

Proposal for Seminar / Working Group / CATR Conference 2016  
From: Stephen Johnson, Heather Davis-Fisch, Roberta Barker

**Performance History Seminar:  
"Communities and the Making of Histories"**

We propose to follow up--and to build on the momentum of-- Performance History Seminars of the past three years, which have attracted a large number of participants, many of them repeat contributors, from across the country and the United States, including graduate students and senior scholars, representing a broad range of disciplinary interests. Several of the recipients of the new CATR awards have been drawn from this seminar, as well as at least two McCallum award recipients. The seminar regularly draws its own audience (from 12 to 50 auditors), who we as organizers fully engage in the seminar by posting materials on a website in advance, for all to read. Our goal this year is to match and improve on this experience for this coming year.

As in our past practice, this year's seminar would call for 'working papers' exploring the challenges members are facing in their ongoing research, in particular the relationship between the performance/theatre historian and documentary evidence; but it would also allow participants to raise more general questions concerning provenance, disciplinary and cross-disciplinary benefits and challenges, ethics, influence, and so on. Participants will be encouraged to engage with the Congress theme as they prepare their submissions (see CFP).

Following on last year's model, all documents, statements and working papers will be posted on the web in a secure environment for participants, with conference registrants allowed access to review the materials in the week prior to the conference. Discussions will be structured in order to be inclusive to auditors. Given our expected numbers, we will repeat our usual model, to break into smaller working groups for a part of the session to discuss the problems participants have brought to the table.

Our long-term goal is to establish a 'Working Group' that will remain active all year, for which the seminar is one outcome. The seminar would welcome members of last year's seminar, as well as new participants. For the record, all potential participants will have to submit proposals, which will be vetted. We may also decide to invite more senior members of the association to act as respondents both before and during the conference seminar.

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CALL FOR PAPERS FOR A SEMINAR AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASSOCIATION  
FOR CANADIAN THEATRE RESEARCH

**Performance History Seminar:  
"Community, Power, and the Making of Histories"**

Proposals are invited for a seminar exploring the challenges of performance history, as it relates to the ongoing research of participants. Like earlier seminars at CATR/ARCT, including last year's Performance History Seminar, this session will explore the relationship between the historian of performance and documentary evidence; but it will also encourage participants to raise more general questions concerning provenance, disciplinary and cross-disciplinary benefits and challenges, and other issues that have arisen while conducting research.

One focus this year will be the way our research engages with the idea of 'community,' broadly defined: the ways in which historians invent and re-invent cohesive audiences and audience responses to events, in their efforts to make sense of the remaining documents; the efforts of performance practitioners to establish themselves in relation to their community, as outsiders, as harbingers of the future, as guardians of the past, or as something else entirely; or the ways in which historians themselves forge communities, disciplinary and sub-disciplinary, collaborative and antagonistic, as they go about the business of making history. Potential participants may examine the general call for proposals on the website for further ideas and are encouraged to think about the Congress theme--and the word 'communities'--in considering their proposals. To be clear, however, we also welcome proposals that do not directly address this theme; it is meant to provide direction for discussion.

Participants will submit 'working papers' by April 15, 2016, exploring a challenge they are facing in their ongoing research, along with documents if appropriate, all of which will be posted to a password-protected, secure website in advance of the conference for viewing by participants and registrants. We will divide participants into groups for on-line discussion, assign respondents, and organize the conference session as a series of related research questions for discussion. Papers will not be read during the seminar, but will act as pretexts for conversation.

We encourage proposals from graduate students, scholars early in their careers, and seasoned veterans. The area of research is not restricted to a particular time or place. Explorations of the challenges in discussing any area of drama, theatre and performance studies will be welcome.

Please send initial proposals of no more than 250 words, along with a brief biography, to [stephen.johnson@utoronto.ca](mailto:stephen.johnson@utoronto.ca).

Deadline for submission is **15 January 2016**. We welcome questions in advance of submitting a proposal.