

Shakespeare and Social Justice: Scholarship and performance in an unequal world

Cape Town, South Africa, 16-18 May 2019



Keynote speaker: Ayanna Thompson

*(Professor of English, Arizona State University
and
President of the Shakespeare Association of America)*

Call for Papers

The transformations Shakespearean drama has undergone across an increasingly complex world allow us to glimpse the rich potential for subversion and renewal within his work. In travelling around the globe, traditional Shakespeare has been dismantled and reimagined, and the result is illuminating for contemporary cultural studies attuned to the dynamics of an unequal world. This colloquium invites scholars and performing arts practitioners to explore the ways in which 'Shakespeare' (in all its forms) can engage the problem of social inequality (in all its forms). We seek to reflect on the creative and critical impact of Shakespearean confrontations with the injustice that is born of uneven access to economic and cultural capital, however this unevenness may be identified.

The colloquium offers an opportunity to re-evaluate the ideological underpinnings of our lexicon: for example, we might ask, does the 'global' in 'global Shakespeare' simply register the position from which one speaks? Does it silently affirm the relationship between an imagined 'here' and an 'elsewhere', reaffirming as it does so the privileged spaces of the North? Or can 'global Shakespeare' operate as a kind of methodology, enabling greater critical acuity, rather than remaining a subfield of Shakespeare studies?

We also invite papers that reflect on the imagined relationship between Shakespeare, neoliberalism and coloniality. In what new ways might scholars and performing arts practitioners marshal the subversive possibilities within the works? How might these, in turn, inform the teaching of Shakespeare at secondary or tertiary level? What critical resources and what vocabularies are most productive for scholars to be able to offer astute, politically inflected scholarship that will allow us to attend to matters of social justice?

Key nodes of inquiry:

- * performance
- * critical lexicon
- * social and economic justice
- * the vectors of race, gender and sexuality
- * pedagogy
- * global Shakespeare, the 'South' and the 'North'

Relevant dates

Please send 200-word proposals by 31 October 2018 to the following addresses:

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Participants will receive notification and further details by 15 November 2018.

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“Shakespeare and Social Justice” forms part of the 11th triennial congress of the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa, to be held at the Fugard Theatre and the Baxter Theatre. It is organised in conjunction with the English Departments at the University of Cape Town and the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg).

Related events:

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