CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Theatre and Social Change (TASC) Focus Group Sessions
Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Conference
Detroit, Michigan
July 28th-July 31st, 2022

Submission Deadlines:
November 1st, 2021 (individual paper proposals: submit to https://forms.gle/Qh4nKkHrF6YyzyYg6)
December 3rd, 2021 (complete panel proposals: submit to www.athe.org)
March 1st, 2022 (TASC Debut Panel proposals: submit to https://forms.gle/FVijAw8u9svbdTut5)

The Theatre and Social Change (TASC) Focus Group invites proposals for in-person panels for next year’s conference to be held in Detroit, MI. Please note, however, that the format may need to change to virtual or hybrid, depending on possible future circumstances. This year’s conference theme is “Rehearsing the Possible: Practicing Reparative Creativity.” Following adrienne maree brown’s vision of emergent strategy, or “[…] ways for humans to practice being in right relationship to our home and each other, to practice complexity and grow a compelling future … [to] change in ways that grow our capacity to embody the just and liberated worlds we long for,” we ask: How can our collective live presence in Detroit offer emergent strategies that shape sustainable change in our field, our host city, and our communities? As theatre artists and scholars, we recognize that rehearsals, the acts of constant creation, can be more significant than the product and, indeed, that the work is ongoing and incomplete. Can we rehearse for the possible in all aspects of our research, pedagogy, and practice for the better present and future we want to embody, or as Tina Campt frames futurity, “live the future now”?

Some questions related to the overall conference theme to consider addressing include:

- What are some of the ways theater and performance can enable us to imagine and embody new possibilities?
- How do theater and performance rearrange our relationship to the impossible?
- How might the theatre as a space of imaginative possibility work to rethink the world in practical and impractical ways?
- How might rehearsing the possible ask us to rethink potential theatre careers for our students, opening up possibilities for how students might use theatre differently to change the world?
- Drawing from Kondo’s view of the reparative as a practice that makes and unmakes race throughout the creative process, what processes that uphold white supremacy can we
abolish from our classrooms, rehearsals, production, and performance spaces and what do we imagine in their place?

• What are white theatre scholars, artists, and educators willing to risk to dismantle white supremacy and enact collective liberation?

• Given the austerity we are experiencing nationally across colleges and universities, how might we actualize potentiality amid ongoing crises?

• Detroit and the state of Michigan have long traditions of theatre making in prisons. How does grassroots theatre making with historically excluded groups, like the incarcerated and the homeless, help us to rehearse for social justice efforts or otherwise contribute to social change? How can theatre learn from such transdisciplinary grassroots work as we re-imagine a more inclusive field and engage trauma-informed practices?

• How might ATHE and/or theatre makers and organizations contribute to efforts to make reparations to historically enslaved or oppressed communities? In what ways can theatre and performance work to help equalize the economic and education gaps that exist in places like Detroit?

Visit [https://www.athe.org/page/22conf_theme](https://www.athe.org/page/22conf_theme) for more information and for the complete overall conference CFP.

TASC invites you to consider proposals for in-person (hopefully) sessions regarding the conference theme for panels and roundtables, as well as proposals that challenge traditional session formats through ACTIVE workshops, performance, or other “session events.” We strongly encourage you to consider ways in which to make your session/panel active and interactive. TASC remains committed to giving voice to a diversity of methodological approaches and geographical emphases.

TASC brainstormed several topic ideas for ATHE 2022. Those topics are listed below for you to consider. Please do not feel limited by these topics.

• Submissions that engage deeply with Detroit and its rich history, as well as acknowledging the ability and necessity of breaking the mold to expand how we engage with our host city.
• The resilience of community despite gentrification.
• The drive towards antiracist pedagogy and making reparations.
• Activism on college campuses related to issues of Race, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
• Interrogating “liveness,” what “coming together live” means, or resisting the return to normalcy.
• Dismantling the “canon.”
• The difficult history of the Detroit Renaissance Center.
• Performances from across the spectrum of polish/production. From youth groups to polished performances.
• "Environment(al)" issues (e.g., urgency of climate change and voting rights).

When planning your proposal, remember that:
• Presenters are limited to two (2) appearances (i.e.: Session chair, Participant, Moderator, Respondent, etc.) Exceptions are at the discretion of the Conference Committee
• All presenters are expected to be current members of ATHE
• All presenters must to register (and pay registration fee) for the conference

Guidelines for Submitting Papers/Panels:

1. **Due November 1st – Individual Papers:**
   a. Although full panel proposals are highly encouraged, TASC will accept individual paper proposals, with which we will attempt to pair you with other individual papers. No guarantee can be made that individual papers will find a place on a panel. If you/we are unable to pair you with other presenters/papers, your individual paper will not be accepted. TASC does not support single presentations or panels (with rare exceptions for workshops). If you would like to submit an individual paper, please submit to https://forms.gle/Qh4nKkHrF6YzvYg6.

2. **Due December 3rd – Complete Panels:**
   a. Proposals for complete panels (with all presenters assembled) should be submitted directly to ATHE through the website at http://www.athe.org. Please forward a copy of your proposal to TASC Conference Planner, Tiffany Pounds-Williams at poundswi@bc.edu (and CC the Incoming Conference Planner, Rivka Eckert, at eckertsr@potsdam.edu).

3. **Due March 1 – TASC Debut Panel Papers:**
   a. The Theatre and Social Change (TASC) Focus Group invites submissions for presentations and workshops for next year’s **TASC Debut Panel**. We seek proposals addressing how performance might be activated in service of or connected to issues of social change. Submissions may be contemporary or historical in scope, may apply a practical or theoretical perspective, and may take the form of papers, interactive presentations, or workshops. Submissions need not be connected to the overall conference theme (Rehearsing the Possible). Presenters need not be new to ATHE, so long as they have not previously presented within the TASC Focus Group. Selected panelists will be matched with a mentor to develop their presentation and learn more about engaging with ATHE, if they so choose. Additionally, there will be some form of financial assistance provided to selected panelists to help defray the costs of conference attendance. A specific CFP for the Debut Panel is forthcoming.
   b. Applicants should submit abstracts up to 250 words in length. These abstracts may describe a paper OR in the case of workshop presentations may summarize the planned activities. Please submit abstracts to https://forms.gle/FVijAw8u9svbdTut5. Email TASC Graduate Representatives, Zach Apony Moriarty at znaymb@missouri.edu and Lia Christine Dewey at liadewey2026@u.northwestern.edu with questions.

4. If you would like assistance in panel coordination, please use the TASC message board on TASC’s page at http://www.athe.org/members/group.aspx?id=130358 (or email TASC Conference Planner, Tiffany Pounds-Williams at poundswi@bc.edu (CC the Incoming Conference Planner, Rivka Eckert, at eckertsr@potsdam.edu) OR fill out the Google form https://forms.gle/Qh4nKkHrF6YzvYg6 no later than November 1st, 2021. Please note, this option does not guarantee submission/acceptance to the conference, which is determined by ATHE and not TASC.
5. Submissions may be either discipline specific or multidisciplinary. In general, we are interested in panel topics that address: the historical role of theatre with a conscious social perspective; the research and practice of theatre with a focus on the dynamic relationship between performance and society; and on cultural analysis and performance praxis which sees itself as an agent for social criticism and/or change. We encourage proposals that include both senior and junior scholars, as well as graduate students. A senior scholar could be asked to serve as a respondent. We also encourage collaborations with other Focus Groups to develop dynamic multidisciplinary sessions. Please see below for specific rules and guidelines for multidisciplinary proposals.

For Theatre and Social Change Specific Proposals: If your session addresses primarily theatre and social change, then when prompted in the application, choose “Single Focus Group” and then “Theatre and Social Change” as the group that should review your proposal. When the selection process begins, all TASC-targeted proposals will be sent to the TASC conference planner. The TASC Executive Committee will rank the proposals, and the conference committee will use those rankings to make final programming decisions. You must submit your proposal to the TASC Conference Planner, Tiffany Pounds-Williams at poundswi@bc.edu (CC the Incoming Conference Planner, Rivka Eckert, at eckertsr@potsdam.edu) before submitting a TASC proposal to ATHE. Also, feel free to contact the conference planner if you have any problems or concerns or if you are curious as to whether your proposal is appropriate for TASC.

For Multi-Disciplinary (MD) Proposals: If your session has a TASC focus but is also appropriate for another Focus Group (FG), you can check “Multidisciplinary Session” on the online proposal application. Then you will be asked to select a “Primary Focus Group Sponsor” (e.g., Theatre and Social Change) and a “Secondary Focus Group Sponsor” (e.g., Directing Program). To make an MD proposal you must contact, by email, the conference planners for each FG selected before submitting proposal online to receive feedback and to make sure the proposals are appropriate for each FG. If one of your targeted FGs is not enthusiastic, it is far better to know before submission and perhaps find another FG to increase its chance of being accepted (MD proposals are ranked by each of its affiliated FGs). See www.athe.org for contact information for FG conference planners.

ATHE Theatre and Social Change Focus Group webpage:
http://www.athe.org/members/group.aspx?id=130358

ATHE’s Call for Proposals Information webpage (with links to online proposal applications):
Visit https://www.athe.org/page/22conf_theme