

Letter to seminar delegates

Dear Seminar Delegates,

I am delighted to welcome you to the seminar, Shakespeare the Documentary, and to introduce you to each other.

We are the following participants, and I am very excited about working with you in the coming months:

Participants:

Professor Mark Thornton Burnett, Queen's University Belfast, mark.burnett@qub.ac.uk

Professor Todd Landon Barnes, Ramapo College of New Jersey, toddbarnes@ramapo.edu

Dr. Terri Bourus, Florida State University, terri.bourus@fsu.edu

Professor Clara Calvo, Universidad de Murcia, ccalvo@um.es

Dr. Jim Casey, Arcadia University, caseyj@arcadia.edu

Professor Eric L. De Barros, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, eric.l.debarros@gmail.com

Dr. Susanne Greenhalgh, University of Roehampton, s.greenhalgh@roehampton.ac.uk

Ms. Madiha Hannachi, Université de Montréal, madiha.hannachi@umontreal.ca

Dr. Mark Houlahan, University of Waikato, maph@waikato.ac.nz

Mr. Michael P. Jensen, Shakespeare Newsletter, jensensh@hotmail.com

Professor Douglas M. Lanier, University of New Hampshire, doug.lanier@unh.edu

Dr. Georgina M. Lucas, University of Birmingham, G.M.Lucas@bham.ac.uk

Professor Laurie E. Osborne, Colby College, leosborn@colby.edu

Dr. Adele Seeff, University of Maryland, aseeff@umd.edu

Dr. Philippa Mary Sheppard, University of Toronto, philippa.sheppard@utoronto.ca

Dr. Ramona Wray, Queen's University Belfast, r.wray@qub.ac.uk

We also have four **respondents** from the above:

Dr. Susanne Greenhalgh, Professor Douglas M. Lanier, Dr. Susanne Greenhalgh, Dr. Ramona Wray

I am including with this email **the full description** of our session so that we are all informed, and please feel free to take this description as openly as you like and as a prompt for discussion:

The documentary as genre and mode is closely tied to Shakespeare. It is a significant part of the archive and living world of Shakespearean adaptation. To film a documentary as a counterpart to a theatrical production is standard. A documentary is often the preferred form for a particular constituency uniting to stage a Shakespearean play, as examples involving communes and factories attest. Certainly, succinct and representationally conventional, the documentary bridges amateur and professional styles of Shakespearean play. There are also – inevitably – variations. Documentaries create spaces for rehabilitative projects (*Facing the Day* [dir. Ivona Juka] centres on a prison-set *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and canvass the virtues of intercultural collaboration (*A Dream in Hanoi* [dir. Tom Weidlinger, 2002]). They facilitate investigation into the interstices of conflict zones (*Shakespeare in the Favelas* [dir. Kieron Jones, 2014] and *Hamlet en Palestine* [dir. Nicolas Klotz, 2017]) while simultaneously igniting artistic experiment – the documentary can be fictional *and* realist; furnishes mixed media platforms for theatrical work; and is a cinematic method in its own right. Traditionally, documentaries have been discretely discussed by commentators such as Stella Bruzzi, Barry Grant and Gail Vanstone in terms of authorship, audience and performance. Given the proliferation of examples, such approaches will need to be scrutinized. To what extent is the Shakespearean documentary bound up in questions of politics and censorship? Are there distinct traditions depending on language, context and place? What connections are there in terms of race, gender and class? How does the typical documentary production relate to its online equivalent? These are salient questions, not least because Shakespearean documentaries appear across locales, because of an increasing number of women practitioners associated with the genre (Anne Cunes and Ulrika Dengts) and because of how the phenomenon of the 'high school' Shakespearean production is undergirded by an online documentary manifestation. This seminar is designed as a sharing experience that pools examples, pioneers approaches and tests emergent themes, making visible an area that has been accorded little Shakespearean attention.

Could I ask if everyone could send me (and the whole group) a 200-word abstract of their paper and one bibliographical entry relevant to the subject by **15 December**? I will add all the abstracts and entries to a document that I will circulate to the whole group. You will see that I have started the ball rolling with a preliminary bibliography.

Could I ask if contributors could send me (and the whole group) their paper by **15 February**?

I will then ask respondents to write a brief response to a group of papers and send these to me and the group by **15 March**.

We then meet **17 to 20 April** for the SAA. For the seminar itself, I thought we would take groups of papers, each commented on by a respondent. I also hope to show over the course of the seminar brief extracts from a number of Shakespeare documentaries in the interest of information gathering and sharing.

I hope this will answer everyone's preliminary queries, if there are any. Please feel free to contact me at any time. And I look forward very much to working with you all.

All good wishes,

Mark