

## **Race, Gender and Disability in Puppetry and Material Performance**

We are seeking papers from practitioners and scholars for an anthology that explores and analyses presentations of race, gender and disability in puppetry and material performance. This book, in contract with Routledge with the prospect of publication in 2022, will be intersectional in scope and investigate primary themes through the performance of: bodies including and not limited to human actor(s), puppets, objects, effigies and avatars; puppet/object intersections with socially constructed and/or embodied manifestations of identity; contexts which speak to representations of societal anxieties about the other and bodies excluded from normative social spaces. We are particularly interested in works that attend to the complexities of thought about these issues and anticipate that contribution will employ diverse writing styles and strategies to do so.

The book will include three sections, each of which cuts across the categories of race, gender and disability:

1. Negotiating identities
2. Performances of the Other
3. Reframing puppetry

Each section will include critical and practice based articles with the aim that these articles from diverse sources will speak to each other on a given topic/theme.

Puppetry, as a popular art form that is often deeply culturally embedded, constitutes a productive site to interrogate and reveal mechanisms of social, cultural and political structures. With the urgency of the BLM movement, gender politics, disability rights, and issues of cultural, national and postcolonial identity in an increasingly globalised and migratory world, an in-depth exploration of puppetry's deep and complex relationship to identity construction and subversion will offer a unique and valuable contribution to theatre studies and other fields engaged in these issues. This anthology seeks to engage with international scholarship that is grounded in praxis and informed by theory to interrogate race, gender and disability as revealed in puppetry and material performance. This book aims to explore questions related to the performance of race and representation, cultural identity, gender politics, questions of gender representation and subversion, disability theory and representation, and the relationship between puppets and puppeteers in light of contemporary race, feminist, gender, disability and sociopolitical theory. This volume represents an opportunity for scholars and practitioners to consider their work within the specific framing of puppetry and race, gender and disability representations and with the full acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of this framing.

**Articles will be between 3,000-7,000 words including notes and bibliography.**

Scholarly and practitioner contributions will be included in each section to allow these voices to be in dialogue with each other rather than siloed. In structuring the sections in this manner, we aim to value diverse points of view and further the interconnectedness of practice and research in theater and performance scholarship

in addition to the interconnectedness of the themes. We are interested in, and are not limited to, works that address the following:

**Negotiating identities** engages with the ways in which puppetry is used to negotiate and re-construct identities, such as

- Puppetry as a means to negotiate postcolonial social formations and identities
- Third space which may follow, for example, Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural approach culture of mind and community as well as more recent approaches such as that of Randall Parker's notion of networked hybrid spaces and the identities that are performed in these spaces via avatars, or other approaches.
- First peoples', Indigenous peoples' practices and traditions.
- Historical and/or historiographical analysis of a particular form or performance that offers new understanding(s) about identity.
- Popular culture, avant garde etc - e.g. analyses of everyday/subversive spaces in comparison to dominant cultural norms and the productive spaces of dialogue these open about identities.
- Puppetry's interactions with stereotypes of othered identities.

**Performances of the Other** will engage with issues of using puppetry to represent the Other through race, gender, disability and other identity markers; themes can include:

- Exoticism: puppetry's engagement with and/or subversion of issues of performative exoticism
- Appropriation/Adaptation: issues of identity markers portrayed and/or performed outside of their cultural contexts/lived experiences, and the unique intersections of puppetry with this
- Abjection: bodies abjected from normative social spaces and/or processes of abjection within/between bodies
- Alterity: puppetry and material performance as a means of expressing or working outside of normative traditions or conventions

**Reframing Puppetry** will engage with methodological approaches to puppetry opened up by framing puppetry through issues of identity, including:

- Deep ecology: connecting ecological approaches to material performance to issues of identity - e.g. feminist ecological approaches to puppetry, with a focus on the agency of puppets vs puppeteers as foregrounding the agency of the material world.
- Material culture and puppetry/material performance in relation to identity - e.g. human meanings ascribed to objects in performance alongside material properties of performing objects/puppets.
- Queering puppetry - puppetry as a space to understand, explore and negotiate sexual identity and trouble binary gender construction.
- Disability embodiment and puppetry - puppetry by disabled artists and/or puppetry's engagements with and enactments of disability embodiments, as well as considerations of the ways in which puppetry and disability performance might productively inform each other.

This book will be published in English. **DEADLINE: Please submit expanded abstracts in English of between 1000 - 1500 words double spaced for consideration on July 1st 2021.**

Abstracts should be sent via email to the editors as either PDFs or Word documents. Authors will be notified of acceptance mid August 2021. Upon acceptance, authors will be notified about the editing and finalization process. Each accepted contribution may include up to two images provided by the author with full usage rights. There is no image license budget for this project, authors are responsible for license fees for images they select. We will be using Harvard style; please visit <https://libraryguides.vu.edu.au/harvard/home> for links to useful guidelines.

Your proposal should present original, unpublished work.

**Proposals should be sent via email to the editors:** Alissa Mello at [alissa.mello@gmail.com](mailto:alissa.mello@gmail.com), Paulette Richards at [paulette.richards3@gmail.com](mailto:paulette.richards3@gmail.com), and Laura Purcell-Gates at [l.purcell-gates@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:l.purcell-gates@bathspa.ac.uk). Please feel free to contact the editors with any questions.