

**Marla Carlson**  
**ASTR President**



Writing in a confusing time signature, simultaneously stretched out and compressed, I welcome you to a conference scheduled to begin on November 5, 2020, or what the mordant humor of counting days in COVID-time might call March 237. And I extend my advance welcome to the conference that will begin—in non-repetition—on October 28, 2021. This program documents “After Repetition” as planned by Soyica Colbert, Douglas A. Jones, Jr., Shane Vogel and their Program Committee, listing the plenary, concurrent, and working sessions gathered around this theme. All of the scholars and sessions listed here were invited to shift their participation to the 2021 conference, and I look forward to joining with many of you after this long delay, even as I regret the loss of opportunity to engage in person with those for whom the postponement is not feasible. We will be meeting in such a different space-time then, and I cherish hopes for our flourishing together.

This program also recognizes the efforts of working session organizers, some of whom will virtually convene their groups in 2020 for a first phase of shared research that they will continue to develop for the 2021 conference, while others will postpone their work for a year, and still others will complete their work together virtually. Thank you for the care that you have taken in crafting and then reconfiguring your sessions. I look forward to present and future encounters with the scholarship being nourished by these working sessions across all their varied circumstances.

Right now, I invite you to get to know the “After Repetition” program and the exciting work accepted for this conference. Soon, together with the ASTR Officers, Executive Committee, and our many committees, I will invite you to participate in the different virtual events that comprise the 2020 pre-conference. Even while I sorely miss our physical co-presence, I am sustained by all the ways that we’re finding to cultivate existing personal and professional relationships and to form new ones.

With my warm best wishes,

Marla Carlson  
ASTR President

The decision by ASTR leadership to postpone the annual conference was guided by the health and safety realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the uncertainty surrounding employment and funding at many institutions. Since our announcement in June, the health emergency has not subsided and institutions of learning have responded in a number of ways, including, but not limited to: terminating contingent and adjunct faculty contracts; reducing graduate student support; eliminating positions and programs; cutting department and research budgets; and forcing some individuals to choose between employment and their health concerns. Through all of this, our membership has also adjusted to new academic calendars and embraced a combination of remote and hybrid teaching practices so that students across the nation and world can continue their educations in an equitable and accessible manner.

Additionally, it is important to note that the historic nature of this summer's protests relating to the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor (among the countless other unarmed Black people who have died at the hands of police) have forced us to rethink the ways our teaching and scholarship must move forward in support of social justice and anti-racist practices. These protests call for accountability against racism and bias at all levels of power in the United States, including higher education. This work is necessary and will continue to shape the efforts and directions of ASTR and its membership.

In the midst of these unprecedented challenges, many of our members face annual reviews and evaluations that affect funding, contract renewals, and promotion and tenure cases. Postponing a conference is a major decision and we are aware that it carries financial, professional, and personal repercussions that will impact individuals for years to come. For these reasons, this program book stands as a record of the intellectual labor and scholarly achievements of those that submitted work for the 2020 ASTR conference. All of the papers and contributions listed in this program underwent a peer-reviewed process in order to be accepted for presentation. ASTR requests that administrators, department and program chairs, graduate student supervisors, search committees, and tenure and promotion committees recognize these accomplishments and give credit to the individuals whose work is presented in this program.

I would like to thank Soyica Colbert, Douglas A. Jones, and Shane Vogel for all of the time and energy that they put into planning their conference (and for their willingness to continue in their roles as program chairs next year). So much labor went into the 2020 conference planning process and I want to thank everyone for their generosity and goodwill as we made this difficult transition. I look forward to repeating our work as we plan for "Theatre and Performance After Repetition" to take place in San Diego from October 28-31, 2021.



**ASTR 2020 Program Chairs**  
**Soyica Colbert**  
**Douglas A. Jones**  
**Shane Vogel**

Perhaps it is fitting that interruption marks our Conference. Typically this page would include a note welcoming you to the annual ASTR destination and conference. This year, however, we write in dispersal due to the world-shifting impacts of Covid-19. Besides disrupting the rhythms, pace, and habits of everyday life, Covid-19 has also drawn attention to the deep structural inequalities that shape our nation and world. Through our conference theme, "After Repetition," we seek to explore how theories of repetition inform theatre history across periods, methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and approaches to examining theatre history and historical practices. From descriptions of repetition-with-a-difference and performative iteration to twice-behaved behavior and staged revivals, repetition has become an axiomatic starting point for understanding the complex temporality of theatre—sometimes at the expense of other ways of imagining performance in time and as time. In toggling between line and cycle, repetition gives us seriality, division, memory, and difference. But there are other ways to contemplate and inhabit difference than via repetition. Our present conditions offer ready examples to theorize performance after repetition.

While appreciating the inestimable value that theories of repetition have contributed to the study of theatre and performance, the conference seeks to center other time signatures that may be related to, but diverge from, repetition. We seek to understand time signatures that account for disruption, divergence, and delay. Repetition is but one way that past/present/future can be configured in relation to each other, but it is not the only one. The ecstatic, the messianic, and the afterlife, for example, are three other time signatures that govern the tempos of performance differently than repetition, and others may be felt if we can so attune our critical and institutional values. This year's plenary panels, curated panels, and working sessions all begin to do this work. This conference theme developed out of the first José Esteban Muñoz Targeted Working Group, a multiyear ASTR initiative to increase the diversity of the organization and the research produced under its auspices. The development of the Muñoz Working Groups provides an opportunity for the organization to take stock of the state of the field and the institution of ASTR, shaping both moving forward. Our conference aimed and aims to extend the conversations originating from the Muñoz Working Groups to the organization as a whole. This program offers an outline for what would-have-been, both conjuring and mourning the sessions, conversations, debates, performances, music, conviviality, eating and drinking—our repeated conference behaviors—we had curated. While we will not be able to gather together in November, we encourage members to continue to devise work within the extended timeframe of the conference. What methodologies, concepts, and networks may form through ASTR in an extended dispersal?

As we continue to plan the repeating 2020 conference, we wish to thank our Conference Program Committee, all of whom have agreed to continue along this journey with us. Their work has shaped what would have been in New Orleans and what will be in San Diego. We would also like to thank the ASTR 2021/2022 Program Chairs for their willingness to postpone their conference, too. We appreciate the support, camaraderie, and expertise of the VP for Conferences, Jimmy Noriega as well as Aimee Zygmanski, Shaun Franklin-Sewell, and Devon Binder who provided valuable logistical and organizational support.

The next time we write this note, it will be filled with conference details. For now, we sit in the meantime, a space familiar to the rhythms wrought after repetition. We hope you will join us here and there.

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