

2000

# Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas International Conference Program, June 15-18, 20003

Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas

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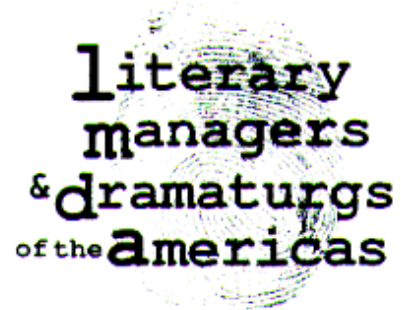
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# International Conference, 2000 Starting At '00: the dramaturg as creator



Thursday, June 15 to Sunday, June 18  
George Mason University  
Fairfax, Virginia

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## Conference Goals

. . . to affirm the function, explore the practice, and promote the profession

We are extremely fortunate to be hosted this year by **Kristin Johnsen-Neshati** and the **Theater Division** of the **Institute of the Arts at George Mason University**, a beautiful campus just west of Washington, DC.

Our conference this year begins with the assumption that dramaturgy is creative and generative, a way of making. We come together to consider the forms this creativity takes and its implications for the field. Conference chairs **Jane Ann Crum** and **Brian Quirt** have invited special guests that provide innovative models of creative dramaturgy: (in order of appearance) **Moisés Kaufman, Paul Lazar, Annie-B Parson,** and **Anne Cattaneo.** **Liz Engelman** has organized eight professional practice forums around the concept of **the dramaturg as creator.** The Advocacy Caucus under the direction of **Shirley Fishman** and **Lynn Thomson** will bring to the conference proposed resolutions that with member input they have created to support and advance the professional lives of dramaturgs and literary managers.

Using resources unique to DC, **Nichole Gantshar** has arranged a special session on copyright issues and **Mark Bly** will co-moderate a panel on the dramaturg as advocate for the arts. We will also continue informally the dialogue that George Thorn began with us last year about who we are as a community of dramaturgs and where we want to go in the coming months in order to improve the environment for the field. Finally, we will welcome a new president, **DD Kugler**, and his executive committee. **Starting in '00** we will begin the work that is before us in the months and years ahead.

Our success depends most of all on what each of us brings to the conference, in particular on what we have learned in the rehearsal hall. Last year, George Thorn reminded us last year that that we learned there prepares us for the work we'll do together here, as we apply what we know about making theater to the making of this organization, this profession.

I hope we will surprise ourselves in the next few days at what we at our best can do together.

Welcome to International Conference, 2000 of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas.

Geoff Proehl  
Outgoing President, Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas

## Conference Schedule

The conference chairs (**Jane Ann Crum** and **Brian Quirt**) created the following plan for the conference with input from many LMDA members including this year's Conference Planning Committee: **Lee Devin**, **Liz Engelman**, **Kristin Johnsen-Neshati**, **Mary Resing**, and **Tricia Roche**.

**Conference Coordinator: Louise Lytle, Univ. of Puget Sound**

**LMDA Administrator: Virginia Coates, Brooklyn College**

**Conference Logistics and Planning: Richard Parker, Columbia Gorge Community College**

**Site Research: Verleah Brown-Kosloske, Joanie Leverone**

**GMU Contacts: Lydia Smith, Housing; Beth Grohnke, Conference Services**

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15

*"A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new."* Albert Einstein

**5pm to 9pm** **Check-In for Early Arrivals**  
**Hanover Center, George Mason Univ.**

**To End the Day: Conference Bar**

### THURSDAY, JUNE 15

*the seven intelligences: language, math and logic, music, spatial reasoning, movement, intrapersonal*  
(howard gardner)

**11am to 12:30pm** **Registration**

After 12:30, report directly to the current session; we will register guests immediately following all sessions. If you cannot locate us, check at the information desk, first floor, Johnson Center.

**Louise Lytle, Conference Coordinator and Virginia Coates, LMDA Administrator**

**West Lounge, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**12:30-5pm** **University Caucus Afternoon**

**12:30pm** **Gather for Coffee**

**West Lounge, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**1-2:15pm:** **Hot Topics**

LMDA members, university and theater-based, report briefly on current projects. The idea is to put your project on the table as a focus for informal conversation throughout the conference.

**Moderator: Lee Devin, Swarthmore College, The People's Light and Theater Company**

**Participants: Gayle Austin, Georgia State; Barbara Bell, Gateway Theatre; Mark Bly, Yale School of Drama; Kristen Gandrow, U. of Iowa; Tom Gibbons, U. of Iowa; Jonathon Hammond, Georgia State; Gretchen Haley, Freelance Dramaturg; Kae Koger, U. of Oklahoma; Aaron Leichter, SUNY, Stony Brook; Claudia Orenstein, Hunter College**

**Meeting Room D, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**2:30-4pm** **Conversation about Digital Dramaturgy**

How can our new technology make real progress in our handling of information and communication among artists? Tom Shafer will talk briefly about some interesting projects at Indiana University and other places. Everyone will be invited then to join in exploring the topic, asking questions, finding out who knows answers, dreaming up projects, etc.

**Moderator: Tom Shafer, Indiana University; Incoming Chair, UCaucus**

**Meeting Room D, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**4:15-5pm** **Ongoing Creative Work by Members**

To conclude the UCaucus afternoon, individuals leading LMDA Projects briefly report on their work in the last year and then we open the floor for discussion and brainstorming: **Mark Bly**, The Production Notebooks Project; **Virginia Coates**, LMDA Office; **Jane Ann Crum**, The Residency Project; **Lee Devin**, Dramaturgy Source Books; **Bronwyn Eisenberg**, Early-Career Dramaturgy Program; **Maxine Kern**, Advocacy Caucus; **Moderator: Lee Devin**

**Meeting Room D, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**6pm** **Pizza Night**  
**Beer and pizza, Bistro, Ground Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**  
**(If you are not on the meal plan but would like to join us we have a few extra meal tickets available on a first come first served basis; cost, \$10; see Louise Lytle)**

**7pm** **Key Note: Moisés Kaufman**  
Writer/Director, Tectonic Theater Project  
*The Laramie Project; Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*

**THE LARAMIE PROJECT**

On November 14, 1998, a month after University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard was murdered, Moisés Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theatre Project company traveled to Laramie to begin a series of face-to-face interviews with the people of the town where the story unfolded. Over the next year, the company traveled six times to Wyoming and conducted over two hundred intensely personal documented interviews. Workshops of the early script were performed in New York and Utah's Sundance Theatre Lab with a world premiere at the Denver Theatre Center. Tectonic's actor-writers play the people they personally interviewed in Laramie following the 1998 crucifixion-style murder of Shepard. Video sequences show "public" responses to the crime, then the cameras are turned off, allowing actors to reveal deeper feelings based on their interviews with doctors, cops, residents, and others. *The Laramie Project* is credited as written and directed by Kaufman and developed with his company of actor-writers.

In 1997, Kaufman and his company created *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, which ran for over 600 performances in New York before being moved to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto, London's West End, and a current production in Paris. *Gross Indecency* has been produced in over 40 cities in the US and in dozens of cities abroad.

**Reception to Follow: Meet Fellow Dramaturgs from Your Region**

**To End the Day: Conference Bar**

**FRIDAY, JUNE 16**  
*seven creativity killers:*  
*surveillance, evaluation, rewards, competition, over-control, restricting choice, pressure*  
(daniel goleman)

**8am** **Breakfast**  
**Food Court (This meal is not part of the meal plan.)**

**9-9:20am** **Conference Preview**  
**Jane Ann Crum, Geoff Proehl, Brian Quirt**  
**Bistro, Ground Floor, George W. Johnson Center**

**9:30-10:45am** **Touching Base: Creating and Renewing Relationships**  
In breakout sessions, LMDA members will ask these two questions: **In the past year, what theater or theater-related project has most challenged and excited you? To what extent was your role on that project that of the dramaturg as creator, generator, initiator . . . ?** We would like all conference attendees to be prepared to speak to these questions in concrete detail for five minutes each. Bring, if appropriate, handouts (six to ten copies), samples (e.g.—programs, study guides), photos, and so forth. If possible, these groups will also meet together for lunch.  
**Coordinator: Brian Quirt, Nightswimming and Factory Theater**  
**Meeting Rooms B, E, F, G; Rooms 116, 237, 243, 244, 246; George W. Johnson Center**

**11-12:30pm** **Round I: Professional Practice Forums**  
**Coordinator: Liz Engelman, A Contemporary Theatre**  
**Meeting Rooms B, E, F, G, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

### **Co-Productions/Co-Creation: How Do Dramaturgs Work Together on the Same Show?**

Usually as dramaturgs we work with playwrights, directors, designers, actors and audience; rarely do we have the chance to work with one another. Co-productions offer up this opportunity. Dramaturgs with co-production experience share stories, secrets and solutions to show how not to reinvent the wheel, but be wheelwrights together.

**Lenora Inez Brown, Crossroads Theatre Co. ; Celise Kalke, Court Theatre**

### **Dramaturg as Generator**

Who says dramaturgs can only ask questions? How about having their own ideas and running with them? How are we as dramaturgs creative participants in theatre-making either within or apart from their institution? Come share thoughts about dramaturg-initiated projects—and the projects themselves.

**Moderator: Harriet Power, Villanova Univ.**

**Gayle Marie Austin, Georgia State; Mark Bly, Yale School of Drama and Yale Rep; Maxine Kern, Regional VP; Brian Quirt, Nightswimming and the Factory Theater**

### **Multi-Authorship: Too Many Cooks?**

Too many cooks don't always spoil the broth . . . an examination into collaborative development of a performance text and of authors-ship.

**Susan Jonas; Kae Koger, Univ. of Oklahoma; Claudia Orenstein Hunter College; Michele Volansky, Steppenwolf/Philadelphia Theater Co.; Paul Walsh, American Conservatory Theater**

### **Desperately Seeking Research**

Dramaturgy isn't only Xeroxing a lot of books. And research needn't be extraneous homework. How to make research live in rehearsal and a creative factor in the process?

**Lue Morgan Douthit, Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Maxine Kern, freelance dramaturg; Kristin Johnsen-Neshati, Theater of the First Amendment; Marie Mendenhall; John Wilson, Cornish School of the Arts**

**12:30pm**

#### **Lunch/Newcomers and Veterans Talk**

Veteran conference participants join newcomers to continue the work of the “Touching Base” session. (This meal is not part of the meal plan.) If you are new to the conference, please meet at the **West Lounge, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center** if you have not yet been matched with a conference veteran for this meal.

**Food Court, George W. Johnson Center**

**2-5pm**

#### **Advocacy Caucus Afternoon**

**Coordinators: Shirley Fishman, Joseph Papp Public Theatre; Lynn Thomson, Brooklyn College Grand Ballroom, SUB II (Coffee break at mid-afternoon.)**

**5:30pm**

#### **Barbecue Night**

**Bistro, Ground Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**6:30pm-8:30pm**

#### **Business Meeting**

Please submit agenda items, resolutions, or motions to the Liz Engelman, LMDA Secretary, by noon Friday. All motions must be in writing. Our major business tonight will be consideration of the Advocacy's proposed resolutions.

Call to Order

Approval of minutes

Reports

Unfinished Business: Proposed Resolutions, Advocacy Caucus.

New Business

Announcements

Adjournment

**Grand Ballroom, SUB II**

**To End the Day: Conference Bar**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 17**

*anatomy of the creative moment: preparation, incubation, daydreaming, illumination*  
(daniel goleman)

**8:30am**

**Travel to Studio Theatre, Washington, DC**

Participants travel by bus, carpool, or public transportation to Studio Theatre, (1333 P St. NW, Washington, DC) where Saturday's morning and early afternoon sessions will be held.

**9:15-9:45am**

**Coffee, Juice, and Bagels with DC Artists**

**Studio Theatre, Washington, DC**

**9:45-11:05**

**DC Breakouts**

**Studio Theatre, Washington, DC**

**Coordinator: Nichole Gantshar**

**On Copyright: Law and Practice**

When in the process of production do you pick up the phone and call a playwright or his/her agent? If the play is 60-years-old do you have to ask permission when cutting a scene? Can you change a gay couple to a straight couple? What about lobby displays? When do we cross the line between educating the public and violating an artist's intellectual property? In this session we will try to answer all these questions. While a lawyer will be available to answer questions, we will also strive to understand these issues beyond the law. This session will be the start of a dialogue on the ethics of adaptation and the other practices.

**Moderator: Nichole Gantshar**

**Special Guest: Carl Settlemeyer of Lusker and Lusker a specialist in copyright law and volunteer with the Washington Area Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts.**

**The Dramaturg as Advocate for the Arts on City, State/Provincial, and National Levels**

What can we as dramaturgs and literary managers do to advocate for theater and the arts at all levels of government and community both in the United States and Canada. Bring your own ideas and experience to this session. Special report from recent meeting between LMDA representatives and the National Endowment. **Special guest: Tom Birch, Legislative Counsel for the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies**

**Co-Moderators: Mark Bly, Yale School of Drama, Yale Rep; Geoff Proehl, Univ. of Puget Sound**

**11:15-1pm**

**Workshop: Annie-B Parson and Paul Lazar, Co-Directors,  
BIG DANCE THEATER**

***BIG DANCE THEATRE***

Founded in 1990, BIG DANCE THEATRE investigates both plays and dance forms, saturating dance with theater and theater with dance. BDT utilizes classic texts coupled with classic movement from many cultures, re-interpreting them to create a new type of theatrical movement that reflects the society it is drawn from, while rigorously utilizing post-modern forms to make it current, edgy and resonant with the particular play or text that it is expressing. Recent work includes *A Simple Heart*, based on the story by Gustave Flaubert, Mac Wellman's playlet, *Girl Gone*, and most recently, *Another Telepathic Thing*, which incorporates Mark Twain's 1916 short story "The Mysterious Stranger" with choreography, songs, and text from actual film and television auditions. BDT's work has been seen at Dance Theater Workshop, The American Dance Festival, Classic Stage Company, The Flea Theatre, The Yard, Cucaracha, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, The Ontological Theatre, and internationally, at the GIFT Festival in Tbilisi, Georgia, and at the EXIT and VIA 98 Festivals in France.

Co-Director Annie-B Parson has choreographed extensively for Off-Broadway theater, regional theater, and for television, movies, and rock videos. She is an instructor of choreography at New York University's Experimental Theater Wing. Co-Director Paul Lazar is an Associate Member of The Wooster Group, performing in *Brace Up!*, *Hairy Ape*, and *Emperor Jones*. He has acted extensively in television and film, including *Silence of the Lambs*, *Married to the Mob*, and *Philadelphia*.

**Cont.:**

**Welcome to the Studio Theatre: Joy Zinoman, Artistic/Managing Dir., Studio Theatre  
Introduction of Annie-B Parson and Paul Lazar of BIG DANCE THEATER: Susan Jonas  
Theater, Studio Theatre**

**1-5pm DC Time: Your Choice**

**Attend** matinee performances at one of DC's theaters: For information on what's playing, contact the League of Washington Theatres, P.O. Box 21645, Washington, DC 20009-1645; 202-638-4270; 202-638-1220 (fax); info@lowt.org; http://www.lowt.org/. The web site includes a season schedule.

**Or lobby** someone in the government;

**Or enjoy** a leisurely lunch with colleagues;

**Or visit** a monument or museum.

**5pm Bus leaves promptly for George Mason from the Studio Theatre**

**8pm Banquet**

Program: Presentation of the Elliott Hayes Award in Dramaturgy with remarks by the selection committee and the reward recipient, followed by brief remarks by outgoing president, Geoff Proehl, and incoming president, DD Kugler.

LMDA thanks Michael Bigelow Dixon for his work organizing the Hayes Award, as well as friends and family members of Elliott whose ongoing support has made this award possible.

**Crossroads Restaurant, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center**

**To End the Day: Conference Bar**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 18**

*"If one advances in the direction of his (or her) dreams, one will meet with success  
unexpected in common hours." Henry David Thoreau*

**8am Regional Breakfasts**

Meet with individuals from your region for continental breakfast.

**West Lounge, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**9-10:30am Round II: Professional Practice Forums**

**Coordinator: Liz Engelman, A Contemporary Theatre**

**Go Directly to Meeting Rooms D-G, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center, George Mason Univ.**

**Entrances and Exits: It's all in the timing**

When you walk into a room at a party, how do you begin your conversation? Likewise, as a dramaturg, how do you enter into the production process? An exploration of the dramaturg's relationship to the overall design of a production. Personal examples, anecdotes, reflections from a dramaturg's eye view are most welcome.

**Moderator: Gwen Orel, Alabama Shakespeare Festival**

**Kristin Johnsen-Neshati, Theater of the First Amendment; Maxine Kern, freelance dramaturg;**

**Michael Kinghorn, Alliance Theatre Co.; John Wilson, Cornish School of the Arts**

**The (New Play) Workshop's the Thing: Getting the Most from New Play Development**

How best to suit the action to the word, the word to action? Workshops are prevalent today, and varied in their structures. A comparison of these differently organized workshop environments to learn how best to suit a play's and playwright's needs.

**Moderator: Brian Quirt, Nightswimming and the Factory Theater**

**Michael Kinghorn, Alliance Theatre Co.; Joseph Megel/Peter Hays, Playwrights' Theatre of New Jersey; Megan Monaghan, Playwrights' Center; Mary Resing, Woolly Mammoth**

**Creating Resources to Expand the Range of Voices in the Theater**

What can we do about the fact that so many of our theaters and theater organizations are less diverse than a walk down a city street or the line of people coming off an airplane at almost any airport? How can we expand the range of voices in our theater in terms of race, gender, class, and sexuality, seeing that expansion not as noble missionary work, but as a source of energy, innovation, and pleasure?

**Co-Moderators: Lenora Inez Brown, Crossroads Theatre Co. ; Gretchen Haley, freelance dramaturg**

**Early Career: Creating and Maintaining Relationships with Writers**

How do Literary Managers both initiate and cultivate their relationships with playwrights? What is the language that we use to speak with these writers? A discussion of the varied approaches to creating effective, productive, and continued relationships within the field.

**Coordinator/Moderator: Bronwyn Eisenberg, freelance dramaturg**

**Lue Morgan Douthit, Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Gavin Witt, Northlight Theatre**

**10:45am-12:00**

**Master Class: Anne Cattaneo on Commissioning New Work**

**Cinema, Ground Floor, George W. Johnson Center**

*ANNE CATTANEO*

Anne Cattaneo is the dramaturg of Lincoln Center Theater in New York and a three-term past president of Literary Managers and Directors of the Americas. As the director of the Playworks Program at the Phoenix Theater in New York during the late 1970s, she commissioned and produced plays by Wendy Wasserstein, Mustapha Matura, and Christopher Durang. For the Acting Company she created the Chekhov short story project *Orchards*, which presented seven stories adapted for the stage by Maria Irene Fornes, Spalding Gray, John Guare, David Mamet, Wendy Wasserstein, Michael Weller, and Samm-Art Williams.

**12:00-12:30pm**

**Conference De-Brief**

**Meeting Room D, Third Floor, George W. Johnson Center**

**Checkout of Campus Housing between 12:30pm and 1:30pm; Hanover Center, George Mason Univ.**

**Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas  
121 Ave. Of Americas, Suite 505, New York, NY 10013  
212-965-0586; fx: 212-966-6940; lmda@lmda.org; www.lmda.org  
for Canadian Memberships**

**Brian Quirt, Chair, Canadian Caucus; Dramaturg, Theatre Centre, 1034 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON, M6J 1H7; (416) 538-0630; bquirt@interlog.com**

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