

Call for Papers

The Other “D”: locating ‘D’ance in Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies in Canada

“... at last year’s seminar, it became clear that the integration of dance into performance studies has created some tensions in the field. Several of my senior colleagues believe that performance studies has erased or undermined dance-specific methods of movement inquiry. In response to this critique, Rebecca (Schneider) ... challenged the group to continue engaging in a performance studies approach, without necessarily living under the rubric or being colonized by the field, in order to examine not just dance as culture, but culture as dance. And I applaud her stance.”

- Susan Manning, 2013 Mellon Dance Studies in/and the Humanities Roundtable Discussion,
Dance Research Journal 45/3, 9

Location: Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Toronto

Dates: January 22-23, 2016

Keynote Speakers: Susan Manning (Northwestern University)
Allana Lindgren (University of Victoria)

In recent years, the presence of Performance Studies in Canada at the graduate level has been on the rise. Performance Studies PhD programs at York University, University of Toronto and University of Alberta have their roots in Theatre Studies and History but are open to dance research. The PhD programs in Interdisciplinary Humanities at Concordia, Interdisciplinary Studies at Simon Fraser University, and Communication and Culture at Ryerson/York are dance friendly but not dance focused.

These expanded opportunities for dance research at the graduate level are positive additions to York’s Dance Studies doctoral program. However, as Susan Manning notes, there are tensions that arise about dance projects within non-dance specific programs. Even as program names change and students become more diverse in terms of disciplinary backgrounds, comprehensive exams, research, practical and teaching work, and language about program goals and curriculum still often revolve around “traditional” Drama and Theatre Studies or do not exhibit in-depth knowledge of Dance Studies research methodologies, debates, and/or performance practices.

When the breadth of Dance Studies is not recognized, Performance Studies programs miss opportunities to engage with extant scholarship, methodologies, archives, documentation, praxis and performance, pedagogy, and developed approaches to thinking and writing about movement, embodiment, and the body. In particular, Dance Studies reminds Performance Studies that, “[a]s culture, dance is in(sinew)ated with power relations. Built bone-deep into the dancing body and permeating its practice and performance, these structurings of power both discipline and pleasure the body” (Foster 2009, 8).

One of the main goals of this symposium will be to move towards productive and positive exchanges between and within Dance, Theatre, and Performance Studies. Potential practical outcomes include raising awareness about the scope of Dance Studies and of dance-based research happening across and/or about Canada as well as developing a shared resource space for research, praxis, and pedagogical support. Papers, organized panels, lecture demonstrations and performances that address the theme of this symposium are welcome. While this symposium is a response to the recent proliferation of Performance Studies programs in Canada, contributions from other disciplines that engage with the ways dance contributes to their inquiry such as Anthropology, Cognitive Science, Comparative Literature, English, Equity Studies, Ethnomusicology History, Music, Women Studies, and beyond are welcome and encouraged.

With the goal of knowledge mobilisation between and across disciplines the selections committee seeks contributions that consider overlapping, conflicting and intersecting methodological and practical approaches to dance-focused and dance-inclusive projects. We want to know how dance is being approached today and what challenges and discoveries researchers and scholars within a variety of disciplines are making about working in and through dance. Possible topics include: choreography and devising; postmodern dance and postdramatic theatre; dramaturgy; historical intersections in drama, dance, theatre, and performance studies; contemporary and historical Canadian dance; archiving, curation and documentation; the digital humanities; modes of performance that blur disciplinary lines such as circus, burlesque, and physical theatre; reflections on practical processes; equity issues such as race, gender, sex, ability and sexuality; affect; performance art; philosophical ontology; virtuosity; duration; environment; advocacy and activism; performance training, somatics and movement based practices not traditionally thought of as dance are welcome.

Paper presentations and lecture demonstrations will be scheduled over the two days of the symposium. Friday evening will be dedicated to performances in the Robert Gill Theatre. Please see requirements for paper, lecture demonstration, and performance proposals below. There will also be a poster presentation session on Saturday. This session will feature research in all stages of development giving presenters the opportunity to share methodological approaches, inquiries, resources, and ideas. A separate call for this session will be distributed in late August.

Submission Requirements

Please send proposals to: theotherdance@gmail.com by September 30, 2015

Please indicate in the subject heading whether it is a paper, lecture demonstration or performance proposal

1. Paper Presentations and Lecture Demonstrations

- an abstract of no more than 250 words**
- 150 word bio**
- a bibliography or 4-5 texts**
- indicate whether you are proposing a paper presentation or a lecture demonstration**
- for organized panels please include a 150 word description of the panel theme in addition to three paper abstracts and submit as a single document**

Technical Requirements

- paper presentations will be given 20 minutes
- lecture demonstrations will be given 45 minutes
- please indicate your AV needs as well as space required for demonstrations

2. Performance Proposals

There will be one evening dedicated to performance presentations at the Robert Gill Theatre. Site-specific and durational performance proposals are also welcome and will be scheduled appropriately. Theatrical, traditional, popular, urban, social and folk dance, performance based research, contemporary performance, historical reconstructions, improvisations, and modes of performance that question and challenge disciplinary boundaries are encouraged. The evening will be programmed in festival format and performances will be given a maximum time of 15 minutes each. Excerpts of evening length works are welcome. In your proposal please include:

- a 250 word description of your performance that contextualizes it within the framework of the symposium
- a 150 word bio
- if available a video clip (maximum 5 minutes) of your performance (not required)

Technical Requirements

The symposium is receiving full technical support from the Centre for Drama Theatre and Performance Studies. Please outline your technical needs in as much detail as possible. If you are selected to perform, an exchange with the technical team will take place. Please indicate if there is anything your performance cannot do without. A marley floor will be laid for the symposium.

For details about the Robert Gill Theatre go to: http://dramacentre.utoronto.ca/?page_id=635 .

In your proposal please include:

- lighting requirements
- AV needs
- props
- length of performance
- # of performers

Committee Members: Seika Boye (Chair), Evadne Kelly, Heather Fitzsimmons-Frey

Advisors to the Committe: Stephen Johnson, Allana Lindgren, Nikki Cesare Shotzko