

CFP: Methodologies of Amateur Theatre Studies

Seminar co-chairs:

Mary Isbell (University of Connecticut) and Robin C. Whittaker (St. Thomas University)

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To encourage rigorous scholarship on amateur theatre, past and present, we invite papers that highlight methodological approaches to diverse amateur theatre practices. Submissions might consider, for example, relevant forms of Classical theatre, Medieval liturgical drama, Stuart court masques, garrison performances, early North American theatrical societies, shipboard theatricals, home theatricals, patrician and plebian theatricals at the center of empires and within colonial communities, contemporary nonprofessionalized theatre practices (including community theatre and theatre in education), and even amateur performances in the internet age.

The benefit of soliciting work from a variety of perspectives is two-fold. By discussing various periods we can develop a comparativist approach to threads that run through diverse amateur practices. By focusing on methodology, we hope to uncover innovative approaches that might cross time- or place-specific boundaries. We also hope to consider various definitions of “amateur” practices and to theorize the wonderfully tricky artifacts available to amateur theatre researchers. Methodological approaches could take into account histories of acting, directing, and the book; and theories of reception, culture, the archive, narrative, genre, internet production/consumption, and gender. Proposals should detail the amateur theatre practice under investigation and the methodological approach implemented. Essays need not be meta-critical (though they may be), as our discussion will be geared in this direction.

This session will be run as a seminar (papers circulated in advance with emphasis on discussion during the session). Proposals of 250-500 words should detail the practice to be investigated and methodological approach. Submit electronically (.doc) by September 30, 2011 to mary.isbell@gmail.com.

Please include with your abstract:

Name and Affiliation

Email address

Postal address

Telephone number

A/V requirements (if any; \$10 handling fee for A/V will be assessed with registration)