



AUSTRALASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THEATRE, DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES (ADSA)  
**ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
**BEING THERE: BEFORE DURING AND AFTER**  
 DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMANCE STUDIES  
 UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY JULY 4-7 2006

- [Registrations now open](#)
- **Conference convenor:**  
Contact [Ian Maxwell](#)
- **Conference Program now available**  
Download [here](#)
- [Conference venue](#)
- [Accommodation](#)
- [Keynote Speakers](#)

## Being There: Before During and After

The annual conference of the Australasian Association for Theatre, Drama and Performance Studies [ADSA](#)

### The Department of Performance Studies University of Sydney

Tuesday July 4th to Friday July 7th, 2006

#### Conference Venue

The conference venue is the Department of Performance Studies, Level 1, Woolley Building, A20 Manning Rd, University of Sydney.

See [map](#)

The registration desk will be open from 2pm on Tuesday July 4th, and an opening reception will be held from 6pm that evening in the Rex Cramphorn Studio.

The first conference session—a keynote address by Professor Mike Pearson—will take place at 9am on Wednesday July 5th, in Lecture Theatre 351 in the Faculty of Education Building, diagonally opposite the Department on Manning Rd. Signs will be posted, and there will be a permanently staffed information desk open throughout the conference in the Departmental offices.

#### Conference Program

##### Conference Program as at June 19th now available

Download [here](#)

#### Conference Dinner

[Back to Top](#)

The Conference Dinner is being held at the Forum Restaurant at the Darlington Centre, on campus (across City Rd), on Friday evening at 7.30pm. Tickets are available with registration or through [Ian Maxwell](#):  
\$85 pp (alcoholic drinks included)  
\$70 non-drinkers.

#### Registrations

[Back to Top](#)

We are now accepting registrations. Please download the registration form [here](#).

Full registration, including three lunches, morning teas and afternoon teas is \$350.00; concession \$175.00.

Day rates are \$100.00/day full, \$75.00 a day concession, including catering.

### Accommodation

[Back to Top](#)

We have been recommending the [Unilodge Hotel](#) on Broadway, which offered 30 rooms at \$125.00 a night. If these have all been taken, try [The Haven Inn on Glebe Pt Rd.](#)

### Keynote Speakers

[Back to Top](#)

Wednesday 9am **Mike Pearson**, Professor of Performance Studies, Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, University of Wales Aberystwyth (see [biographical notes](#));

Thursday 4pm **Marilyn Miller**, Artistic Director of Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts Company, Queensland (see [biographical notes](#)); and

Friday 9am **Rustom Bharucha**, independent writer, director, dramaturge and cultural critic based in Calcutta, India (see [biographical notes](#)).

The keynote speakers have been invited to prepare a presentation in response to the [thematic prospectus](#). Their introductory comments may be found [here](#). Additionally, we have invited two respondents to each of the keynotes, each of whom will speak for 10 minutes, developing the ideas brought by the keynotes into local contexts, concerns and the other panels and projects brought together in the body of the conference. The keynote speakers and respondents will be in regular contact with each other in the weeks leading up to the conference. We will then open the sessions to general comments.

### Introductory Comments by Keynote Speakers

#### Mike Pearson

Session Chair: Paul Dwyer (University of Sydney)

Respondents:

- Gay McAuley (University of Sydney)
- Jane Goodall (University of Western Sydney)

#### Chorographic enquiry and performance

The role of chorography is to understand and represent the unique character of individual places; above all, it is a specific scale of geographical study that serves to identify and differentiate sites of significance. Chorography espouses the local; it concerns specificities, particularities and peculiarities.

Seventeenth century English chorographies collected and arranged natural, historical and antiquarian information topographically in a region place by place, village by village, without necessarily relating it to larger spatial frames; for Edward Casey a choric region is a 'locatory matrix for things'. In the form of a gazetteer, they involved the systematic description of a region's natural features, its inhabitants, their histories, laws and traditions, antiquities, customs, property ownership, and the etymology of names; they incorporated elements of historical narrative, biography, pictorial maps and architectural sketches.

This presentation extends the notion of chorography to include manifestations of performance, past and present, in a defined geographical area in eastern England, in relation to particular sets of historical, social, cultural and environmental circumstance, attending equally to modes of traditional practice—folk drama and calendar custom—and to manifestations of contemporary devised and site-specific theatre. With region as its optic, it offers conceptual and analytical approaches that work horizontally across the terrain and simultaneously vertically through time: performance becomes a topographic phenomenon of both natural history and local history. And it develops Ulmer's observation that chorography offers 'a valuable resonance for a rhetoric of invention concerned with the history of "place" in relation to memory'.

#### Marilyn Miller

[Back to Top](#)

Session Chair: Laura Ginters (University of Sydney)

Respondents:

- Amanda Card (University of Sydney)

- Maryrose Casey (University of Queensland)

### Putting on a Face

What does it mean to "put on a face"?

What is the practice in different cultures? For example, in Western form the use of make up, in Australian Indigenous form the use of ochre.

What is the purpose of this practice? Transformation, transcendence?

Is there specific ritual/ ceremony in the practice itself? (Taking into consideration time, place, and relationships).

Does this purpose have a place in performance in a contemporary practice?

What difference, if any, does "Putting on a Face" make to performance in a contemporary context?

[Back to Top](#)

### Rustom Bharucha

Session Chair: Ian Maxwell (University of Sydney)

Respondents:

- Jacqueline Lo (Australian National University)
- Helen Gilbert (Royal Holloway, University of London)

### Exit the Theatre: An Inventory of What Begins When the Play Ends

Circumventing the nostalgia of the death-in-life of theatre valorized in the question, 'what remains when the play ends?', this lecture chooses to ask 'what begins when the play ends?' This 'beginning' will prompt a series of reflections constituting an autobiographical inventory of decisive moments experienced on the borders of theatre: moments that have mutated and sparked new beginnings of narratives, actions, thoughts, and practices that challenge the protocols of legitimacy in the theatrical canon. Exploring the principles of rupture, disruption, the event, crisis, chaos, and process, this discourse will focus on the exit points of theatre, the afterplay that pushes the boundaries of theatre into the indeterminacies and politics of the real. Is there theatre beyond theatre? What other forms of cultural action could the 'beyond' catalyze? What are the new alliances and organizational challenges that are likely to sustain these forms? Do forms matter at all as they disappear into the habitus of everyday life?

Instead of pursuing a dystopian/utopian line on the future of theatre, or the possibilities of rethinking para-theatre, this improvised lecture will attempt to open up new modalities of cultural practice through activism and interventions in the public sphere. Avoiding needless speculation or abstraction, it will present concrete examples of performances relating to subaltern issues on land and memory in the Indian subcontinent, as well as to the linkage between the struggles against apartheid and HIV/AIDS in South Africa. Grounded in the difficult lessons, hopes, and positive failures of such emergent practices, this talk will attempt to highlight that the world beyond theatre demands new processes of interaction that may no longer be accommodated within the reassurances of unitary notions of space and time, or the protectionist devices of illusion. Embracing multiple and colliding spatialities and temporalities, this advocacy of process within the larger framework of 'new beginnings' will draw on the ethical necessity of betraying the civic limits of theatre for a more vulnerable, risk-laden chaos embodying a steadily disintegrating here and now.

[Back to Top](#)

### Keynote Biographical notes

**Mike Pearson** is Professor of Performance Studies, Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, University of Wales Aberystwyth.

Between 1971 and 1997 he helped develop and pioneer innovative approaches in the practice, theory, pedagogy and documentation of performance particularly in Wales, in a series of companies including RAT Theatre (1972-3), Cardiff Laboratory Theatre (1973-81) and Cwmni Theatr Brith Gof (1981-97). His interests include physical theatre, devised performance and site-specific performance. He continues to make

performance work as a solo artist and in collaboration with designer Mike Brookes in the Pearson/Brookes group.

His research interests include performance, natural history and landscape; performance, forensics and the city; the use of biography, personal narrative and memory in performance; the everyday life of Antarctic explorers; folklore and traditional drama. He is engaged in a long term examination of theoretical and practical convergences of performance and archaeology: interdisciplinary approaches to recording, writing, illustrating and animating the material past. He is the co-author with Michael Shanks of *Theatre/Archaeology* (Routledge, 2001). His monograph *In Comes I: Performance, Memory and Landscape* will be published in October 2006 by the University of Exeter Press.

**Rustom Bharucha** is an independent writer, director, dramaturge, and cultural critic based in Calcutta, India. He is the author of several books including *Theatre and the World*, *The Question of Faith*, *In the Name of the Secular*, *The Politics of Cultural Practice*, *Rajasthan: An Oral History*, and *Another Asia: Rabindranath Tagore and Okakura Tenshin* (to be published by Oxford University Press in September 2006). Apart from his theoretical interventions in the fields of interculturalism, secularism, and globalization, he has been involved in conducting workshops with the Siddi (persons of African origin living in scattered communities in India) on issues such as income generation, the politics of identity, and forest rights. In Durban, South Africa, he is connected to the Tangencya project, involving public art and cultural interventions in the public sphere, focusing on HIV/AIDS. Also involved in the conceptual processes underlying cultural policy, he is an advisor to the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, the Netherlands.

Marilyn Miller began her Dance training as a 5 year old in Cairns, Northern Queensland. While still in college Marilyn was a Guest Artist with Queensland Ballet and upon graduating became the sole female co-founder of the Australian Indigenous Dance Theatre: AIDT-the Company, with whom she toured nationally and internationally as both a dancer and choreographer.

Marilyn has also choreographed and/or danced with Bangarra Dance Theatre, Australian Ballet, One Extra Dance Theatre, Kooemba Jdarra, FOXTV, SBSTV, and ABCTV. Her work *Contemporary Welcome Dances* also appears in the National Museum of Australia First People's Gallery.

Apart from being a dance practitioner, Marilyn has also graduated from the University of Technology, Sydney with a Business Degree and was committee member for Ausdance Qld and Ausdance NSW, and for the NSW Ministry for the Arts was Chair of the Dance committee, Chair of Indigenous Fellowship, Chair of Robert Helpman Fellowship, and committee member of Western Sydney Development.

Marilyn is currently Artistic Director Kooemba Jdarra, Qld's Premier Indigenous Performing Arts Company (Brisbane).

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