

Seminar

Performing Gender(s) Elsewhere: Shakespeare in Contemporary Alternative Spaces and Institutions

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The creative range in performances of gender in Shakespeare's plays has its roots in the lived experience of early modern actors. Their performances of gender took place "elsewhere," arguably stimulating the many challenges that Shakespeare's characters, from Ariel to Viola, present to gender normativity. Thus actors in the early modern theatre companies formed alternative households apart from their domestic ones and located in the "liberties"—sites outside of city jurisdiction and social control; traveling troupes from the continent staged spectacular Italian femininity – a gender construct previously unseen on the English public stage.

For this seminar, we invite papers that explore contemporary performances of gender in Shakespeare's plays and poems outside of culturally normative sites and institutions. The organizers are interested in a broad representation of national and transnational experiences and traditions. We look for analyses of the effects that contemporary theatre performances have on both the category of gender and on the sites/communities, in which the performances take place. Possibilities include, but are not limited to investigations of:

- performing the gender of Shakespeare's characters in alternative spaces, such as migrant camps, youth programs, prison programs, civic spaces;
- Shakespeare and gender in de-centralized social power structures, such as community programs, digital collaborations, etc.;
- re-gendering and trans-gendering Shakespeare's characters as part of artistic and civic or political agendas;
- the role of women in directing and designing performances of Shakespeare;
- performing the gender of Shakespeare's Fools;
- cartographies of gender and race in Shakespeare performances;
- cartographies of gender and sexuality in Shakespeare performances;
- performing gender and sexual violence in Shakespeare.

Keywords: gender, performance, trans-gendering, re-gendering, gender and race, gender and sexuality, sexual violence