CFP: Dramaturgy Focus Group (DRFG), Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)
July 28-31, 2022: Detroit, Michigan (an in-person conference)

“Building upon the work of the 2021 conference of RE: (claim, frame, pair, write, etc.), 2022 invites ATHE to deepen engagements with questions that Detroit urges us to address. How will we abolish institutional, embedded racist structures? As we seek to reimagine, rebuild, and rise up, what are some new arrangements of the possible that we might pursue?” Additionally, the politically volatile state of Michigan is approaching critical state elections in November of 2022 with the appointments of Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General. Despite the constant challenges, threats, and attacks from the GOP, likely, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, and Attorney General Dana Nessel will seek reelection. The Michigan sociopolitical crisis may lead to dramaturgical inquiries during our exploration in Detroit. The overall conference theme is available on ATHE’s website: https://www.athe.org/page/22conf_theme

The Dramaturgy Focus Group invites proposals responding to these ideas, as well as reflections on the current state of dramaturgy as a field. We envision a series of panels and roundtables, and welcome proposals that would offer innovative structures. Some possibilities include:

- **RE: Claim, Frame, Pair, Write.** Who is in the room? Connecting with Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA). Dramaturgy and Community.


- What are some of the ways dramaturgy can enable us to imagine and embody new possibilities?

- How do theater and performance and dramaturgy rearrange our relationship to the impossible?

- How might dramaturgy as a space of imaginative possibility work to rethink the world in practical and impractical ways?

- How might dramaturgy of 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?

- What are white dramaturgs willing to risk to dismantle white supremacy and enact collective liberation?

- Through a dramaturgical lens, 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? What’s the role of the dramaturg in these settings? How can theatre learn from such transdisciplinary grassroots work as we re-imagine a more inclusive field and engage trauma-informed practices?

- Nina Simone said “It is the artist's duty to reflect the times in which we live.” With this in mind, what is the role of the theatre practitioner/scholar/dramaturg in social justice and revolution in these current times? Why and how does theatre reify historic inequalities?
• What types of theatre and performance have arisen (emerged) from our collective time in isolation and from the demands for equality such as those from “We see you white American Theatre”? What changes have you or your institutions made? How will this work be sustained?

If you have an idea for an individual presentation, please contact DRFG Conference Planner Kristin Leahey, who will attempt to develop sessions from individual proposals. ATHE only accepts complete panel submissions. If you have an idea for a panel, you will need to assemble participants, probably by circulating a call for proposals for your own session.

Submission Deadlines:
• Individual paper proposals must be sent by Monday, November 1, 2021 to Kristin Leahey at kleahey@bu.edu
• Complete panels must be submitted by Wednesday, December 1, 2021 via the ATHE online form at http://www.athe.org.

Tips for submitting proposals:

1. Proposals for complete panels (with all presenters assembled) should be submitted directly to ATHE through the website at www.athe.org. The deadline for all proposals is December 1, 2021.

2. If you would like assistance in panel coordination, please use the Dramaturgy Focus Group Facebook page (ATHE Dramaturgy Focus Group), our Focus Group page on the ATHE website, or email individual paper proposals to the conference planner (kleahey@bu.edu) no later than Monday, November 1. Please note, this option does not guarantee submission/acceptance to the conference.

3. Submissions may be either discipline specific (Dramaturgy = DR) or multidisciplinary (MD).
   a. If your session addresses primarily Dramaturgy, then choose “Single Focus Group” on the online proposal form. All DR-targeted proposals will be sent to the DR conference planner and executive committee to be ranked. It is not necessary to contact the conference planner before submitting a DR proposal (unless you have questions), but it is helpful to keep the conference planner informed as there may be strength in combining the efforts of similar panels.

   b. If your session addresses Dramaturgy but is also appropriate for another Focus Group, you may select DR as one of your Focus Groups for an MD panel. Please contact the conference planners for each of the targeted Focus Groups before submitting the panel. MD proposals are ranked by each affiliated Focus Groups. If you list a Focus Group as a sponsor for an MD session without having contacted that Focus Group’s Conference Planner, your session is likely to be rejected.

4. Notes for ATHE Conference 2021

   a. Please note the conference dates this year. It will not be possible to request specific days for presentations.

   b. Participants will be limited to a maximum of two presentations, which include delivering a paper, serving on a roundtable, or serving in an equivalent role in a different type of session. There is no limit to the number of sessions that a person can Chair or Coordinate. Session coordinators should expect to hear whether or not proposals have been accepted or rejected by mid-March 2021.
Questions? Contact Dramaturgy (DR) Conference Planner – Kristin Leahey – kleahey@bu.edu