CALL FOR PAPERS
THEATRE HISTORIOGRAPHY WORKING GROUP
IFTR

13th July-17th July 2020, Galway

The IFTR Historiography Working Group will be meeting during the IFTR conference in Galway, 13-17 July 2020. The working group welcomes papers from new and existing members dealing with any possible period or topic in theatre history, but as the group is dedicated to theatre historiography, authors are asked to focus on methodological and epistemological problems related to the history of theatre and performance. Historiographical questions discussed by participants may be illustrated through specific case examples, and there are no restrictions on the historical time or place a proposal might involve or on the kind of historiographical approach explored.

The Historiography Working Group welcomes, but does not confine itself, to papers addressing the theme of the conference. The general theme of the 2020 conference, “Theatre Ecologies: Environments, Sustainability, and Politics”, has various critical implications for theatre historiography, which in recent years has seen an interrogation into the roles theatre plays in cultural and physical eco-systems, and the myriad ways by which theatre and performance are shaped by environmental factors, throughout historical periods and across geographical, social and cultural lines.

As presented in the convenors’ description, this year’s conference theme aims to address the topic of Theatre Ecologies in broad terms. Ecology is the study of the relationship between living organisms and their environments (whether cultural, political, social or biological). Naming theatre’s aesthetic and working practices as ecologies permits scholars to locate theatrical performances within not only social, political and cultural networks, but also interrelated biological systems. Inherently political, embodied and performative, theatre ecologies are constructed by – and responsive to – wider social, political, cultural, and physical environments. Taking its cue from this year’s conference theme, we also invite papers that focus on historical relationships between social, cultural and physical environments that shape and effect theatre practices. Possible topics may include: theatre as an eco-system, techniques of theatrical preservation, storage and waste; theatre and trash culture; historical intersections between theatre, politics, environment; theatre and sustainability.

See the announcement of the conference for a full elaboration of the topic and subthemes, on the IFTR website at: iftr.org.

The Historiography Working Group works by circulating papers to members in advance of the conference for in-depth discussion in sessions at the conference. The aim of the group’s discussion is always to be constructive. Submissions are normally linked to a research project that the author currently has in progress. There are two possibilities:

a) Scholars share a work in progress, usually an article or book chapter excerpt (5000-word limit), framed by historiographical questions. They are invited to speak for not more than ten minutes about the context in which they have written their pieces, and about historiographical points where they would particularly welcome a response. (Participants take care to read all
the papers carefully, so an oral summary of the paper is discouraged.) The group spends about 20 minutes discussing each paper, and the emphasis of the discussion is upon historiographical method rather than the detail of the content.

b) Scholars share a short essay (2000-word limit) that takes up a specific historiographical problem, possibly in response to the conference or convening theme. This might be a think piece or provocation. The shorter papers will be grouped together in panels within the working group with each presenter invited to speak about their topic for no more than five minutes, with 15 minutes of discussion within the group to follow.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted by the deadline of **January 31, 2020** via the Cambridge Core website, indicating that you are submitting to the Historiography Working Group. Please indicate whether you are proposing a 2,000 word or 5,000-word paper and include in your abstract a clear statement about the historiographical questions raised by the work.

The Working Group convenors will select proposals that best fit the historiographical theme of our group. We particularly welcome proposals from new scholars and from scholars outside Europe. If we cannot accommodate your paper, we will refer it to the conference organizers for possible placement on a general panel.

The full text of the selected paper (a) no more than 5000 words / (b) no more than 2000 words should be emailed to the conveners by June 1, 2020, for uploading to the group’s website.

Information about the group can be found on: [http://theaterhistoriography.wordpress.com/](http://theaterhistoriography.wordpress.com/)

Please share this call for papers with any colleagues or research students whom you think may be interested.

For further information, please contact the group’s convenors. The current conveners of the Historiography Working Group are:

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