

## **CFP: c19 conference: Theatrical Reconstructions**

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Type:

Conference

Date:

March 31, 2022 to April 2, 2022

Location:

Florida, United States

Subject Fields:

American History / Studies, Theatre & Performance History / Studies, Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Cultural History / Studies, Literature

### **THEATRICAL RECONSTRUCTIONS (Proposed Panel)**

C19 CONFERENCE

March 31-April 2

Coral Gables, FL

Panel Organizers:

Michael D'Alessandro, Duke University

Brian D. Valencia, Florida International University

Nineteenth-century American theatre was—by nature and often necessity—reconstructive. Managers remounted old productions on the fly; playwrights cobbled together scripts from those of rivals; music, scenery, and spectacles were recycled from one show to the next. Night after night, the medium demanded that actors and audiences build something dynamic together, often from the memories or mere shadows of performances past. Moreover, twenty-first century criticism requires archival reconstructions of what so often went unrecorded, or else was simply lost in the countless theatre fires of the era. True to the spirit of the period, these burned structures were themselves often rebuilt, reconstructed.

Our panel seeks to explore how nineteenth-century American theatre was (and continues to be) a site of deconstruction and regeneration, collapse and renewal, forgetting and re-remembering. How have these processes of reconstruction advanced or hindered aspirations of a national theatre? (A “national” theatre for whom?) How might the history of this period be upended and re-understood by unearthing and centering the stories of especially non-white figures who have, until now, occupied only the margins? How did inexperienced American theatre-makers utilize previous models—dramaturgies, acting styles, theatrical architectures, producing structures, etc.—to navigate their own successes (or infamous failures)? What are the principal challenges facing scholars in reimagining nineteenth-century American theatre?

Other topics might include:

- Theatrical adaptations of literary works
  - Rediscovering “lost” plays or playwrights
  - Foregrounding contributions of figures from underrepresented backgrounds
  - The function of memory in theatergoing
  - Recycled and/or plagiarized works
  - The creation and cultivation of specific audiences
  - The ongoing development of theatrical genres (minstrelsy, melodrama, musical theatre, etc.)
  - Revising national crises (the Barbary Wars, the Civil War, etc.) on the stage
- Reimagining the nineteenth-century American dramatic canon

Please send a 250-word abstract and one-page CV to [michael.dalessandro@duke.edu](mailto:michael.dalessandro@duke.edu) and [brian.valencia@gmail.com](mailto:brian.valencia@gmail.com) by **September 8**.

Contact Email:

[michael.dalessandro@duke.edu](mailto:michael.dalessandro@duke.edu)