ADSA 2006 Being There: Before, During and After

The ADSA History Project

The Australasian Association for Theatre, Drama & Performance Studies (ADSA) has convened an annual conference for several decades. These conferences provide a forum for the presentation of current research in theatre, drama and performance studies. Some research presented at ADSA conferences is subsequently published in journals and books; other presentations live on as memories, as a network of shared ideas, provocations and responses elaborated from conference to conference, but also at risk of being forgotten.

The aim of the ADSA History Project will be to document and investigate the contribution of the ADSA conference to the development of theatre, drama and performance studies in the Australasian region.

Three research tasks will be initiated and developed before, during and after the 2006 ADSA conference.

1. **Conference records**: collecting archival copies of the conference program, book of abstracts and website from every ADSA conference.

   Prior to the conference, we will invite participants to bring copies of materials from past conferences to the 2006 conference. This invitation will be coordinated and participants allocated years or year-ranges to ensure coverage and minimise duplication.

2. **ADSA memories**: collecting oral histories of past ADSA conferences.

   At the conference, we will set up facilities for conference participants to record stories of memorable presentations, incidents and interactions from past ADSA conferences.

3. **Analysing abstracts**: investigating the intellectual history of research presentations at ADSA conferences

   We will convene a meeting at the conference to devise a distributed method for analysing the abstracts of past conferences to investigate shifting trends in research topics, issues and approaches over the years. We will then recruit analysts at the conference and allocate to them sets of conference abstracts to be analysed during 2006/2007. Findings will be presented and discussed in a meeting at the 2007 conference.

The project will work towards developing a collective account of the intellectual history of the ADSA conference, drawing on both the analysis of conference abstracts and the collection of oral histories. This account could be presented and discussed at
the 2008 conference and then submitted to Australasian Drama Studies along with a transcript of the discussion. The project would also work to enhance the conference history section of the ADSA website.

At the 2006 conference, the **ADSA History Project** will involve a 90-minute session for a meeting to chart the parameters of the project, and to devise a distributed method for analysing abstracts.

Additionally, participants will be invited to record oral histories of past ADSA conferences.

**Those interested in contributing to the project may contact Jonathan Bollen (below), or another of the ADSA History Project team:**

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