

2001

## Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas Conference Program, June 7-10, 2001

Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas

Follow this and additional works at: <https://soundideas.pugetsound.edu/lmdaconferences>

---

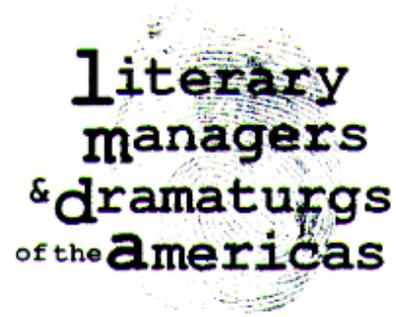
### Recommended Citation

Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas, "Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas Conference Program, June 7-10, 2001" (2001). *LMDA Conferences*. 5.  
<https://soundideas.pugetsound.edu/lmdaconferences/5>

This Program is brought to you for free and open access by the LMDA Archive at Sound Ideas. It has been accepted for inclusion in LMDA Conferences by an authorized administrator of Sound Ideas. For more information, please contact [soundideas@pugetsound.edu](mailto:soundideas@pugetsound.edu).

# Annual Conference, 2001

## Dramaturgy & Community: Building and Maintaining a Healthy Theatre Ecology



Thursday, June 7 to Sunday, June 10  
Denver Public Library  
Denver, Colorado

---

### dramaturgy/community

*Community doesn't mean understanding everything about everybody and resolving all the differences; it means knowing how to work within differences as they change & evolve.* -Lucy Lippard (*the lure of the local*)

At last year's conference in Washington DC, in a small break out session on diversity on stage, a thought circulated that has stuck with me ever since: what would happen if, in future conferences, instead of just discussing representation and relevance in a single breakout, we grounded our conversation around such themes? What would that say about our priorities—as dramaturgs, as organizations, as theatre-artists? How much more complex, more rich, more meaningful might our conversation be able to be?

In building this conference, I have continuously come back to this idea: the work we choose to do relates to the community around us, whether we acknowledge it or not. A theatre's season relates to how, and how much, it interacts with its surrounding population; the kind of relationship a theatre aims to have with its audience (and potential audience) often directly influences the shows it chooses and the performers it brings to the stage. In planning the conference, Kugler spoke about what he understands as a theatre "ecology." In a healthy ecology, there is a certain symbiosis of participants; theatres work in collaboration with each other and their audiences.

As dramaturgs and as literary managers, we must confront these questions in every part of our work. How does our theatre relate to the community around it? How does this affect our programming? What is our relationship with other theatres in our "community?" How is this community defined/limited by geography? How do we encourage a relationship with our community—through education, through outreach, through public relations, through marketing? How can we facilitate a meaningful and ongoing dialogue between the theatre and its community? How does this idea of community work on a micro level even within our theatres—perhaps in our relationships with our peers, our co-workers, our collaborators?

I encourage you to challenge yourselves, to challenge each other, to speak passionately and courageously, and to work dramaturgically in every way possible.

Finally, I encourage you to enjoy yourself, each other, and the community of Denver (we filled your conference folder with information to ensure that you can) – to eat good meals with each other, to drink late into the night, and to leave here exhausted and hungry.

Cheers,  
Gretchen Haley  
Conference Chair

The conference chair, **Gretchen Haley**, created the following plan for the conference with input from many LMDA members including this year's Conference Planning Committee: **Carri Ratazzi (Conference Site Chair)**, **Laura Tesman**, **Lisa Lusero**, **Liz Engelman (VP/Communications)**, and **DD Kugler (LMDA President)**.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 7

**10:00am to 8:00pm**

**Registration (Lower Lobby)**

LMDA Administrator **Virginia Coates** (assisted by the Conference Planning Committee) will greet you at the Registration Table. Registration will remain open throughout the day.

**12:00-5:00pm**

**PRE-CONFERENCE**

**University & Student Caucus Afternoon: Gates (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)**

**12:00-1:00pm**

**Gather for Pizza & Pop: Gates (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)**

**1:00-2:45pm:**

**Hot Topics: Gates (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)**

**Moderators: Tom Shafer**, University Caucus Chair &  
**Jonathan Hammond**, Student Caucus Chair

This session is designed to introduce conference participants and their current projects. Particular emphasis will be given to current projects which attempt to break the fourth-wall between the theatre community, and the larger community of which theatre is a part.

**Participants:** Everyone who shows up.

**2:45-3:15pm**

**Break (Lower Lobby)**

**3:15-5:00pm**

**Environmental Architecture:**

**The Academic and Professional Lives of Dramaturgs  
Gates (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)**

**Moderators: Jonathan Hammond**, Student Caucus Chair &  
**Tom Shafer**, University Caucus Chair

This session examines two environments in which dramaturgs and literary managers perform their art: the professional stage and the academic stage. Ecology, as the relationship between organisms and their environments, and Theatre Ecology, as the relationship between the Theatre (a living organism) and its environments (professional work and academic work), suggest that LMDA begin to ask questions which explore not only the relationship between the organism and its environments, but the relationship between the two environments.

**Participants: Kae Koger** (University of Oklahoma)

**Amy Jensen** (Brigham Young University)

**Genevieve Miller** (Cincinnati Playhouse)  
and others.

**5:00-8:00pm**

**Dinner: Off Site** (*See suggestions in your conference folder*)

**8:00pm**

**Key Note Speaker: Ashara Ekundayo, "Waiting to be Invited"**  
**Conference Room B & C: Lower Lobby**

**Ashara Saran Ekundayo** is the founder and director of the Pan African Arts Society, which coordinates the Denver Pan African Film & Arts Festival; and BluBlak UltraMedia, both based in Denver, Colorado. Ashara blends over 10 years of non-profit management experience with arts activism to organize and execute multi-media, multi-cultural venues aimed at cultivating social change, art appreciation and critical thought. *See blue handout for full bio.*

**9:30pm**

**Conference Bar: Herby's  
Executive Towers (1405 Curtis, @ 16<sup>th</sup>)**

## FRIDAY, JUNE 8

**8:00-9:00am** **LMDA Executive Meeting: Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

**9:00am-6:00pm** **Registration (Lower Lobby)** (*open throughout the day*)

**9:00-9:30am** **Conference Preview: Conference Room B & C (Lower Level)**  
**Gretchen Haley, DD Kugler**

**9:30am-12:00pm** **Touching Base: Creating and Renewing Relationships**  
**Various Rooms & Spaces**

Conference participants will engage in two breakout sessions, separated by a brief break. In the first session, participants will introduce themselves and their work to other members of the group. After the break, participants will discuss suggested questions on community, and prepare to report to the conference as a whole.

**12:00-1:00pm** **Breakout Reports: Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**  
**Moderator: Gretchen Haley**

Breakout groups will report back about their discussions on community. This will, hopefully, lead to a spontaneous discussion by all conference participants.

**1:00-2:30pm** **Lunch: Off- Site** (*See suggestions in your conference folder*)  
**\*\*\* Last chance to purchase a Bag Lunch for Saturday \*\*\***

**2:30-3:45pm** **Business Meeting #1: Executive Reports**  
**Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

Reports on the activity of LMDA by the Executives: DD Kugler (President), Geoff Proehl (Past President), Liz Engelman (VP/Communications), Michele Volansky (VP/Development), Maxine Kern (Treasurer), Virginia Coates (Administrator), Lynn Thomson (VP/Advocacy), Brian Quirt (VP/Canada).

**3:45-4:15pm** **Break (Lower Lobby)**

**4:15-6:00pm** **Panel: Denver Theatre Artists on Local Theatre Ecology**  
**Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

**Moderator: Lisa Lusero**, Performer / Playwright / Teacher, Logan School

In the spirit of community, we have invited a group of artists from a representative spectrum of theatres to talk about the local ecology. In this moderated panel, we will explore how each sees its place in the Denver theatre community, how it has interacted (or not) with the other local theatres, and the entire Denver community. How does each theatre understand its “target” audience, does it intend to move outside its “usual” audience, and if so, how? Finally, what is the current state of the Denver Theatre Ecology? Is it healthy? What role does theatre play in the Denver community?

**Participants: Brett Aune**, Horsechart Theatre  
**Brian Freeland**, LIDA Project  
**Tanya Mote**, El Centro Su Teatro  
**Jeffery Nickelson**, Shadow Theatre  
**Gully Stanford**, Denver Center for the Performing Arts  
**Chip Walton**, Curious Theatre

**6:00-7:30pm** **Dinner: Off-Site** (*See suggestions in your conference folder*)

**7:30-** **Performance Options** (*See suggestions in your conference folder*)

We have suggested a number of performance options on a pink sheet entitled “Friday Night Options.” If you are interested in any of them, I recommend you call the phone numbers provided to reserve tickets.

**9:30pm** **Conference Bar: Herby’s**  
**Executive Towers (1405 Curtis, @ 16<sup>th</sup>)**

## SATURDAY, JUNE 9

9:00-10:15am

### Workshop Sessions: Round One

#### 1. Dramaturgy and Architecture

##### Gates Room (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)

Recently, many theatres have changed locations or undergone major renovations. How does changing/moving a theatre space affect a dramaturg's work, both in form and content? How does a theatre space affect your audience, and how does where you perform affect the play's reception. How does the dramaturg help consider questions of space and environment when staging a play? From capital campaigns to finding your office, this panel explores how location helps to determine your position within the theatre, and the theatre's position within its community.

**Participants:** Michele Volansky, Philadelphia Theater Company)  
Megan Monaghan, The Playwrights' Center  
Bruce Sevy, Denver Center Theatre Company

#### 2. Dramaturgical Voices Inside/Outside the Theatre: Working Within the Institution

##### Conference Room B & C (Lower Level)

As dramaturgs, we work with many different people and departments within our institutions. How do we successfully build a foundation of support for dramaturgy, and negotiate strong working relationships with other staff members – Artistic Directors, Marketing, Development, Producers, etc.?

**Participants:** Douglas Langworthy, Oregon Shakespeare Festival  
Rachel Shteir, DePaul University  
Celise Kalke, Court Theatre

#### 3. Dramaturgy/Making a Life 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

In the process of "becoming" a dramaturg, there are often questions about how one actually *makes* a life while pursuing dramaturgy. Sometimes, this means working in the regional theatre, sometimes this means freelance work, and sometimes it means something else entirely. This panel explores the different paths we take while attempting to make a life as a dramaturg – things that are gained by each of the possible choices, and the things that are perhaps compromised along the way.

**Participants:** Gretchen Haley, Options / Freelance  
Liz Engelman, A Contemporary Theatre  
Rachel Ditor, Freelance  
Nichole Gantshar, Sports Writer / Freelance

10:15-10:45am

### Break (Lower Lobby)

10:45am-12:00pm

### Workshop Sessions: Round Two

#### 1. New Play Festivals

##### Gates Room (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)

Many of us are involved in facilitating new play festivals. What are the challenges involved in producing a festival of new plays? Share processes, obstacles and successes involved in: writing and fulfilling mission statements, festival programming, scheduling, rehearsals, and audience involvement in this particular kind of dramaturgy.

**Participants:** Brian Quirt, Nightswimming  
Megan Monaghan, The Playwrights' Center  
Bruce Sevy, Denver Center Theatre Company  
Amy Wegener & Tonya Palmer, Actor's Theatre of Louisville

#### 2. Dramaturgical Voices Inside/Outside the Theatre: Working Outside the Institution

##### Conference Room B & C (Lower Level)

How do we use our skills as dramaturgs to enhance the larger community's awareness of the dramaturgical process? How do we use these same skills to strengthen the relationship between the theatre and its community?

**Participants:** Des Gallant, Florida Stage)  
Mary Resing, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company  
Lee Devin, People's Light & Theatre Company  
Paul Kosidowski, Milwaukee Rep

### 3. Educational Theatre                      4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

In the past several years, many theatres have turned their focus towards education and outreach. As a dramaturg, what is your involvement in these programs? How do you participate in shaping the artistic core, and implementing its goals? What are the fundamental values at work in prioritizing educational programming? How is this work dramaturgical in nature? This session will share specific examples of programs at work, including brochures, syllabi, lesson plans, etc.

**Participants:** **Dick Devin**, Colorado Shakespeare Festival  
**Kamella Tate**, East LA Classic Theatre  
**Luanne Nunes de Char**, Denver Center Theatre Company

**12:00-2:00pm**

#### **Bag Lunch with TheatreFest Playwrights Denver Center for the Performing Arts**

**Bruce Sevy, Associate Artistic Director, New Play Development**

We will head over to the Denver Center, pick up the pre-ordered Bag Lunches, meet and lunch with playwrights from the TheatreFest, perhaps tour the Denver Center (if there is time), and then head back for Advocacy!

**TheatreFest** is Denver Center Theatre Company's primary vehicle for the discovery and workshopping of new plays. TheatreFest is held annually in the Ricketson Theatre. Eight plays, more or less, are given readings by company members in an informal setting over a four-day period. These readings are offered free to the public – trying to provide the best working situation for the playwright to hear, polish, or rethink a script. It has brought some remarkable scripts to light that have found themselves fully produced on DCTC stages: *Inna Beginning* and *1933* are the most recent examples. Public readings are scheduled for June 12-15. Reservations are required 303-893-4100.

**2:00-4:00pm**

#### **Advocacy: Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

**Lynn M. Thomson** (VP/Advocacy) and **Mark Bly** (Board Chair)

The two-hour Advocacy session has the following rough agenda:

- 1) a brief history of the advocacy process which led to membership approval of three resolutions;
- 2) oral histories, this time focusing on member use of the guidelines (resolution #1), and related stories;
- 3) potential guideline revisions, additions;
- 4) discussion about how to best to implement guideline dissemination (resolution #2);
- 5) report about Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (resolution #3).

**4:00-4:30pm**

#### **Break (Lower Lobby)**

**4:30-6:00pm**

#### **Business Meeting #2: Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

**6:00-7:00pm**

#### **Break (Lower Lobby)**

**7:00-7:30pm**

#### **LMDA Reception: Colorado History Museum**

Join us for a pre-banquet reception with a beer & wine cash bar (\$3/drink).

**7:30-8:30pm**

#### **LMDA Banquet: Colorado History Museum**

Our highly regarded caterers, Three Tomatoes, serve up a delicious buffet: Grilled Buffalo Flank Steak (with caramelized onions and course mustard and petite rolls); Goat Cheese and Cilantro Stuffed Chicken Breast (with black bean sauce and pico de gallo); Wild Mushroom Enchiladas (with ancho chile cream sauce); Baby Lettuce Greens (with grilled veggies and tortilla threads tossed in southwest vinaigrette); Roasted Rosemary Potatoes; Minted Skewers of Fresh Fruit; Petite International Pastries. Yum!

**8:30-9:30pm**

#### **Elliott Hayes Award Presentation: Colorado History Museum**

**9:30pm**

#### **Conference Bar: Herby's Executive Towers (1405 Curtis, @ 16<sup>th</sup>)**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 10**

**9:00-10:00am**                      **LMDA Board Meeting: Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

**10:00-11:00am**                      **Regional Breakfast Meetings**  
**Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

Continental Breakfast provided while conference participants hold regional meetings.

**11:00am-12:00pm**                      **Conference De-Briefing**  
**Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**  
**Moderator: Amy Wegener, Actors' Theatre of Louisville**

**\* \* \* END OF CONFERENCE \* \* \***

**12:00-1:00pm**                      **Executive Meeting & Conference-02 Planning**  
**Conference Rooms B & C (Lower Level)**

One conference not quite over, and planning for another already begins...

*...see you in Vancouver!!*