Turning the Page: Creating New Writing 1945-2013

organised by the University of Reading and the Victoria & Albert Museum
Friday 13th to Saturday 14th September 2013 at the University of Reading

Turning the Page: Creating New Writing (1945-2013)
Conference Programme: Friday 13th September

9.30  Conference Registration and Refreshments


10.20  Two Kingdoms: England vs Germany (Chair: John Bull)  
Simon Stephens and Michael Raab

11.45  Coffee

12.00  Parallel Panel 1: Theatre for Young People (Chair: Trevor Griffiths)
Tony Coult: A Ghost at the Feast - the Arts Council, Education, and the death of Theatre-in-Education
Catherine Love: A Culture of Development: The Royal Court and the Young Writers' Programme
Les Wade: New Models for New Theatre: London's At-Risk Youth in Play

Parallel Panel 2: Text / Non-Text Based Theatre (Chair: Liz Tomlin)
Vicky Angelaki: New Writing, New Provocation: A State of Shared Authorship
Steve Waters: Border Crossings - Some heretical thoughts on plays and writing
Cyrielle Garson: "Recycling Spoken Reality": An Exploration of the Relationship between Verbatim Theatre and New Writing
Jacqueline Bolton: "the collectively spent and used up lifetime in the collectively breathed air of that space"

Parallel Panel 3: Institutions and Networks (Chair: John Bull)
Ian Brown: New writing and new political identities in Scotland since 1945
Claire Cochrane: Risk and New Writing: The Case of Birmingham Rep
Catriona Fallow: Writing Residence at the RSC and Shakespeare's Globe
Jane Woddis: Influencing New Writing Policy: Networks of Policy and Practice

1.30  Lunch

2.30  Facilitating the Future (Chair: Graham Saunders)
Jenny Stephens, John Bashford and Anna Farthing

3.30  Coffee

3.45  Participation and Agitation (Chair: Taryn Storey)
David Edgar, Fin Kennedy, Jonathan Petherbridge and Steven Atkinson

5.30  Acts and Apparitions
Liz Tomlin in conversation with John Bull

Turning the Page: Creating New Writing (1945-2013)
Conference Programme: Saturday 14th September
9.30  Conference Registration and Refreshments


10.20  Changing Landscapes (Chair: Tony Coult)
Timberlake Wertenbaker and Roy Williams

11.45  Coffee

12.00  Parallel Panel 1: Authors and Authorship (Chair: Graham Saunders)
Gary Cassidy: The Role of the Actor in Anthony Neilson’s 'Process'
Susan Croft: New Writing in the Alternative Theatre Movement: New Models of Practice and their Discontents
Sara Freeman: Annie Smart’s Scenography for New Writing

Parallel Panel 2: Dramaturgy and Playwriting (Chair: Jacqueline Bolton)
David Lane and Hannah Silva: Progressive Dramaturgy: Learning a play’s language
Jonathan Lloyd: In new writing, can the playwright write the 'experiential' or is this a term which will always be grounded in 'performance' and the 'postdramatic'? Mary Oliver: If you can’t think of a better idea - shut up! Ensemble approaches to writing contemporary UK theatre 1983 - 2013
Duška Radosavljevic: The Ensemble Way of Working and Playwriting

Parallel Panel 3: Arts Council and New Writing (Chair: Kate Dorney)
Sophie Bush: Caring for their craft: Support for plays and/or playwrights in the 1980s and 1990s
Trevor Griffiths: Feeding the Dumb Waiter: Aspects of the Funding Regime in the Eighties
Joe McLoughlin: Reading the Writing of Arts Council England
Taryn Storey: How many plays would have remained unwritten...

1.30  Lunch

2.30  From Ink to Inc.: New Writing Today (Chair: Jacqueline Bolton)
Andy Smith and Dan Rebellato

3.30  Coffee

4.00  Long Table Discussion (Chair: Kate Dorney)
Dan Rebellato, Timberlake Wertenbaker, Roy Williams, Michael Raab, Jonathan Meth and Lisa Goldman

‘Giving Voice to the Nation’ is a five year research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council to investigate the relationship between Arts Council subsidy, arts policy and theatre practice. The project, which began in 2009, is a collaboration between the University of Reading and the Victoria and Albert Museum which holds the archives of the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB).

The project focuses on three major areas of ACGB activity: regional theatre, new writing and touring work and seeks to shed light on the following questions:

- How has the Arts Council shaped contemporary theatre practice through its policies and funding streams?
- How are these practices influenced by government policy on the arts at any particular moment?
- How have theatre practitioners shaped theatre policy in Britain through their involvement with Arts Council panels, working committees and advisory groups?
- How have the relationships between the two groups evolved?

The project team is:

- Dr Graham Saunders (University of Reading: Principal Investigator
- Professor John Bull (University of Reading) Co-Investigator
- Dr Kate Dorney (Victoria & Albert Museum) Co-Investigator
- Dr Jacqueline Bolton (University of Reading) Post Doctoral Research Associate
- Tony Coul (University of Reading) PhD student
- Taryn Storey (University of Reading) PhD student

To date, we’ve completed extensive surveying and cataloguing of the archive relating to the three research areas, conducted a number of interviews with former ACGB staff and practitioners, organised a series of conferences and symposia and delivered a number of conference papers and publications, including:


Further details about the archive can be found by visiting the V&A website:
http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/wid/ead/acgb/acgbf.html

Further details of the project can be found by visiting our website:
http://www.reading.ac.uk/ftt/research/ftt-givingvoice.aspx

Keynote Platform and Long Table Discussion
Speaker Biographies

Steven Atkinson
Steven Atkinson is co-founder and Artistic Director of HighTide Festival Theatre, one of the UK’s leading producers of new plays, and the only professional theatre focused on the production of new playwrights. Since 2007, HighTide have premièred major productions by playwrights including Ella Hickson, Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, Nick Payne, Adam Brace, Beth Steel, Laura Poliakoff, Luke Barnes, Vickie Donoghue, Lydia Adetunji and Joel Hirwood. In six years HighTide has staged over fifty productions, working with some of the world’s leading theatres in London (including the National Theatre, Bush Theatre, Old Vic Theatre and Soho Theatre), regionally (including Sheffield Theatres, Watford Palace and Southampton Nuffield) and internationally (Public Theater New York and National Play Festival Australia).

John Bashford

John Bashford trained at LAMDA and worked for the Cambridge Theatre Company, Channel Theatre Company and Churchill Theatre. He lived in Australia for ten years where he graduated from the NIDA Directors course (University of N.S.W. Australia). He was the artistic director of Warehouse Theatre Company, Sydney, associate director of Now Theatre, Orange, N.S.W. and was one of the founding shareholders of the Belvoir Street Theatre. He returned to the UK to work for Sir Peter Hall. He formed Briefly Shakespeare (with actor Andrew Vezey) and has directed and taught at Kobe Arts Network, Japan; National School of Drama (New Delhi) and the Film & Television Institute of India. He is currently the Vice-principal & Head of Acting at LAMDA. As a writer his credits include: New Australia, Daemons and The Hop Garden. For his own company, Hare’s Breadth, he wrote and directed Some Kinda’ Arizona and more recently: Blue on Blue. He is currently developing a new play: Crossing the Gulf.

David Edgar

David Edgar’s plays for the Royal Shakespeare Company include Destiny (1976), Maydays (1983) and Pentecost (1994-5), the second in a series of of plays about Eastern Europe after the Cold War, following The Shape of the Table (National Theatre 1990) and preceding The Prisoner’s Dilemma (RSC, 2001). His last play for the RSC, Written on the Heart, was premiered in Stratford in 2011 and transferred to the west end the following year.

His other recent stage work includes Playing with Fire (National Theatre, 2005), Testing the Echo (Out of Joint, 2008) and If Only (Chichester Festival Theatre, 2013). His stage adaptations include a multi-award-winning adaptation of Dickens’ Nicholas Nickleby (Royal Shakespeare Company in London and New York, 1980-1), Gitta Sereny’s Albert Speer (National Theatre, 2000) and Julian Barnes’s Arthur & George (Birmingham Rep, 2010).

He has also written for television and radio, and wrote the screenplay for Lady Jane (Paramount, 1986).

In 1989, he founded his first graduate playwriting course, at the University of Birmingham. His book about playwriting, How Plays Work, was published by Nick Hern Books in 2009. He was President of the Writers’ Guild of Great Britain from 2007 to 2013.

Anna Farthing

Anna Farthing is Research Associate at The Conservatoire for Dance and Drama; a unique higher education institution made up of eight performing arts schools. At the conference she is representing RADA, and is joined by colleagues from LAMDA and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Anna gained her PhD in Drama from Manchester University and is currently a visiting fellow at Bristol University.

Anna is also a director with a particular interest in the development of new dramatic writing in all media and for all kinds of spaces. Her professional credits include productions for The National Theatre Studio, Bristol Old Vic, Eastern Angles, Midlands Arts Centre, Battersea Arts Centre and The Banff Centre, Canada. With John Webster she co-wrote the BBC1 animated film Hamilton Mattress, that has since won 16 international awards and been sold to over 30 countries.
Her current practice interprets historical material in innovative ways that are site-specific and multi-sensory. Recent projects in this strand include *Now Children, Find a Space*... for the Olympics, *Unlocked* for Manx National Heritage at Castle Rushen, *The Magic of Medicine* for the Thackray Medical Museum and *HMS Hear My Story* for the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

**Fin Kennedy**

Fin Kennedy is an award-winning playwright whose plays are produced in the UK and abroad. In the UK, he has written for Soho Theatre, Sheffield Crucible, Southwark Playhouse, Half Moon Theatre, The Red Room and BBC Radio 4. His play *How To Disappear Completely And Never Be Found* was the first unproduced play ever to win the John Whiting Award, and is now produced around the world. It is also one of the UK’s most popular plays for student and amateur performance. In 2013, Fin researched and wrote *In Battalions*, an evidence-based report on how Government cuts to the Arts Council are affecting new play development in the UK. The report received widespread coverage and had questions asked in Parliament. Fin also has many years’ experience teaching playwriting in schools, youth clubs, and at universities. Since 2007 he has been writer-in-residence at Mulberry School in East London, for whom he has co-founded a theatre company and written plays which premiered at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and in London. *The Unravelling* (2009) won a Scotsman Fringe First, the first time a British state school has received one. Fin is currently developing a fifth play for the school, as well as new ideas for Birmingham Rep, Bristol Old Vic and West Yorkshire Playhouse. Fin has been an Associate Artist at Tamasha, a freelance dramaturg, and is also a visiting lecturer at Goldsmiths College and an occasional contributor to The Guardian and The Stage. He writes a popular theatre industry blog at www.finkennedy.blogspot.co.uk More information on all Fin’s plays and other projects can be found at www.finkennedy.co.uk

**Jonathan Meth**

Jonathan is taking over as Convenor of the MA in Writing for Performance and Dramaturgy at Goldsmiths, from September 2013.

Since its founding in October 2003, Jonathan has curated The Fence, a network of dramatic writers and cultural operators across Europe and beyond - to explore issues of mobility and diversity. The Fence now has 180 network participants from 40 countries and has met 17 times. He also co-curated the Janus project (developed out of The Fence) which translated 16 new plays from across Europe and presented them as staged readings at Festivals in Tampere, Finland; Graz, Austria and Leeds.

Between 1994-2009 he was Director of writernet, a UK based organisation which aimed to give dramatic writers the tools they need to build better careers and change the culture in which they work. He created regional, national and international networks, delivered a wide range of targeted playwright development programmes, co-produced new plays, wrote and published a range of guides, reports and articles on many aspects of the broader theatre writing ecology.

He trained as a theatre director at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. He is also an Artistic Associate at Az Theatre, a Trustee of Ambitious about Autism and a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts. He is currently developing a new performance piece – *Two Schmucks, Three Opinions* with Steve Tiller.

**Jonathan Petherbridge**

Creative Director of London Bubble Theatre Company. Has been making different sorts of theatre for three decades - some orthodox stuff - shows developed from the work of a writer (Shakespeare, Brecht, Brenton), some inspired by places (parks, cliff tops, vaults), some driven by social purposes (young people, intergenerational projects, theatre for early years). An early practitioner of Promenade he has worked with London Bubble since 1990 to develop a model of an open theatre company that generates great theatre with, and for local people. He is a member of the board of the Independent Theatre Council and an advisor on the Imagining Autism project at Kent University.
Michael Raab

Dr. Michael Raab is a freelance translator and lecturer and lives in Frankfurt/Main. He worked as dramaturg at the State Theatre Stuttgart and the Munich Kammerspiele and as head of dramaturgy at the State Theatre Mainz and the Schauspiel Leipzig. His main field of work is new British and Irish drama on which he has published numerous articles and essays. He taught at the Otto-Falckenberg-School, the Bavarian Theatre Academy and the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, the Mozarteum Salzburg, the Hessian Theatre Academy Frankfurt as well as at the universities of Konstanz, Leipzig, Mainz and Heidelberg. In 2009 he received the journalism prize of the Anglistentag. In 2011 he was translator-in-residence at the University of Tubingen.

Dan Rebellato

Dan Rebellato is Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Royal Holloway, University of London. His books include Decades of British Playwriting: 2000 (2013), The Suspect Culture Book (2013), Contemporary European Theatre Directors (2010), Theatre & Globalization (2009), and 1956 and All That (1999). His plays for stage and radio have been widely performed.

Andy Smith

Andy Smith has been making theatre under the name a smith since 2003. His most recent solo works are all that is solid melts into air and commonwealth. Along with Karl James he is the co-director of An Oak Tree, ENGLAND, and The Author by Tim Crouch. Andy and Tim have recently been commissioned to write and perform what happens to the hope at the end of the evening for the Almeida Theatre. He is currently undertaking an AHRC funded practice-as-research PhD at Lancaster University, where he has also taught courses in contemporary theatre practice and performance composition.

Jenny Stephens

Jenny Stephens is the Artistic Director of Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. She has been directing theatre for many years - including eight years as Artistic Director of Worcester Swan Theatre. Her productions have toured nationally and internationally (to Ireland, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Russia Canada and Norway) and she has a particular interest in new writing. Jenny has produced many plays for BBC Radio 4 (and is a guest director of The Archers).

As a writer, she has had three drama series broadcast on BBC radio and had two plays produced by Birmingham Rep Theatre. Her play Wounded toured to London and Edinburgh last year. She is a co-founder of Hoopla Theatre company and will direct a new music-theatre piece, Three Witches, in collaboration with the Belgrade Theatre Coventry this autumn.

Simon Stephens

Simon Stephens plays have been translated into over 20 languages and performed in four different continents. He is Artistic Associate at the Lyric Hammersmith.

Liz Tomlin

Dr Liz Tomlin lectures in Drama and Theatre Arts at the University of Birmingham. Her new monograph, Acts and Apparitions: Discourses on the Real in Performance Practice and Theory 1990 – 2010, came out in April, published by Manchester University Press and she is currently editing the third volume of the forthcoming Methuen series on British Theatre Companies. She was associate director of Point Blank Theatre from 1999-2009 and has edited Point Blank (Intellect, 2007), a selection of Point Blank Theatre’s performance texts and critical essays on the company’s work. Previous professional theatre productions she has written and directed have included The Pool Game (2012), Roses &
Morphine (2005), Operation Wonderland (2004) and Nothing to Declare (2002). She is currently an associate editor of international journal Performing Ethos.

**Timberlake Wertenbaker**

Timberlake Wertenbaker's plays include New Anatomies (ICA, London, 1982), Abel's Sister (Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, 1984), The Grace of Mary Traverse (Royal Court), Our Country's Good (Royal Court and Broadway), The Love of the Nightingale (RSC’s Other Place), Three Birds Alighting on a Field (Royal Court), The Break of Day (Out of Joint production, Royal Court and tour, 1995), After Darwin (Hampstead Theatre, 1998), The Ash Girl (Birmingham Rep, 2000), Credible Witness (Royal Court, 2001), Galileo's Daughter (Theatre Royal, Bath, 2004), Arden City (NT Connections, 2008) and The Line (Arcola Theatre, 2009).

She has written the screenplay of The Children, based on the novel by Edith Wharton, and a BBC2 film entitled Do Not Disturb. Translations and adaptations include Marivaux's La Dispute, Jean Anouilh's Leocadia, Maurice Maeterlinck's Pelleas and Melisande for BBC Radio, Ariane Mnouchkine's Mephisto, adapted for the RSC in 1986, Sophocles's The Theban Plays (RSC, 1991), Euripides' Hecuba (ACT, San Francisco, 1995; BBC Radio 3, 2001) and Hippolytus (Riverside Studios, 2009), Eduardo de Filippo's Filumena (Peter Hall Company at the Piccadilly Theatre, 1998), Pirandello's Come tu mi vuoi, Gabriela Preissova's Jenufa (Arcola Theatre, 2008) and Racine's Britannicus (Wilton's Music Hall, 2011).

**Roy Williams**

London born Roy Williams is an award winning playwright. His third play for the Royal Court, Fallout, won the 2003 South Bank Show Arts Council Decibel Award. His second, Clubland, won the 2001 Evening Standard Charles Wintour Award for Most Promising Playwright and Lift Off, also for the Royal Court, was joint winner of the George Devine Award 2000. His other work includes The Gift (Birmingham Rep), Local Boy (Hampstead Theatre) and The No-boys Cricket Club (Theatre Royal Stratford East). Williams was the first recipient of the Alfred Fagan Award and winner of both the John Whiting Award 1997 and the EMMA Award 1999 for Starstruck (Tricycle Theatre).

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**Friday 13th September: 12.00pm-1.30pm**

**Parallel Panel 1: Theatre for Young People**

**Chair:** Trevor Griffiths  
**Room:** Bob Kaley Theatre

Tony Coult
Tony Coult is a PhD student working with the University of Reading Giving Voice to the Nation research group, focussing on the Arts Council of Great Britain and its relationship to Education and Young Peoples Theatre. He is a freelance researcher, playwright, arts journalist and drama worker, specialising in work with and for young mentally ill people, and those with special needs. He has contributed journalism to Canadian Theatre Review, Plays and Players, Times Educational Supplement, and eMagazine, co-edited the Engineers of the Imagination, the Welfare State Handbook with Baz Kershaw and is the author of books on playwrights Edward Bond and Brian Friel. His plays have been performed by inter alia, Theatre Centre, Cockpit Tie, Perspectives Theatre company, and BBC Education and BBC Radio 4.

A Ghost at the Feast

The Arts Council, Education, and the death of Theatre-in Education

In 1984, in the middle of a fiercely contested Miner’s strike, the Arts Council of Great Britain held a three-day conference at Warwick University, Theatre and Education.

Ever since Maynard Keynes declared that the Arts Council of Great Britain was not going to behave like a schoolmaster, there has been a see-sawing range of initiatives that either invoked, or revoked the idea of Education. Education is a remarkably fluid concept that has been reached for in a whole range of Arts Council GB contexts.

In 1964, after a range of pressures, an enquiry was set up that resulted in funding for five young peoples’ theatre companies. At roughly the same time, a whole new, category-busting, initiative was begun at the Belgrade Theatre - the first theatre-in-education (T.i.E.) team. This also created a longer-term difficulty because its instrumental purpose was seen to work within an Education ecology, not the Artistic one the Arts Council saw itself as curating.

In 1975 Roy Shaw became the ACGB Secretary-General. He was passionate about educating audiences about art, not simply to increase audiences but to spread the word about a canon of excellence that he perceived the Arts Council as protector and proselytisor for. As a result, he created an Education Officer post, at first funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, with the brief to liaise across all the artforms and instil in the departments the necessity to put artform education at the heart of policy.

By 1980 he had an Education Unit, one of whose achievements was the 1984 ACGB conference Theatre and Education. By then Luke Rittner was Secretary-General, and William Rees-Mogg chairman, and a Tory government was in power.

The unique artform of Theatre-in-Education that envisioned drama as both a learning tool and an artistic form, was about to lose its grip on funding sources in a paradoxical way, as the idea of education became more and more entrenched in theatre company policies.

The Tory Education policy that instituted a National Curriculum and Local Management of Schools, reinforced by drastic cuts to local authority budgets, eventually caused the slow demise of classic T.i.E.form. Was this perhaps the intention all along, not of Arts Council officers Drama and Education officers, T.i.E.’s great defenders, but of the upper reaches of the organisation with direct connections to the Government of the day?

This paper looks at the 1984 conference achievements and legacy, the context in which it was set up, and the historical hinterland to its establishment. It draws on contemporary interview and Arts Council archive material.

Catherine Love

Catherine Love is currently a part-time MA student on the Theatre and Performance programme at Queen Mary, University of London. Her research interests include notions of authorship in British theatre and understandings of the theatre text’s relationship with live performance. She is also a freelance arts journalist and theatre critic and one of the editors of Exeunt Magazine.
A Culture of Development: 
The Royal Court and the Young Writers' Programme

I propose to investigate the influence of the Young Writers’ Programme on new play development at the Royal Court, with a particular focus on the theatre’s shift in favour of dramaturgical development over the last decade and how this shift might impact upon the notion of authorship in theatre.

Throughout Dominic Cooke’s time as artistic director of the theatre, building from the groundwork laid during Ian Rickson’s tenure, the Young Writers’ Programme has become one of the core structures of new play development at the Royal Court, with many of its alumni going on to have full productions of their plays staged in the theatre. I wish to suggest that it is this movement towards nurturing young and untested writers that has shifted the new writing culture at the Royal Court, producing an increased emphasis on dramaturgy and development.

Using existing surveys of the theatre’s history such as Ruth Little and Emily McLaughlin’s extensive study The Royal Court Theatre Inside Out as a starting point, my research will build upon current scholarship in this area, using material from the Royal Court’s archives and interviews with individuals involved with the Young Writers’ Programme.

Through this research, I hope to demonstrate the increasing influence of the Young Writers’ Programme on programming, development and attitudes at the Royal Court. My paper will also investigate the wider implications of this shift on new play development in the UK, on popular perceptions of new writing, and on understandings of authorship in British theatre.

Mary Oliver

Mary Oliver is Reader in Performance and Head of the Performance Research Centre at the University of Salford. She has been a writer and performance maker since the early 80s creating works with (amongst others) House Performance Company, IOU Theatre, Industrial and Domestic Theatre Contractors, the Claire Russ Dance Ensemble and Barclays award winners Lee and Dawes. Since the late 90s she has worked as a solo performer, writing and performing multimedia works in which she performs with virtual performers. This (she says) is no reflection on her experience of working with real ones.

If you can't think of a better idea - shut up! 
Ensemble approaches to writing contemporary UK theatre 1983 - 2013

Ensemble devising methodologies have dominated contemporary performance making since the 1970s. Companies such as the largely visual IOU Theatre, the heavily stylised Impact and the spectacular Hesitate and Demonstrate all approached the construction of texts through both collaborative writing and visually driven scripts. These collaborative approaches to theatre writing have since been ratified in the work of companies such as Reckless Sleepers, Uninvited Guests and Forced Entertainment with their multi-linear narratives and mix of genres, that have challenged traditional single author methods of constructing the ‘Play’. My own writing practice has been informed by this lineage, having worked with a wide range of contemporary theatre companies since the mid 1980s, (including IOU Theatre), I have experienced first hand, the torture and the revelations of different of experimental writing processes. For the last decade I have returned to a more traditional approach to the construction of the text. Most recently my work has deliberately conflated theatre and screenwriting approaches in the making of performances that combine both stage and screen based performers, and which have relied exclusively on a script led process of development.

This illustrated paper will explore the shifts in writing style in UK contemporary performance from 1983 – 2013. I will draw on personal experience of traversing through this history as both writer and performer but will focus on the range of writing methodologies employed in the making of contemporary performance in the UK, which I propose has a quintessentially English style.

Les Wade
Les Wade is a professor and playwright at the University of Arkansas. His research interest is contemporary American and British theatre, and his publications include essays on David Hare, Mark Ravenhill, and Jez Butterworth. He has been a member of the ASTR working group on new British Theatre. While a professor at Louisiana State University he led the LSU in London summer study program (from 1993-2010). He is also the author of Sam Shepard and the American Theatre. His play Raw Vision was workshopped in the fall of 2012 by London’s Art Saves Lives and given a staged-reading at 93 Feet East.

**New Models for New Theatre: London’s At-Risk Youth in Play**

The production of new work in the London theatre may find an unlikely inspiration—in matters of funding, acquisition of space, media promotion, etc.—in recent theatre enterprises that involve at-risk youth. While these organizations perform a commendable community service, they also demonstrate an admirable ingenuity in matters of production, drawing on unusual alliances and configurations of support.

During a recent sabbatical in London, I encountered two compelling instances of theatre for at-risk youth: Art Saves Lives and the Intermission Youth Theatre. I conducted interviews with the leaders of both groups (and subsequently returned to London for a new-script workshop with Art Saves Lives). The paper I propose will focus on one of these groups, the Intermission Youth Theatre, and its eclectic approach to producing new work.

Founded in 2008, the Intermission Youth Theatre operates out of St. Saviour’s Church in Knightsbridge. Launched by the Reverend Rob Gillon and his wife Janine (both former actors), the group is now led by Dareen Raymond (who came to theatre in prison). The Theatre provides free drama workshops and seeks to provide a safe space for at-risk youth. Embracing techniques of devised theatre, the group has distinguished itself by rendering Shakespeare’s plays in an urban context and street vernacular. The rivals in Verona Road (Romeo and Juliet) come from Hackney and Peckham; the apothecary shop is a tattoo parlor. The group has also adapted Julius Caesar (The Wasted Stabbing) and Othello (The Ring of Envy).

My interest in the Intermission Youth Theatre concerns its blend of attitudes and influences. Though housed in a church and partially supported by the Bishop of London’s Mission Fund, the group is ecumenical in outlook—welcoming those “of all faiths or none.” It also receives monies from private donors and corporations. The group has been chosen as the London home-theatre for the RSC’s Learning Performance Network Project. While Shakespeare is showcased in IYT productions, the text is handled in a non-canonical manner, directed toward an inner-city audience. Members of the theatre have been launched into performance careers, in film, TV, and commercial theatre. A group of West-End performers recently hosted a benefit concert for the group. In sum, the enterprise traverses a range of boundaries and thereby secures its future. In exploring the operations and innovations of the Intermission Youth Theatre, one may identify paths of viability that might benefit other ventures in new theatre (in light of austerity budgets and tired production methods).

**Friday 14th September: 12.00pm-1.30pm**

**Parallel Panel 2: Text/Non-Text Based Theatre**

**Chair: Liz Tomlin**  
**Room: Studio Space 102**

Vicky Angelaki

Vicky Angelaki is Lecturer in Drama at the University of Birmingham. Her research is internationalist in its scope, with a specialism in modern and contemporary British and European theatre, translation, adaptation, spectatorship and citizenship, aesthetics and politics, as well as performance,

**New Writing, New Provocation: A State of Shared Authorship**

In a piece published in 2012 on the Guardian Theatre Blog to coincide with his (then) latest and arguably most controversial play Three Kingdoms, playwright Simon Stephens made the case for the support of emergent writing practices. Discussing how important cultural exchange with Germany has been for his work, Stephens focused on the great significance of its state subsidy: it is a question of the playwright and theatre company feeling that their debt is to the public and that it comes with radically pushing boundaries. In this way, theatre practice continues to vigorously evolve, remaining urgently resonant within the given sociopolitical context and making bold statements about contemporary lives.

The premise is intriguing, especially in the context of two statements made by Dominic Cooke, artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre in 2007-13, the beginning and end of whose tenure gave rise to some creative controversy. From his early, well-known remark on the importance of middle-class audiences to his recent comment on the primacy of the playwright at this year’s Olivier awards, Cooke sets up a challenge. I will argue in my paper that this aims more at uniting audiences and practitioners than setting boundaries in how ‘the text’ – from more conventional to less established meanings – is produced and engaged with.

My paper will therefore proceed from notions of the ‘well-made play’ to the ‘well-watched play’ that tests perception and social involvement. Discussing examples of groundbreaking contemporary dramatists and leading new writing venues, I will argue that the most radical act the theatre has performed in our time has been to reposition the playwright at the heart of the narrative. This has meant rigorously necessitating a reconfiguration not only of what playwriting practice entails, but, more importantly, of how this serves to create a shared ground of authorship between artist and audience, inscribing a new territory for private and public response.

**Steve Waters**

Steve Waters is a playwright whose plays include World Music (Sheffield/Donmar 2003/4), The Contingency Plan (The Bush 2009), Little Platoons (The Bush 2011), Ignorance/Jahiliyyah (Hampstead 2012). He is the author of The Secret Life of Plays (2010) and is a senior lecturer in Creative Writing at UEA. He has also taken part in a number of collaborative projects - Europa (for Birmingham Rep, Dresden Schauspielhaus, Zagreb Youth Theatre and Teatr Polski Bydgoszcz - May-October 2013); Coventrated with Theatre Absolute June 2014; Amphibians with Offstage Theatre, Bridewell 2011 and various projects with Menagerie Theatre most recently Why Can’t We Live Together? (Junction, Cambridge, Colchester Mercury, Soho July 2013; Theatre 503 Oct-Nov 2013). He is also a member of British Theatre Conference and was a co-author of the ‘Writ Large’ report for ACE in 2010.

**Border Crossings - Some heretical thoughts on plays and writing**

This paper will offer an ‘exploded view’ of playwriting seeking to offer some tentative bridge-building between the ‘new play universe’ and the practices it excludes.

- Can playwrights take anything from Hans Thies Lehmann?
- What are the writerly aesthetics of site-specific text? Of Hyper-Naturalism?
- Where are the boundaries between the solo play, the verbatim play and the work of autonomous fiction to be found?
- How profoundly can collaboration be written into a text?
- What can we take from continental practice?
- Do film and theatre have a more common writerly fate than is often acknowledged?
- Is the real enemy the internet and television?
Drawing on my own practice as a writer and teacher this paper will be personal, exploratory and confessional piece with especial reference to my work with Offstage theatre company (‘Amphibians’ 2011), Menagerie Theatre company (‘Out of your knowledge’ 2007-8) and with Birmingham Rep, Dresden StaatsTheater, Zagreb Youth Theatre and Teatr Polski, Bydgoscz (‘Europa’ – 2013)

Cyrielle Garson

Cyrielle Garson is a member of the research group Théâtre(s) Politique(s) in France and belongs to the interdisciplinary research laboratory ICTT ‘Cultural Identity, Texts and Theatricality’ at the University of Avignon, France. She is an English tutor currently working on a PhD entitled “Contemporary British Verbatim Theatre: Aesthetic Responses to Political Crises”. With Hotreview.org (edited by the Hunter College Theater Department in New York City), she has recently published an essay on political theatre at the 66th Avignon Festival and she is currently completing a chapter on verbatim screenplays to appear in Theatre Plays on British Television, a collection of essays to be edited by Amanda Wrigley and John Wyver with Manchester University Press in 2014.

"Recycling Spoken Reality": An Exploration of the Relationship between Verbatim Theatre and New Writing

Verbatim theatre, a type of drama based on actual words spoken by “real people”, has been at the heart of a remarkable and unexpected renaissance of the genre in Great Britain since the mid-nineties. At the present time, verbatim theatre is often denied the status of “new writing” because it disrupts the dominant ideology’s cultural certainties (authorship, process of composition, status of the text).

By alluding to a possible relationship between verbatim theatre and the new writing genre, this paper will suggest that there have been, however, many crossovers and similarities between the two approaches which merit critical re-evaluation. Certainly, the verbatim output of the past two decades, characterised by the absence of any prescribed form and a commitment to aesthetic experimentation, serves as a testimony to the growing permeation of verbatim techniques into new writing.

Opening with a presentation of both these categories in a theoretical outline, the paper will then proceed to a demonstration of how these categories apply in dramatic and theatrical practice, before examining in more detail the changing paradigm within contemporary practice.

The study ends by arguing that the increased funding following the Boyden Report led to both a reconsideration and broadening of the definition of what new writing could possibly mean1 in our fast-moving era of globalisation.


Jacqueline Bolton

Jacqueline Bolton is Lecturer in Drama and Theatre at the University of Lincoln. Her research interests include dramaturgy, new writing and alternative British theatre. She has written for the journal Studies in Theatre and Performance, is the editor of the Methuen Drama Student Edition of Pornography by Simon Stephens, and author of ‘Joint Stock’ in British Theatre Companies: From Fringe to Mainstream Volume II, eds. John Bull and Graham Saunders (Methuen Drama, 2014).

"the collectively spent and used up lifetime in the collectively breathed air of that space"
During the course of the 1990s, dramaturgical practice in England became identified with the writer-centred development of new plays by new or emerging playwrights. Looking beyond the structures of mainstream producing models, however, the ongoing evolution of artists and companies engaged in physical theatre, live art and intermedial performance has contemporaneously produced a need for ‘creative specialists who keep track of the complicated flow of ideas, technologies and forms associated with such work’.¹ Whilst the majority of producing theatres, companies and development agencies in England regard the dramaturg as a playwright’s mentor, working almost exclusively on the pre-rehearsal development of a play-text, an increasing number of devising ensembles and artists are inviting dramaturgs into the rehearsal room as co-creators of a performance text ‘“written” not before but as a consequence of the process’.²

The existence of these ‘dual dramaturgical tracks’, drawn up in response to sets of institutional and aesthetic assumptions regarding the distinctiveness (and, often, implied superiority) of these two areas of performance practice, evidences a contemporary schism manifest within both professional and academic discourses; a schism known in shorthand as ‘text-based theatre’ versus ‘non-text-based performance’. Proceeding from an assessment of Writ Large: New Writing on the English Stage 2003-2009 (2009), a report produced by the British Theatre Consortium on behalf of the Arts Council, this paper will address the emergence of an ‘oppositional’, even hostile, relationship between ‘the mainstream, the literary theatre’ and the ‘live art/performance scene’.³ In discerning and questioning what is at stake in the text-based/non-text-based divide, the influence of the academy upon contemporary discourses of theatre and performance will be evaluated alongside a comparison with the production processes of German-language theatre, where such a schism between writer-led and devising processes does not obtain.

This paper will suggest that what is signalled by the distinction ‘text-based/non-text-based’ theatre is not the simple presence/absence of a pre-existing script but instead the perceived deployment, interrogation, or erasure of a dramatic teleology constructed through adeptly crafted dialogue and authenticated by an individual writing-subject – the “person” of the Author.⁴ It will argue that more inclusive notions of the status and function of ‘text’, as well as more nuanced approaches to ‘authorship’, might help erase specious distinctions between allegedly text-based and non-text-based processes, advancing in their place a holistic approach to theatre-making which invigorates new theatre writing and performance.

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2 Turner and Behrndt, Dramaturgy and Performance, p. 170. Original emphasis.
3 Tim Etchells, ‘Etchells’ in Programme Notes, pp. 18-35 (p.32).
literature, theatre history, language and theatre, cultural policy, and Scottish culture and is General Editor of the landmark *Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature* (EUP: 2007) and joint series editor for the *International (formerly Edinburgh) Companions to Scottish Literature*. In that series he co-edited with Alan Riach the volume on *Twentieth-Century Scottish Literature* (2009) and edited that on *Scottish Drama* (2011). He is joint editor of the *International Journal of Scottish Theatre and Screen*. His edited collections include *From Tartan to Tartanry, Scottish Culture, History and Myth* (EUP 2010) and *Literary Tourism, the Trossachs and Walter Scott* (Scottish Literature International: 2012). His monograph *Scottish Theatre: Diversity, Language and Identity* is to be published by Rodopi this year. He is Visiting Professor to the Scottish Literature Department at Glasgow University and to the Centre for the Study of Media and Culture in Small Nations at the University of Glamorgan.

**New writing and new political identities in Scotland since 1945**

In 1999, following the 1997 referendum, the Scottish Parliament was re-established. At a seminar for artists held at the Festival Theatre, Edinburgh, during that year’s Edinburgh Festival Sam Galbraith, Minister for Culture in the new Scottish government, said that the parliament would not have been achieved without the impact of artists. This paper will consider, with particular regard to new playwriting in Scotland since 1945, what Galbraith might have meant by such a remark. It will consider the role of the languages of Scotland in new writing and of new play initiatives set up by theatre artists, including the contribution of playwrights in establishing several Scottish reps such as the Byre Theatre (A B Paterson), the Citizens Theatre (James Bridie) and the Gateway Theatre (Robert Kemp). It will also address the changing role of the Traverse Theatre in new writing since its foundation fifty years ago and the impact of the Scottish Society of Playwrights since its foundation forty years ago.

**Claire Cochrane**


**Risk and New Writing: The Case of Birmingham Rep**

Any new play represents some sort of risk even if the provenance is a comparatively successful metropolitan theatre and the writer well-known. That said, however, the concentration of creative resources to be found in London: an abundance of venues, influential networks of talent with access to at least some enabling finance, and perhaps most crucially, receptive audiences hungry for innovation, makes the risk worth taking and is responsible for the fact that the capital city remains the UK’s principal centre for new play production. In the regional context the risks can seem insuperable when what may be just one building-based producing management has to reconcile the unpredictable tastes and interests of a widely divergent target audience while attempting to achieve artistic innovation which has some kind of local distinctiveness. My paper will focus on Birmingham Rep which over the past two decades has become one of the most important regional centres for the nurturing, production and showcasing of new plays despite a record of economic turbulence. In September, with Roxana Silbert as the new artistic director, the Rep will reopen its newly extended and reconfigured building to embark on what is potentially the most high-risk phase of its entire history. I will examine the effectiveness of previous new play development strategies and reflect on what new policies and indeed new relationships have to be forged in order to retain and enhance that capacity for innovation.

**Catriona Fallow**
Catriona Fallow is a second year AHRC-funded PhD student in the Department of Drama at Queen Mary, University of London. Her thesis considers the role of New Writing at the Royal Shakespeare Company and Shakespeare’s Globe. In particular, she explores how contemporary literary and theatrical production(s) within specific arts institutions co-exists with the historical and cultural heritage invoked by those institutions.

**Writing Residence at the RSC and Shakespeare's Globe**

To designate something as ‘new’ is to place it in a complex relationship between past and present: it is at once current but also contingent on the existence of something that has gone before. The discourses that surround new writing are redolent of this tension between past and present modes of theatre writing.

Two institutions that have been committed to staging the work of iconic writers of the past but also to contributing to the canon of new writing in the present are the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and Shakespeare’s Globe. However, to date there has been no sustained critical enquiry into what the practice of staging new writing in an institution explicitly aligned with Shakespeare might mean for British theatre. These institutions, while significantly different in terms of subsidy and material conditions, present an opportunity to unpick new writing’s relationship to the theatrical past as well a chance to explore the claims made about this tacit link between two strands of British theatre.

This paper considers the role of the writer in residence at the RSC and Shakespeare’s Globe and by extension the literary practices that operate within these institutions. It reflects on the possibilities and complications of ‘residing’ in, and writing for, an institution that is aligned with a cultural figure that continues to influence public and critical discourses that surround the ‘new’. As critics negotiate dialogues across the decades of contemporary theatre writing, what might we learn from placing these endeavours in dialogue with the past?

**Jane Woddis**

Dr Jane Woddis is an independent cultural researcher, based in Birmingham. She has worked professionally for many years in community-based and educational arts organisations, including at a senior management level. She gained her PhD in the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies at the University of Warwick, has lectured and tutored in the Centre and the School of Theatre Studies, and is now an Associate Fellow in the Centre for Cultural Policy Studies. She is currently undertaking research and project management for: an AHRC-funded British Theatre Consortium project on Cultural Value, a Research Council of Norway project - The relational politics of aesthetics: Negotiating relations between art and society through cultural policy [http://estetikkpolitikk.wordpress.com/](http://estetikkpolitikk.wordpress.com/), and the Warwick Creative Exchange.

**Influencing New Writing Policy: Networks of Policy and Practice**

Since 1973, playwrights in Britain have set up their own associations to promote and develop new writing in the theatre, and to improve and protect the terms and conditions of their work. Operating at local, regional and national levels, these organisations have sought to influence policies of both public funding bodies and theatres, through the formal mechanisms of policy reviews and consultations and by initiating a wide variety of their own activities.

This paper will consider the range of policy issues with which playwrights’ groups have concerned themselves, and in particular will examine the ways in which they have established extensive relationships, collaborations and forums in the process of undertaking these policy activities. The paper makes the argument that these complex connections cross the boundaries of policy-making and artistic practice, creating shared interests and understandings which can have a significant bearing on playwrights’ attempts to influence new writing policy. Specifically, it proposes that there is a close
link between the existence of active, collaborative networks and the capacity of practitioners to make an input into policy development and implementation.

In developing these points, the paper will also explore concepts associated with informal groupings, networks and complexity, in order to deepen understanding of the policy-making process and the role of practitioners within it. The paper is based on original in-depth case-study research into playwrights’ organisations and new writing policy, which draws on interviews by the author with practitioners and funders; participant-observation of policy consultations, seminars and conferences; and primary archive material.

Saturday 14th September: 12.00pm-1.30pm
Parallel Panel 1: Authors and Authorship
Chair: Graham Saunders
Venue: Bob Kaley Theatre

Gary Cassidy

Gary Cassidy – Equity name Cas Harkins – trained as an actor at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama graduating with a Diploma in Dramatic Art, and was the recipient of The Simon Crowther Memorial Award. He has thirteen years of acting experience, covering all the performance genres: in particular he worked with two of the principal ‘in-yr-face’ dramatists; Sarah Kane and Anthony Neilson. In 2001-12, Gary graduated with a First Class Honours degree in English Studies and a MLitt in Literature, Culture and Place from Strathclyde University. He is a recipient of an AHRC funded scholarship at the University of Reading. His PhD is entitled ‘From Theory to Practice: An Analysis of In-Yer-Face Theatre’. His thesis will focus on the largely overlooked role of the actor in this type of theatre. Gary was one of the organisers of Reading University’s postgraduate conference,
Journeys Across Media, in 2013; and has just presented his first academic paper ‘Psychological Liminality in Anthony Neilson’s The Wonderful World of Dissocia’ at ‘Haggis Hunting’ in Edinburgh.

*The Role of the Actor in Anthony Neilson's 'Process'*

Anthony Neilson is a British dramatist of growing international significance. His authorial/directorial process is highly unorthodox: he begins rehearsals with no script; writes his plays in collaboration with his actors, right up until the opening night, and often beyond. This ‘process’ allows Neilson ‘to tailor a play to an actor’s strengths’ and to ‘discover the play as it unfolds’ (Neilson in Sierz, 2001). But how accurate is Neilson’s assertion?

Neilson’s ‘process’ is common knowledge among theatre academics, but to date none have been in a position to witness it from a first-hand perspective. In this paper I will assess the contribution of the actor in developing/creating a Neilson play through the data I have collated from filming the rehearsals of his new show at the Royal Court, *Narrative*, and interview material from Neilson and the actors involved.

In order to pay critical attention to the largely overlooked experiential knowledge gained from comprehending the creative labour of actors, I will present clips and interview material from the documentary I am currently editing from this footage. This material will facilitate a fuller understanding of the directorial, performance and authorial techniques and strategies employed by Neilson and his actors in manufacturing a new play. The main objective of this paper is to demonstrate how, when a piece of new writing is created collaboratively in the rehearsal room, the actor’s role is to be assessed and the extent to which his/her presence shapes the text.

**Susan Croft**

Dr Susan Croft is a writer, historian, curator and Clive Barker Research Fellow at Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance. She is also Director, of Unfinished Histories, a major initiative recording the history of Alternative Theatre in Britain from the 1960s to 1980s through oral histories and preserving archives: see www.unfinishedhistories.com Founder Director of New Playwrights Trust, leading the organisation from 1986-89. She taught Creative Arts (Performance) at Nottingham Trent University, was then Senior Research Fellow in Performance Arts at Manchester Metropolitan University and from 1997-2005 Senior Curator (Contemporary Performance) at the V&A Theatre Museum working on the National Video Archive of Performance and curating four major exhibitions including *Let Paul Robeson Sing!* and *Architects of Fantasy*. She edited *Black and Asian Performance at the Theatre Museum: a Users’ Guide* along with establishing initiatives to record the history of black and Asian theatre in Britain. Her writings on women playwrights include ...*She Also Wrote Plays: an International Guide to Women Playwrights from the 10th to the 21st Century* (Faber and Faber, 2001), the anthologies *Votes for Women and Other Plays* (2009) and *Classic Plays by Women* (2010) along with the book and exhibition *How the Vote Was Won: Art, Theatre and Women’s Suffrage* (2010). She is curating the exhibition *Re-Staging Revolutions*, opening at Ovalhouse 10th November.

*New Writing in the Alternative Theatre Movement: New Models of Practice and their Discontents*

The alternative theatre movement was a broad church containing within it many models of practice. The questioning of established practice was central to movement and this was true of the role of the text within performance and of the role of the writer within the company and the working process. This paper will explore some of the relationships that emerged looking at both companies which marginalised the writer and the text and others which sought to place writers at the centre of decision-making and examining some of the experiments that were instituted. It will touch on the successful model developed by Joint Stock and the experimental collaborations between playwrights and other practitioners that emerged through such experiments as the Gulbenkian-funded New
Theatre Workshops. It will also draw on accounts of less successful relationships that fed into the commissioning of Richard Pinner’s report ‘Contract in Writing’ in the late 1980s which sought to find formulae to address the tensions that had emerged especially in socialist, feminist, community and TIE over the position of the text and the playwright within the collective working practices that were supposed to underpin both the artistic process and company decision-making processes. It will draw on anecdotal evidence gathered from my own experience running New Playwrights Trust in the late 1980s, in the wake of the alternative theatre movement along with written accounts and testimony gathered more recently by the project Unfinished Histories.

Sara Freeman

Sara Freeman is Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Puget Sound and has taught at the University of Oregon, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Columbia College in Chicago. She writes about alternative British theatre and contemporary playwrights, and maintains an active creative practice as a director and dramaturg. She co-edited International Dramaturgy: Translation and Transformations in the Theatre of Timberlake Wertenbaker (Peter Lang, 2008) and Public Theatres and Theatre Publics (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012) and published chapters and articles in Decades of Modern British Playwriting: The 1980s, Readings in Performance and Ecology, Querying Difference in Theatre History. She is contributing chapters to the forthcoming collections Conspicuous Work: Theatre, Performance, and History in Process; Staging the Maternal; and The British Theatre Company: From Fringe to Mainstream. Her articles appear in New Theatre Quarterly, Modern Drama, Comparative Drama, and she won ASTR's Gerald Kahan in 2007 for an article on Joint Stock Theatre Company in Theatre Survey.

Annie Smart’s Scenography for New Writing

Trained at London’s Art Educational Trust and Manchester University, Annie Smart’s career encompasses both set and costume design and she’s worked with established, institutional companies (the National Theatre, the Berkeley Rep) and alternative, political, and community groups (Red Ladder, Soho Poly, Hampstead Theatre, Joint Stock). Design for new plays dominates Smart’s UK and US credits to such a degree that her experience working on premieres and collaborating with living playwrights comes to define her aesthetic project. This paper explores the role of a scenographer in relation to new writing via close analysis of Smart’s contributions to the premieres of Caryl Churchill’s play *Fen* (1982) and Sarah Ruhl’s *In the Next Room, or, the Vibrator Play* (2009). Through these two examples, the paper interrogates the nature of collaboration on a new play and the role of the visual in realizing the worlds created by new writing.

Smart’s grounding in British alternative theatre practice and its Arts Council supported new writing scene during the 1970s and 1980s emerges as foundational to her methods and expectations staging new writing in US regional repertory houses after relocating to California in the mid 1990s. Consequently, the paper argues that Smart’s artistic process and design choices meld a text-honoring dramaturgical approach to collaborating with writers and directors and aesthetic strategies influenced by non-text based performance experiments. Annie Smart’s scenography belongs in the history of new writing and is both shaped by and constituent of the practices and discourses of new writing as developed since 1945.
Saturday 14th September: 12.00pm-1.30pm
Parallel Panel 2: Dramaturgy and Playwriting
Chair: Jacqueline Bolton
Room: Studio Space 102

David Lane and Hannah Silva

David Lane is a playwright, dramaturg and Associate Artist at the egg. He has worked with Soho Theatre, Bristol Old Vic, the Ustinov, Beaford Arts in North Devon and the Writers' Forum @ Tobacco Factory Theatre developing writers and their work. His own plays have been seen at Theatre 503, Salisbury Playhouse, The Drum in Plymouth, Half Moon Young People’s Theatre and on rural and UK tours. He is the author of Contemporary British Drama (2010), has taught for seven years on the MA Writing for Performance at Goldsmiths College and is currently under commission from Chichester Festival Theatre and Theatre Royal Bath.

Hannah Silva has shown her work internationally including at the Tokyo Design Centre, Krikri International Festival of Polyphony in Belgium and Poetry Hearings in Berlin. She has performed her poetry throughout the UK at festivals including Latitude, the Edinburgh Fringe, Ledbury Festival and Stanza. Her solo show Opposition toured nationally 2011-12 and was described by What’s on Stage as ‘radical, political, courageous’. Hannah has written for Radio 3 and regularly appears on The Verb. Recent works include a solo sound based performance Total Man, commissioned for the Electronic Voice Phenomena tour and Orchid, a play for young people commissioned by the Lady Eleanor Holles
The Disappearance of Sadie Jones was written and directed by Hannah Silva, and funded through the Jerwood Charitable Foundation and the Arts Council England. As the lead producer on the project Silva was able to choose her creative team and to design the project from development through to production and tour. The process was entirely driven by Silva and non-affiliated to any new writing theatres or organisations. This makes it truly ‘writer driven’. One of her key collaborators was dramaturg David Lane. In this paper Lane and Silva will share their process of working together on the work and will explore what they mean by the term ‘progressive dramaturgy’. They will discuss the differences between working as a ‘desk dramaturg’ and a ‘floor dramaturg’, and how the whole creative team were involved in making visible the dramaturgy of the play. Key topics include the importance of approaching a play on its own terms; developing a vocabulary with which to talk about non plot/character-driven work; the tools which an audience takes into a theatre; learning to speak the language of a play; the dramaturg as facilitator of dramaturgical thinking; expressive structure. Hannah Silva will present the paper alongside video footage of David Lane (who is in China at the time). Lane talks about making plays that look like Picasso paintings rather than photographs; through its compositional and audio visual elements, the form of this presentation will reflect the intentions and content of the work discussed.

Jonathan Lloyd

Jonathan Lloyd is a PhD researcher at the University of Birmingham. The main field of his research is contemporary playwriting techniques, in particular, those which create a visual and experiential environment for an audience. His practice as a freelance playwright in the Birmingham and West Midlands area is influenced by his research and vice versa. He runs his own theatre company, Red Trouser, and is Associate Playwright for FRED Theatre, for which his play, The Lasting Sense of Sudden, and a forthcoming adaptation of The Diary of a Nobody, are his most recent commissions.

In new writing, can the playwright write the 'experiential' or is this a term which will always be grounded in 'performance' and the 'postdramatic'?

This paper will examine whether the written play can achieve the elements of experiential performance.

The word ‘experiential’ is most commonly associated with performance art and immersive, site-specific theatre which forms the basis of Lehmann’s ‘postdramatic’ definition, where the authoritative hand of the author is not as valued and the visual is prominent and often radical. Drama, which is more associated with the authored play, is not seen to be a medium which concerns itself with the visual or experimental, these being seen mainly as post-script concerns for the director. As a result, it has become common for audiences and dramatic theorists to separate the written play from that of ‘performance’. Devised, physical performance is becoming increasingly popular within the theatre industry, possibly because audiences feel that the more open process provides results which are more contemporary, entertaining and relevant to modern politics and culture and are created by an ensemble of minds and opinions instead of one ‘subjective’ author. Due to this division, many assume that it is impossible for a written play to achieve these aspects; its scope for experimentation being restrained by words.

The question, therefore, is whether the ‘experiential’ with its more radical connotations can be achieved within a more traditionally written play. This will be explored with reference to my own experience as a playwright and PhD researcher and also to work by playwrights such as Crouch, Kane and Crimp, which has been labelled experiential in the past. The paper will conclude as to whether, in my mind, it is the postdramatic or dramatic definition which needs expanding to encapsulate a theatre which includes the writing of the experiential.
Duška Radosavljevic

Duška Radosavljevic is Lecturer in Drama and Theatre Studies at the University of Kent. She has previously worked as the Dramaturg at the Northern Stage ensemble, education practitioner at the RSC, and theatre reviewer for The Stage. She is the editor of The Contemporary Ensemble: Interviews with Theatre-Makers (Routledge, 2013) and Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

The Ensemble Way of Working and Playwriting

Drawing on Chapter 3 of my monograph Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the Twenty-First Century (Palgrave, 2013), this paper focuses on the impact of the ensemble way of working on the changing status of playtext in contemporary theatre.

My research into the contemporary ensemble has shown that the academically and politically defined distinctions between new writing, devising and live art/performance are most definitely dissolved in those contexts where collaborative modes of theatre-making prevail. Historically, the work of Max Stafford-Clark (specifically with Joint Stock) can be seen to have been influential in this respect. However, my empirical research has also drawn on Chris Thorpe and Alex Kelly’s working relationship as well as the work of the American playwright Adriano Shaplin (Riot Group, RSC). The latter provides a useful analogy between playwriting and music-making, which I have taken further in conjunction with David Roesner’s concept of ‘musicality’ (2010) in order to consider ways in which the 21st century notion of playwriting might be leaving notions of literariness behind in the interest of theatricality. This trend, as well as the aforementioned emphasis on collaboration is also here analysed with reference to Simon Stephens’ work and particularly his play Three Kingdoms.

Saturday 14th September: 12.00pm-1.30pm
Parallel Panel 3: Arts Council and New Writing
Chair: Kate Dorney
Room: Cinema

Sophie Bush

Sophie Bush is a Lecturer in Performance at Sheffield Hallam University and has previously taught at the Universities of Sheffield, Huddersfield and Manchester Metropolitan. Her research and teaching interests lie in the history and practice of contemporary British Theatre. Her doctorate, on the work of Timberlake Wertenbaker, was awarded by the University of Sheffield in 2011, and in September 2013, her first book The Theatre of Timberlake Wertenbaker will be published by Methuen Drama. She maintains an involvement with practical theatre-making, as director and devisor.

Caring for their craft: Support for plays and/or playwrights in the 1980s and 1990s

Using the career of Timberlake Wertenbaker as its principal case study, this paper considers how we might distinguish between support for ‘new writing’ and support of ‘new writers’. It examines the role some of the Arts Council’s funding priorities of the 1980s and 1990s have played in this debate. In particular, it considers the Arts Council Theatre Writing Committee’s 1993 response to hefty cuts in its budget, which protected commissioning grants and bursaries by taking the ‘extremely unfortunate’ decision to suspend three key schemes: those funding ‘Second Productions’, ‘Writers’ Workshops’ and...
'Playwrights Organisations'\textsuperscript{5} This paper reads this decision as an implicit prioritisation of the funding of 'new writing' over that of 'new writers', and considers some of the potential implications of that policy.

**Trevor Griffiths**

Trevor R Griffiths is currently a Visiting Honorary Professor in Humanities at the University of Exeter. He is co-ordinating Editor of *Theatre Notebook*, the refereed journal of the Society for Theatre Research, for whom he also chairs the New Scholars Prize Committee. He was formerly Professor of Theatre Studies at London Metropolitan University. In the 1980s he worked with the Foco Novo Theatre Company as a dramaturg, board member and ultimately Chair of the Board. He has published on aspects of Early Modern Theatre, particularly books on *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Tempest*, on twentieth-century British theatre, British and Irish Women Dramatists Since 1958 and *The Theatre Guide* and on theatre practice, *Stagecraft*. He is a series editor of the Nick Hern Drama Classics series, for which he has edited or introduced ten plays. He is currently developing a long-term digital project on Shakespeare with Bloomsbury Publishing.

**Feeding the Dumb Waiter:**

*Aspects of the Funding Regime in the Eighties*

This paper will explore some of the nuances of trying to survive in the funding climate of the 1980s for a touring theatre company supported by the Art Council. It will draw on both the author’s personal experience as board member and latterly chair of the Foco Novo Theatre Company and on his research in the Arts Council files.

It will examine some of the challenges of maintaining a healthy relationship with the funding body in the face of changing government policies, the arms-length principle, and changing personnel at both the Art Council and in the companies. The paper will draw on the experiences of other companies as well as Foco Novo, including Joint Stock, Pirate Jenny, Pip Simmons, ATC, Paine’s Plough and Gay Sweatshop I will argue that one of the keys issues in the eighties was the mismatch between a model of support based on notions of laissez-fair growth and a reality characterized by increased pressure on available funds and a demand for more accountability. This will involve considering questions of financial accountability, the role of company managers, the role of Arts Council officers, relationships between the Council and the companies, career structures within the Arts Council, careers with the companies, definitions of scale, sponsorship, and the problems of biting the hand that feeds you.

**Joe Mcloughlin**

Joe Mcloughlin is a second year research student in the Drama Department at Royal Holloway, University of London. His developing thesis looks at the work of Arts Council England since the late 1990s, roughly opening with the election of New Labour in 1997, through to today. He is interested in exploring how key-and long standing- Council goals were defined in this period and the effect that these understandings may have had on policy. Consequently, his work up to now has asked questions about what is meant by terms such as excellence, access and, even, art from the perspective of the Council. As part of this investigation into significant terms, he is also intrigued by how the Arts Council understands and documents itself. This has led to the development of a variety of historiographical work, some of which has contributed to the paper he will be giving at this conference, that focuses on reading the writing of the Arts Council and attempting to provide possible (and provocative) interpretations of these texts.

**Reading the Writing of Arts Council England**

Arts Council England is ‘the national body for the arts’. It has offered subsidy and expertise to practitioners in various artforms, including theatre and new writing, for almost seven decades. Given

\textsuperscript{5} Charles Hart, minutes of Theatre Writing Committee Policy Meeting, dated January 18 1993. BLMC, TWA, Add 79210.
this prominence, it is not surprising that the history of the organisation has been written by many individuals from across disciplinary boundaries.

Despite all of these detailed and, often, competing historical narratives there has never been a thorough historiographical analysis of the writings of the Arts Council. There has been no examination of how these various histories relate to each other and what each reveals about the epistemological, methodological and ideological positions of the authors and their understanding of a national cultural narrative.

With this in mind, this paper will apply some of the theories outlined in Jenkins’ Re-Thinking History and develop a much needed historiographical analysis. It will clarify the distinction between Arts Council past and Arts Council history, the role and utility of bias in writing this history and reveal some of the power structures operating behind this chronicling process.

In doing so, this paper will provide a new perspective on the writings of a body that has been a key player in the development of new writing. The benefit of this is that it will foster a better understanding of Britain’s cultural past and, at the same time, allows us to look with a new, critical lens at the writing of its present and future.

Taryn Storey

Taryn Storey is a third year doctoral student at University of Reading. Her PhD thesis examines the relationship between practice and policy in the development of new writing in post-war British theatre. The research is part of the AHRC funded project Giving Voice to the Nation: The Arts Council of Great Britain and the Development of Theatre and Performance in Britain 1945-1995, a collaboration between the University of Reading and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Last year the second chapter of her thesis was published as an article: Devine Intervention: Collaboration and Conspiracy in the History of the Royal Court, New Theatre Quarterly, 28:4 (November 2012).

Taryn has previously worked at the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Theatre Museum, London, and Pegasus Theatre, Oxford. She has taught at Oxford Brookes University, University of Bedford and Oxford University Department of Education. She has a special interest in developing new writing with young people and currently runs the Writing and Performance group at Pegasus Theatre with young writers aged 11 to 25.

U Turn if You Want To, The Panel’s Not for Turning: the Arts Council and New Writing in the 1980s.

A buff folder in the Arts Council archive contains a script dated 19th November 1981. It contains the following dialogue:

ME: I am looking at next year as a package deal…
JBw: I am looking at next year as a disaster.
JS: An exploding package.
ME: This is a suggested way of carving up the money and then a suggested administrative back up… I apologise for the sea of paper
JBw: We asked for this so we can’t complain.

This script is not a new play awaiting assessment by the readers’ panel of the New Writing Subcommittee, but the transcript of minutes of the sub-committee meeting recorded verbatim by a playwright member of the committee. It wasn’t just the following year that was to be a disaster for new writing, however, but the whole decade. The 1980s saw a marked decline in new writing to just 7% of the drama repertoire, a 30% drop in new writing commissions, cuts in funding to London’s new writing theatres and two attempts to close the Royal Court.

In early 1985 seven members of the Arts Council’s Drama Panel resigned in protest over the cuts to London’s new writing theatres accusing the Arts Council of ‘betraying the arts and lending itself to
party politics’. Forty-two Artistic Directors passed a unanimous vote of no confidence in the Arts Council claiming they were ‘no longer representing the needs of the theatre as a whole’ and Philip Hedley appeared on Channel Four News stating that:

The whole fabric of new playwriting in London and therefore in English Drama in general, is threatened.

This paper interrogates Arts Council policy for new writing in the early 1980s and examines the increasingly acrimonious relationship between the Drama Panel and the ruling Council – were key members of the Council using policy to censor the work of left-wing playwrights?