Call for Papers
ATHE’s Music Theatre/Dance Focus Group:
The Bruce Kirle Memorial Debut Panel in Music Theatre/Dance

Deadline: March 1, 2021

The Music Theatre/Dance (MT/D) Focus Group of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) announces its call for papers for the Bruce Kirle Memorial Debut Panel in Music Theatre/Dance at the 2021 ATHE conference in Austin, TX from August 5-8, 2021. Accepted papers will be published in *Studies in Musical Theatre*, and panelists will receive a complimentary copy of Bruce Kirle’s *Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process*.

This annual panel is held in memory of Dr. Bruce Kirle, scholar of musical theatre and longtime member of the Music Theatre/Dance Focus Group. Dr. Brian Herrera, Associate Professor of Theater at Princeton University, will serve as this year’s respondent. (Please see below for more on Drs. Kirle and Herrera.)

Paper submissions may concern any area within the purview of the MT/D Focus Group, which encompasses opera, operetta, musical theatre, dance theatre, performance art with music or dance elements, and pedagogy of music theatre and dance. This year, in the spirit of the 2021 ATHE conference theme of recognition and reckoning, paper submissions are encouraged, but not required, to embrace topics, methods, and strategies that decenter white cis-heteropatriarchy.

Submissions are open to emerging scholars (including graduate students) who have not yet presented at a national conference on a topic related to music theatre or dance, as well as established scholars who have not previously presented or published in the areas of music theatre or dance. Scholars must not be scheduled to present on music theatre or dance topics at any other national conference prior to the submission date, and papers may not be cross-submitted to another ATHE panel for the 2021 conference. Scholars may, however, present or serve on other panels at this conference.

For consideration, please e-mail your paper, 10 to 12 pages in length, as a Microsoft Word attachment to mtdgradrep@gmail.com by Mar 1, 2021. Please include a cover page with your name, paper title, institutional affiliation, and contact information, but remove your name from the body of the essay.

Three papers will be selected by a blind-review committee for inclusion on this competitive panel. The selected authors will be expected to participate and present their papers at the conference in Austin. Due to the flexibility required by COVID-related public-health constraints, participation may transpire in an in-person or digital basis, to be determined at a date closer to the conference. Each panelist will receive a copy of Bruce Kirle’s *Unfinished Show Business*: 

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Drs. Kirle and Herrera:

Dr. Bruce Kirle was a long-time member of the Music Theatre/Dance Focus Group of ATHE and a scholar of musical theatre. He passed away in 2019. Dr. Brian Herrera is a scholar of musical theatre and dance who has been active in ATHE for many years. His work has focused on the intersection of race and music theatre, and he has been a key figure in the ATHE community. His work on Dr. Kirle’s legacy is an important part of ATHE’s ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion in the field.
"Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process," generously donated by the Kirle family. In addition, panelists will also receive a yearlong subscription to Studies in Musical Theatre (Intellect Books), and their essays will be prepared for publication in that journal.

Please direct any and all questions to the current MT/D Focus Group Graduate Student Representatives, Adrienne Oehlers and Anne Potter, at mtdgradrep@gmail.com.

For more information on the ATHE 2021 conference, visit http://www.athe.org.

Bruce Kirle was a professor of music theatre studies at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London and a former Associate Professor of Theatre at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Kirle trained as a concert pianist and began his career writing musicals with Tom Eyen at La MaMa, the renowned off-off Broadway theatre club. He was a professional musical director in the U.S. and Canada. His credits include the nightclub act in which Chita Rivera introduced Kander and Ebb's songs “All That Jazz” and “How Lucky Can You Get.” Kirle studied English at Columbia University and received his doctorate in theatre from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He was awarded the Monette-Horwitz Dissertation Prize by the Center for Gay and Lesbian Studies for an outstanding dissertation dealing with gender and identity issues. His groundbreaking work, Unfinished Show Business: Broadway Musicals as Works-in-Process, emphasized the centrality of the political and social environments in which musicals are created and performed. Kirle was well known as an extraordinarily dedicated and professional teacher, and he is remembered particularly for his encouragement of young scholars and actors.

Brian Eugenio Herrera is an Associate Professor of Theater in the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University, where he is also a core faculty member in the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies and a faculty affiliate with the Programs in American Studies, Music Theater, and Latino Studies. Hailing from New Mexico, his academic and artistic work examines the history of gender, sexuality, and race within and through US popular performance. He is author of The Latina/o Theatre Commons 2013 National Convening: A Narrative Report (HowlRound, 2015) and an award-winning book Latin Numbers: Playing the Latino in Twentieth-Century U.S. Popular Performance (Michigan, 2015), and currently serves as co-editor of “Performances and American Cultures” series at NYU Press. As a performer, Brian's autobiographical storywork performances (including I Was the Voice of Democracy and TouchTones) have been presented across the United States, as well as Beirut and Abu Dhabi. Brian is also the Inaugural Resident Scholar for The Sol Project, an initiative dedicated to producing the work of Latinx playwrights in New York City and beyond; is a longstanding contributor to the Fornés Institute, a project committed to preserving and amplifying the legacy of María Irene Fornés; and is part of the Core Facilitation Team with ArtEquity, an organization dedicated to creating and sustaining a culture of equity and inclusion through the arts. Brian is presently at work on two scholarly book projects: Next! A Brief History of Casting, a historical study of the material practices of casting in US popular performance, and Starring Miss Virginia Calhoun, a narrative portrait of a deservedly obscure early 20th century actress/writer/producer.