent to Judith Rudakoff at rudakoff@yorku.ca on or before December 1, 2010.

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Curated Panel B: Men of the Empire: Performing Masculinity in Nineteenth-Century Canada

Organizer: Marlis Schweitzer, York University

Deadline: December 1, 2010

Over the last decade, cultural historians have examined the relationship between gender and empire in productive new ways, giving rise to what some have termed “the new imperial history.” This scholarship acknowledges the role of women in the construction, administration, and celebration of empire, but is particularly concerned with exploring first, how and why men assumed such dominant positions within European imperial projects and second, the extent to which definitions of masculinity evolved in response to colonial encounters, conflicts, and responsibilities.

This panel aims to advance existing scholarship on gender and empire by examining the staging and performance of masculinity in Canada (or what would someday be Canada) in the nineteenth century, both prior to and immediately following Confederation. Drawing inspiration from the conference theme “Coasts and Continents,” the panel will pay close attention to the transmission of ideas, ideologies, bodies, plays, performers, and performance genres across land and sea to consider how Canada’s history as a settler nation, “her” relationship both with and within the British Empire, and the lives of the thousands of men who served as colonial administrators and military personnel, played out on public stages and performance spaces throughout the colonies/country.

Papers focusing on specific plays, playwrights, actors, managers, and theatrical events are welcome as are papers that look more broadly at performances occurring outside of traditional theatre spaces. Possible topics include:

- military spectacle
- performances of/by Canadian political and/or military leaders
- plays that explore colonial relations (public and private)
- the incorporation of European acting methods by colonial performers
- actors and playwrights who held colonial offices
- protests and uprisings against colonial powers
- explorations of the relationship between theatrical and political/social performances of masculinity (e.g, how the stage affected the public arena and vice versa)

Those interested in presenting on the panel should submit a 300---word abstract. Papers, if accepted should conform to CATR guidelines for length.

Abstracts, along with a short bio, should be sent via email to Marlis Schweitzer at schweit@yorku.ca on or before December 1, 2010.

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Curated Panel C: “Land of the Living Skies”: Exploring People, Space and Place in Saskatchewan

Organizer: Moira Day, University of Saskatchewan

Deadline: December 1, 2010

“Land of the Living Skies,” the official motto for Saskatchewan, suggests that the Saskatchewan of popular imagination—and even of canonical artistic, literary, dramatic or cultural vision remains a psychic space defined by an infinite sense of austere physical and even metaphysical space. If “coasts” are ambiguous, liminal thresholds of human, natural, and elemental being and becoming in Atlantic mythology, then horizons, the dividing place between “continent” and sky, have much the same mystical reverberations in prairie iconography.

Traditional literary scholarship has tended to explore that deep-rooted regional tension between physical and conceptualized space in terms of iconic images accessible to the reader or spectator through the written drama. More recent scholarship, integrating a variety of post-colonial, historical, environmental and interdisciplinary approaches, has tended to reassess the production of those images and the texts containing them within an increasingly complex understanding of the historical, political, socio-economic, aesthetic and geographic forces constantly reshaping our perception of the borders between physical and conceptual space, and the actual generation of theatrical production, performance, structure and meaning throughout Saskatchewan.

Panelists are invited to consider the theme of people, space and place in Saskatchewan from a variety of literary, historical, cultural, critical, and performance perspectives that simultaneously explore questions and issues of current importance in theatre practice, drama and performance at the regional, national and global level. Comparative studies that examine points of synchronicity and difference between Atlantic, Great Plains, Northern Canadian and Saskatchewan theatre experience are particularly welcome.

Questions may include but are not restricted to

- How is theatre, as written and performance text, shaping the conception of space, place, community (geographical or imagined), ethnic, racial or gender identity, and particular or collective pasts?
- How are theatre spaces and places of performance—both rural and urban—literally contributing to the architectural, topographical, and spatial evolution of their communities?
- To what extent is the literal geographical positioning of the province, as well as its metaphorical positioning relative to concepts of “centres”, “margins” and “liminal spaces” in the Canadian cultural fabric and the larger global experience, shaping the current theatre scene?

Those interested in presenting on the panel should submit a 300-word abstract. Papers, if accepted should conform to CATR guidelines for length. Selected panelists will share written drafts of their papers with the moderator and each other two weeks before the conference.

Abstracts, along with a short bio, should be sent to Moira Day at moira.day@usask.ca on or before December 1, 2010.

Call for Participants

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Seminar A: Theatre in Small Cities

**Organizers: James Hoffman, Ginny Ratsoy, and Heidi Verwey, Thompson Rivers
University**

Deadline: January 15, 2011

Small-city theatre practitioners face special challenges and opportunities, and seminar participants are invited to share their knowledge of the nature of theatrical production in such cities. For example, there is often only one professional company in a small city, the company being in the enviable position of having a somewhat captive audience and the less enviable position of feeling an obligation to be all things to that audience. Depending on the city's geographical location, such theatre companies may face formidable competition from nearby better-known companies or feel isolated from the national scene. On the other hand, the small city may foster closer relationships of theatres with audiences and other arts and non-arts organizations. The aim of this seminar is to engage scholars and practitioners in productive dialogue on the specific situation of small city theatre for the purposes of creating ongoing professional relationships and collaboration, and generating scholarship on theatre in small cities.

In preparation for an email discussion in which the agenda for the seminar will be jointly decided, participants must read "Political Theatre in a Small City: The Staging of the Laurier Memorial in Kamloops" by James Hoffman and prepare a list of five issues they deem most relevant to the topic of theatre in small cities by March 1, 2011.

Interested participants are asked to submit an expression of interest and a short bio to Ginny Ratsoy at gratsoy@tru.ca by January 15, 2011.

Work Cited

Hoffman, James. "Political Theatre in a Small City: The Staging of the Laurier Memorial in Kamloops." *The Small Cities Book*. Ed. W.F. Garrett-Petts. Vancouver: New Star Books, 2005: 285-301. Print.

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Seminar B: A Tyranny of Documents: The Further Adventures of the Performing Arts Historian as Film Noir Detective

Organizer: Stephen Johnson, University of Toronto

Deadline: January 15, 2010

This is a further consideration of a subject first explored in panels at the 2006 and 2007 CATR conferences, and now followed up in a forthcoming volume of *Performing Arts Resources* (PAR 28), including over forty contributors. Proposals are invited for the examination and discussion of one document (or an equivalent particular problem) that has been particularly troublesome in your own historical research. The emphasis should be on the work of the historian as detective in the archive, and on the difficult balance sought between respect for documentary evidence, the need to generate significance from it, and the natural-but-dangerous tendency to smooth out the rough edges of evidence.

Participants in the seminar will provide a copy of the document and a statement of the problem experienced with it—the way in which it has been troublesome, or the problem of research that it represents. All documents and statements will be posted to a password-protected, secure website in advance of the conference for viewing by participants and registrants. Respondents will be assigned to each document and stated problem, and the session will be organized as a series of related questions arising from the posted material and responses.

Proposals from graduate students and scholars early in their careers are particularly encouraged, though seasoned veterans of the archive wars are more than welcome. The area of research is not restricted—documents inform all history writing, and what happened earlier today is history.

Interested participants are asked to submit a 250-word proposal and short bio to Stephen Johnson at stephen.johnson@utoronto.ca by January 15, 2011. Copy in the body of the email, please.

The organizer welcomes questions from potential participants in advance of submitting a proposal.

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Seminar C: Approaches to the Theatre of Atlantic Canada

Organizers: Linda Burnett, Algoma University, and Glen Nichols, Mount Allison University

Deadline: January 15, 2011

This seminar will focus on “approaches,” broadly conceived, to theatre in Atlantic Canada. Seminar participants might be interested in exploring some aspect of one of the following subject areas in their papers:

- Approaches to producing the work of Atlantic Canadian theatre artists (on stage or on film)
- Approaches to publishing the plays of Atlantic Canadian playwrights
- Approaches to new play development in Atlantic Canada
- Theatrical approaches to the history and/or politics of the region
- Approaches to the role of place/space in the work of Atlantic Canadian theatre artists (including under “space” the condition, variety, and usefulness of theatre buildings in the region)
- Approaches to the role of language in the work of Atlantic Canadian theatre artists
- Approaches to situating the work of Atlantic Canadian theatre artists in a national or an international context
- Approaches of/to theatre artists in Atlantic Canada, including approaches of/to female, gay, black, Mik’maq and other under-represented theatre artists in Atlantic Canada
- Approaches to theatre training in the region (eg, PARC’s playwright development program, training done at universities and by theatre companies, etc.)
- Approaches to teaching dramatic literature in/of the region

Participants will be asked to circulate drafts of a short paper (12 double-spaced pages maximum) a month before the conference. This will allow participants to read each other’s papers and pose questions pre-seminar. As well, each participant will be asked to prepare a short overview of his/her paper and ‘formal’ response to another participant's paper and present these during the seminar.

Interested participants are asked to submit a 250-word abstract and short bio to both Linda Burnett at linda.burnett@algonau.ca and Glen Nichols at gnichols@mta.ca by January 15, 2011.

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Seminar D: Investigating Urban Social Life through Performance

Organizer: Barry Freeman, University of Toronto (Scarborough)

Deadline: January 15, 2011

The 2006 CATR conference took "Performing the City" as its theme, and the federal census of the same year revealed that 80% of Canadians live in cities. Since then, scholars in our association have been looking at the city from many angles as a special ideological and material context for performance. This seminar will contribute to this ongoing conversation by examining the use of performance as a lens, method, and mode of representation in research of urban social life. This may be academic research that uses performance as one investigative tool among others, or it may be forms of theatrical creation that involve directly investigating the social lives of urban subjects.

In *Theatre & the City*, Jen Harvie notes an ambivalence in this field of study between a materialist view that sees urban life as strictly conditioned by capitalist forces, and a "willful optimism" that sees challenges to such hegemony as expressions of individual agency (67-68). The seminar will explore this ambivalence in a range of scholarly and artistic investigations of urban social life. By juxtaposing projects with different contexts, agendas and audiences, it is hoped that the conversation will expose some well-worn assumptions in the field, such as a tendency to regard interventions in urban social life as permanently transformative. We hope to discuss projects that frame themselves as, or borrow the techniques of, applied theatre, drama-in-education, protest theatre, verbatim theatre, or theatre for development. Questions we may address include:

- What insights do the techniques used yield into urban social life, and what were their practical and ethical limitations?
- How is theatre and performance being used to support rather than conflict with other qualitative or quantitative methods of urban social research?
- What strategies does the work employ for translating brief interruptions into sustainable change? How are the results of the investigation represented, and what role does aesthetics play?

The seminar will be limited to 10 members. Participants will be asked to circulate their 2500-3000 word papers to the group by May 9. In the 3-hour session, each participant will be responsible for a 5-minute response to one of the other papers, which will be followed by a discussion focusing on a small set of issues emergent from the responses.

Interested participants are asked to submit a 250-word abstract and short bio to Barry Freeman at barry.freeman@utoronto.ca by January 15, 2011.

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Seminar E: Affect / Canada / Theatre

Organizer: Erin Hurley, McGill University

Deadline January 15, 2011

Of late, scholars have renewed theatre and performance studies' historical attention to questions of sentiment, feeling, and mood. Work on racialized affect in/as performance (Muñoz), utopian performatives (Dolan), and theatre's affective labour (Ridout) reflect this engagement with creative expression of the "affective turn." Little, however, has been published on the relation of affect to theatre and performance in or about Canada. The goal of this seminar is to examine if and how the affective turn is changing theatre studies in Canada. We might ask, How has theatrical affect participated in building or destabilizing collectives, communities, and nations in Canada? What strategies can we use for mapping or marking affects and their resonances in and through performance? A more conceptual goal is to explore how thinking feeling opens up new areas of inquiry, modes of analysis, and kinds of attention in theatre studies in Canada.

Participants may wish to consider the following:

- How does Canadian theatre and performance produce, manage, and transmit feeling, emotion, and affect?
- Can we map a Canadian theatrical geography via an emotional geography of performance in Canada? Would it allow for an alternative narrative of Canadian theatre history or regionalism?
- Can regional differences in theatrical style be reconsidered through the lens of affect as varying affective registers or emphases?
- Can we consider Canada's geopolitical borders or identity frontiers as affectively invested domains?
- How might a production's affective draw inform what becomes a Canadian "classic"?
- What are the connections between so-called "national" or "representative" plays/performances and the specifics of the affects they deploy or provoke?
- What character types, theatrical forms, or performance venues carry the burden of affective labour?

Selected participants must submit papers (10 pages) by April 2, 2011, for feedback by other participants. The seminar will involve structured discussion of broader questions regarding the emergent discourse of theatre and affect and its challenges and opportunities for theatre and performance studies in and about Canada.

Interested participants are asked to submit a 500-word proposal and short bio to Erin Hurley at erin.hurley@mcgill.ca by January 15, 2011.

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Roundtable: Teaching Theatre in a Void: Avoiding Cultural, Geographic and Pedagogical Isolation (teaching theatre when there's NO theatre in town)

Organizer: Wes Pearce, University of Regina

Deadline: March 1, 2011

Many CATR members teach theatre in centres where there are limited opportunities to expose students to theatre (beyond in-house, amateur, or community productions). This roundtable asks if said isolation can be seen as a pedagogical obstacle to providing a fully rounded and engaged theatre student and, if so, what strategies can be employed so that students and faculty located in geographically (and/or culturally) isolated institutions can witness and engage with current trends in Canadian (or world) theatre, new aesthetics (performative or visual), or new understandings of performance reception?

Participants will share ideas and pedagogical strategies and experiences (both good and bad) around this notion of cultural isolation and the pedagogical implications of this seclusion. The focus will be on creative and innovative strategies (moving away from showing filmed plays) with an emphasis on transferable pedagogies.

Participants will present a brief overview of their current situation and a few experiences/strategies/suggestions they have explored within the classroom that address the concerns of this roundtable. Prior to the session, participant profiles and experiences will be shared to facilitate a more informed, useful discussion.

Interested participants are asked to submit a brief summary of their current situation and strategies/suggestions to Wes Pearce at wes.pearce@uregina.ca by March 1, 2011.

Complete responses will be required from selected participants by May 1, 2011.

Participation in this roundtable does not limit your participation in another session at the conference