A Conference Organized by the University of Silesia, Poland and
the University of the Fraser Valley, Canada
April 26-28, 2017, University of Silesia, Sosnowiec campus

Second Call for Proposals

Indigenous Expressions of Culture in Storytelling, Drama, Theatre and Performance –Traditional and Contemporary Canadian and Polish Upper Silesian Perspectives.

Confirmed Speaker: Tomson Highway (Cree)

"Storytelling is at the core of decolonizing, because it is a process of remembering, visioning and creating a just reality […] [it] becomes a lens through which we can envision our way out of cognitive imperialism" (Simpson 89)

The first of the intended series of conferences dedicated to the exploration of the complexity of Indigenous cultures of North America and minor cultures of Eastern/Central Europe - is a joint project of the Department of English and Indigenous Affairs Office, University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), Canada, and the Canadian Studies Centre, Department of American and Canadian Studies, Theatrum Research Group and the Centre for the Study of Minor Cultures at the University of Silesia (US), Poland. As Canadian and Polish scholars and educators working in the fields of Indigenous, minor, and transcultural literary and cultural studies, we propose that the first conference will explore the traditional and contemporary expressions of culture in Indigenous America, specifically Canada, and in the Eastern/Central European territory of Upper Silesia, specifically Poland, with a primary focus on the acts of resistance, survival and celebration of culture as enacted in storytelling, drama, theatre and performance (DTP). Performance is interpreted broadly including traditional and contemporary music and dance as well as festival events understood as modes of cultural storytelling. We envision the event as a meeting of Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars representing a variety of disciplines and Indigenous Canadian and Upper Silesian storytellers, writers, artists, performers, educators and community members.

Our aim is to explore the richness of Indigenous expressions of culture in storytelling and DPT in Canada and Upper Silesia. We believe that the transcultural dialogue between scholars, artists and educators of marginalized cultures will be an enriching learning experience for all, but especially for Upper Silesians, colonized by diverse powers throughout history, whose most recent struggle for recognition, including the processes of cultural and linguistic revitalization, can benefit from such transcultural encounters.

The exploration of Canadian scholarship on Indigenous literatures and cultures, and especially the work of Indigenous playwrights, artists, performers, scholars/critics and educators is of great interest to the critics of minor/ Indigenous literatures and cultures in Europe. We believe that in spite of many differences between Indigenous cultures of America and minor cultures of Eastern/Central Europe, critical insights and analytical tools offered by Indigenous research methodologies, epistemologies and pedagogical theories can provide instructive, alternative ways of approaching the under-studied and under-theorized works of European minor/Indigenous writers, performers and artists. A panel discussion by specialists in this area will explore diverse perspectives on these complex issues.

Prospective participants are invited to submit proposals for traditional and non-traditional presentations that broadly address the theme of the conference. Submissions from graduate and

postgraduate students at any stage of their research are welcome. The following list of topics should be regarded as neither exhaustive nor prescriptive:

- Re-reading and re-writing of history in DTP
- Poetics, aesthetics and politics of identity construction in DTP
- Storytelling, drama, theatre and performance as tools of decolonization and pedagogy
- Storytelling as a repository and archive of Indigenous knowledge
- Interrogating the concept of indigeneity: theorizing indigenous and minor cultures perspectives
- Indigeneity of Upper Silesia
- Transindigeneity and a dialogue of cultures
- Indigenous ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology and their translation into storytelling and DTP
- Use of oral traditions, stories, culture and history to promote activism
- Inventing home through stories and performance: a decolonizing approach to DTP
- Performing history and re-visioning of community memories DTP
- The role of the storytelling and DTP in the cultural revival of Canadian Indigenous cultures
- The role of the storytelling and DTP in the cultural revival of Upper Silesian culture and language
- (De)Construction of cultural identity in storytelling and DTP
- Traditional knowledge and values in storytelling and DTP
- Indigenous/ local knowledge and traditional and contemporary expressions of culture
- Performance of identity and language recovery and revitalization
- Language recovery and revitalization and identity construction
- Methodological practices of Native Performance Culture (NPC) as a possible model for the Upper Silesian expressions of culture
- Diversity of the traditional Indigenous forms of cultural expression in the contemporary Canadian Indigenous and Upper Silesian DTP
- Theories of affect and the enactment of Indigenous cultures in storytelling and DTP
- Traditional knowledge versus folklore and its performance
- Folklore and theatre
- The role of folklore in preserving Indigenous and minor cultures
- The condition of ritual in theatre – Canadian Indigenous and Slavic perspectives
- Contemporary storytelling methods in DTP
- The poetics of place and aesthetic values
- Poetic auto-creation and mythologizing of Indigenous cultures and landscapes
- Indigenous values and cosmologies and their translation into DTP
- Heritage tourism and storytelling
- Cultural festivals and their role in preserving and inventing cultures

With a comparative project in mind, we are initiating new avenues of research related to the marginalized local/ indigenous/minor cultures of Eastern/Central Europe studied in the context of Indigenous cultures of North America. We hope this pioneering venture in will lead to a greater understanding of the Indigenous and minor cultures functioning within major dominant national narratives of Canada and Poland.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

University of Silesia:
Eugenia Sojka
Aneta Głowacka
Sabina Sweta Sen
Rafał Madeja

University of the Fraser Valley
Michelle LaFlamme
Shirley Swelchalot Shxwha:yathel Hardman

Deadline for abstracts: December 31st 2016 ;
Notification of acceptance: January 6th 2017

Please send proposals to: indigenoustheatre2017poland@gmail.com

Proposal submission address:
(i) Individual proposals should be 250-300 words.
(ii) For panels, in English, or Polish, please send the title of the panel and a 250-word presentation explaining the overall focus together with a 250-300 word abstract for each participant.
(iii) Please attach a short bio to your conference paper proposal.
All files should be clearly marked with the applicants' name. Please make sure the files are in the PDF format.

Registration fee: covering welcome reception, all conference materials, coffee breaks, and conference banquet.

- $ 250 US – full time faculty
- $125 US - students and part-time faculty

Publication: selected papers based on the conference presentations will be published in a refereed monograph.

The conference website will be opened shortly.