

The 38th Annual Mid-America Theatre Conference
Hyatt Regency Galleria, Houston, TX
March 16-19, 2017

“Houston...We Have a Problem”
Theatre History Symposium—Call For Papers

Conceiving of the dance-dramaturg as a “friend of the problem,” performance theorist and artist Bojana Cvejic views problems as generative moments. Problems, Cvejic explains, “do not *represent* pre-formed concepts, they *create* concepts in expression... rais[ing] a problem implies constructing terms in which it will be stated, and conditions it will be solved in. The solution entails a construction of procedure and working situation” or the “methodology of the problem.” This year’s MATC Theatre History Symposium asks participants to engage with the ways theatre historians act as a “friend of the problem.” How can analyzing complications inspire us to create new ways of writing history, working in/against the archive, engaging artistic practice, and generating “methodologies of the problem” that push our thinking forward? What histories are uncovered when a “problem and possibility” mode of inquiry is engaged by theatre scholars and artists? At the same time, focusing on “the problem” is only one approach to theatre history. What is obscured, missed, or lost when a methodological bias toward problems is employed? How does the rhetoric of “the problem” continue to oppress, circumscribe, and define people who are traditionally discounted or marginalized?

As we negotiate social, political, and economic unrest, how is the study of theatre and performance well-suited for tackling the most pressing problems of our shared world? In what ways are there generative opportunities surrounding history’s intersections with injustice, missing voices, and erased archives? What is the labor of the theatre historian and historiographer in the examination of history’s complications? Mediator? Problem-Solver? Listener? What are the issues and stakes involved in this line of pseudo-activist thinking?

The Theatre History Symposium invites proposals that forward clear, explicit arguments and welcomes a range of research methods, theoretical genealogies, analytical strategies, and writing or presentation styles. We are delighted to announce that Dr. Brian Herrera (Princeton University) will serve as this year’s Theatre History Symposium Respondent.

Please submit proposals via email in MS Word or PDF Format to thsmatc@gmail.com and include the following:

- Your **name**, **title** (graduate student, faculty rank, independent scholar), **academic affiliation** (if applicable), and a **brief biography**.
- Your **contact information** (particularly email).
- The **title** and **abstract** for your paper. Please limit abstracts to **250 words**.
- Any **audiovisual elements** requested for your presentation. We cannot guarantee audiovisual support but will take requests into account when scheduling. Late requests may not be honored.
- We also welcome proposals for full panels. Contact the co-chairs for more information.

Theatre History Symposium Co-Chairs: Michelle Granshaw, PhD Chandra Owenby Hopkins, PhD
University of Pittsburgh Converse College

All proposals must be received by October 15, 2016

Robert A. Schanke Award

The Robert A. Schanke Research Award is given annually to an untenured faculty presenter of the Theatre History Symposium and carries a cash award of \$500 and consideration for publication in *Theatre History Studies*, the Mid-America Theatre Conference journal. For consideration, submit your full, conference-length version of your paper to the co-chairs at the email address above by February 20, 2017.