

# Gender and Otherness in the Humanities

## Research Centre Launch

24<sup>th</sup> October 2019, 4pm-6.30pm

Library Seminar Room 6, The Open University, Milton Keynes

### Programme

4pm – Welcome and Introduction to GOTH – Dr Peg Katritzky,  
Director of GOTH

4.15pm – Introduction to and extract from The Orestes Project – By  
Jove Theatre Company

4.45pm – Scenes from *The Amazonians* by Aphra Behn – Prof Pavel  
Drábek and students from the University of Hull

5.15pm – Remarks from Prof Ian Fribbance, Exective Dean of the  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

5.30pm – Drinks reception

Gender and Otherness  
in the Humanities



### Extract from The Orestes Project – By Jove Theatre Company

The Orestes Project is By Jove Theatre Company's ongoing performance development project in collaboration with Prof Nancy Rabinowitz of Hamilton College, NY. The project explores the relationships among the children of the house of Atreus: Orestes, Electra, and Iphigenia, exploring how the traumas of their shared history play out after the mythic narrative is over. In particular, the project explores queer relationships: Orestes' male 'companion' Pylades becomes his lover, Iphigenia explores her desire for her goddess rescuer Artemis, and Electra navigates her relationship with herself and her mother's legacy. The performance is a work in progress, written and devised by the company, and combining text, music, movement, and other theatrical forms.

#### Cast:

<i>Electra/Artemis</i>	SJ Brady
<i>Iphigenia</i>	Sinead Costelloe
<i>Orestes</i>	Marcus Bell
<i>Storyteller</i>	Christine Plastow
Music	Vivienne Youel
Head Writer/Stage Manager	Wendy Haines
Movement Director	Susanna Dye

#### **SJ Brady** (*Electra/Artemis/Director*)

SJ is an actor, director, and writer. She has been performing with By Jove since 2011 and became Co-Artistic Director with David in 2017. She writes spoken word poetry and is part of the Young Vic Directors Program. SJ has a keen interest in feminist adaptation and has adapted *Othello* and *The Bacchae* for By Jove. She is specifically interested in writing and performing narratives accompanied by a musical score. She is currently developing a full collection of poetry while working in the West End for a theatre producer. She enjoys dance, music, and art and currently resides in South East London.



#### **Sinead Costelloe** (*Iphigenia*)

Sinead is an actor. Her previous work with By Jove includes *Homer's Women*, *Medea*, *Pride and Prejudice: The Panto*, *Before They Told You What You Are*, and *Othello*. Other credits include: *Plug In: Women Aren't Funny* (Albany Theatre), *Plug In* (Canal Café Theatre), *Mismatched* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *Beauty and the Beast* (Theatre N16), *A Christmas Carol* (Teatro Sala de Umberto), and *Mother Goose* (Caboodle tour).

#### **Marcus Bell** (*Orestes*)

Marcus is a dancer, choreographer and scholar. Marcus is working on a PhD at the University of Oxford and is particularly interested in queer theory and performance; practice-based research; and feminist adaptations of Greek Tragedy. In his work with the Advocating Classics Education project (ACE) he researches public impact. Marcus has performed with Matthew Bourne's company New Adventures and



trained with Ballet Boyz. He has also choreographed music videos for queer artists such as itoldyouiwoulddeatyou.



**Vivienne Youel (Music)**

Vivienne is a songwriter and composer for worldwide publisher, Audio Network, and vocalist and guitarist of YOUEL and Sun Bloom band. She writes in multiple genres, including indie-electro pop, jazz, acoustic folk, rock and classical. She also composes music for theatre, having worked with Emma Rice from The Globe Theatre, London & Kneehigh Theatre, in research and development for a new show. She has previously written music for By Jove's *Here She Comes*.

**Wendy Haines (Head Writer)**

Wendy is a playwright, poet, and script-editor based in South West London with a particular interest in feminism, science fiction, and magical realism. She has penned many a project for By Jove, including *Before They Told You What You Are* and *Medea*, and was programmed for the One-Act Festival at Stockwell Playhouse in 2019 with her play *Beautiful Halo*.



**Susanne Dye (Movement Director)**

Susanna brings together her experience in theatre and dance, in her work with actor movement. She studied Movement Direction at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. She also works in the field of contemporary dance where she trains, performs and teaches with Candoco, the contemporary dance company for disabled and non disabled dancers. She has movement directed with By Jove on productions

including *Pride & Prejudice: the Panto*, *Margaret of Anjou* and *Medea*.

**About By Jove**

By Jove are a socialist feminist theatre company. We're socialists, we're feminists, and we make theatre together.

We tell old stories in new ways. We think about how myths, legends, and tales from the cultural canon – some familiar, some less so – can speak to audiences in the 21st century.

As a group of theatre makers coming together creatively, our work is always collaborative, always an experiment, always evolving. We tackle complex issues, but do so with a distinct sense of playfulness and irreverence. Our shows combine text, music, and movement, and we like to perform in unexpected spaces – libraries, converted factories, art galleries – to connect with the local communities in which those spaces are situated.

We started making theatre in 2011, and debuted our first London show the following year.

Website: [ByJoveTheatre.org](http://ByJoveTheatre.org)

Twitter: [@ByJoveTheatre](https://twitter.com/ByJoveTheatre)

Facebook: [By Jove Theatre Company](https://www.facebook.com/ByJoveTheatreCompany)

**We receive no regular public funding of any kind. Please support us: [Patreon.com/ByJove](https://www.patreon.com/ByJove)**

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## Scenes from Aphra Behn, *The Amazonians* – Dr Pavel Drábek and students from the University of Hull

A selection of scenes adapted from Aphra Behn's *The Young King, or The Mistake* (c1679), a Fletcherian tragicomedy inspired by La Calprenède's *Cléopâtre* (1646), Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), and Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño* (c1631). For this performance we have worked with Janet Todd's edition from *The Works of Aphra Behn* (vol. 7; London: William Pickering, 1996). A longer version of this play will be performed at the University of Hull on 1–2 November 2019 by first year students as part of the Gulbenkian Careers and Employability Festival and as an outcome of the Approaches to Theatre 1 module.

### Cast:

*Cleomena*, Dacian Princess, bred up in War

*Semiris*, Woman to Cleomena

*Thersander*, Thracian Prince, under the name of Clemanthis, when on the Dacian side

Queen of Dacia

Director

Costumes

Props

Photography

*Special thanks to Cat Fergusson Baugh, Jemima Corbett and Simba.*

Jemma Baker

Eirlys Wiggett

Leah Siddall

Charlotte Wilson

Pavel Drábek

Eirlys Wiggett

Charlotte Wilson and Jack Jenkins

Shannon Johnston

### Jemma Baker (*Cleomena*)

Jemma is a student on the MA Theatre Making programme with interests in sci-fi, scenography and construction. She has performed in a variety of roles with a specialism in clowning. She was construction manager on the musical *Urinetown* and is currently co-adaptating the *Second Shepherds' Play* for a production in December.



### Eirlys Wiggett (*Semiris*)

Eirlys is a student on the MA Theatre Making programme with an interest in costume design and acting. She has designed costumes for a number of shows, most recently Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*, performed by an all female cast, and is hoping to utilise her graduate studies to explore themes of costume and sustainability. She was awarded the Glen Willoughby Prize for her scenographic work, and is currently reviewing *Dance*

*Body Costume for Studies in Costume and Performance.* #thereisnoplanetB

### Leah Siddall (*Thersander*)

Leah is a 2nd Year student in BA Drama and Theatre Practice with interests in music, scenography and construction. She has been musical director in theatre and, at university, has recently co-directed *Cleopatra: Egypt is Burning*. Currently, she is the musical director and co-construction manager in the musical *Heathers*. #freethenipple







**Charlotte Wilson** (*Queen*)

Charlotte is a student on the MA Theatre Making programme with interests in acting, directing, dramaturgy, scenography and stage management. She has acted, danced and sung in musicals, performed in a variety of roles. She has been co-director, dramaturg and lead role in *Damned*, an experimental adaptation of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. She was also involved in a staged reading of Lope de Vega's *Castelvines and Monteses*.

**Shannon Johnston** (Photographer)

Shannon is a 2nd Year student in BA Drama and Theatre Practice with a special interest in theatre photography, fascinated by the beauty of capturing the raw emotion on stage and the story as if it's been frozen in time. She set up her own company Xphoria Photography hoping to succeed as a professional theatre photographer.

**Pavel Drábek** (director)

Pavel is Professor of Drama and Theatre Practice at the University of Hull; a theatre historian, theorist and practitioner. His interests range from Shakespeare and early modern drama, translation, adaptation, to scenography and playwriting. He writes and translates for opera, radio and stage. With M. A. Katritzky he has co-edited *Transnational Connections in Early Modern Theatre* (forthcoming with Manchester UP in November 2019). His fourth radio play *Košice 1923* for four Czech and Slovak actresses of four different generations had its broadcast on Czech Radio 3 on 8 October 2019. For 1–2 November, he is directing a double-bill student production of Aphra Behn's *The Young King, or The Mistake*, and a new play about the art collector and oil magnate Calouste Gulbenkian, co-written with Josh Overton, entitled *Oil: The Story of Mr Five Per Cent and His Seven Sisters*.



**Drama at Hull**

The University of Hull's Drama department, led by Dr Cat Fergusson Baugh, is part of the School of the Arts, together with Music, Screen and Digital Media. Established in 1963 and seated in the Grade 2 listed Gulbenkian Centre, it is one of the oldest Drama departments in the UK and was set up around a curriculum that integrates practice and theory, modelling the setting of a working professional theatre. Our holistic approach to theatre and performance is unique in the range and variety of production work accessible to all levels of students – from performing, directing and dramaturgy, through scenography, design and construction, to stage and production management. Practice-as-research modes are embedded in our activities, combining professional theatre experience with world-leading research. A truly unique feature is the network of alumni and industrial partners, whose contribution is incorporated into the programmes at all levels – from the BA Drama and Theatre Practice, through MA Theatre Making, to PhD programmes. We pride ourselves in the liberal and inclusive environment in matters of cultures, gender and diversity.

This academic year, with two resident theatre companies (The Roaring Girls and Silent Uproar), we centre our activities around the theme of environmental sustainability.

Twitter: @DramaHullUni

Facebook: hulluni.drama

Instagram: hulldramaproduction

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## About GOTH

Gender and Otherness in the Humanities (GOTH) is a research centre based in the School of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at The Open University. Our interests are broad-ranging across research areas: our affiliated academics work in a variety of fields within the Humanities including English Literature, Creative Writing, Music, History, Theatre Studies, Art History, Classical Studies and more, exploring topics related to the themes of gender and otherness.

GOTH was relaunched in 2019 from its previous incarnation, GiTH (Gender in the Humanities). Its new name underlines gender's often complex intersections with different types of 'otherness'. Gender is a particular aspect of the broader characterisation of 'otherness' as a deviation from 'the norm'. The relationship between gender and otherness throughout time and across the Arts and Humanities forms the focal point of our investigations. This relationship is multifarious: people are othered due to their gender, or their expression of their gender; gender plays a role within intersectional identities, leading to more complex forms of otherness; gender politics can itself be intersected by various kinds of othering; and there are those who feel othered by the very concept of gender. The diverse facets of the relationship between gender and otherness form a rich array of material for academic study, and are of great significance in modern scholarship. Apart from this central focus, we also encourage and support research in otherness more broadly: an awareness of the centrality of human diversity to an understanding of the Humanities is crucial to The Open University, to our exceptionally large and diverse student body, our research and teaching goals, and our impact on society.

GOTH will pull together the valuable OU research being carried out in these areas, finding points of connection and contrast and providing a space for fruitful discussion and collaboration between academics across the Humanities. We run regular critical reading sessions based at Walton Hall campus in Milton Keynes. We also organise twice-yearly research away days to relevant exhibitions, historical sites, and other accessible locations, where we learn from each other's research interests on site. Additional types of events we organise include conferences and research seminars, the hosting of visiting scholars, supporting and initiating bidding for research funding, and working on doctoral and other research projects, both within the group and in collaboration with external scholars. **We are currently seeking applicants for a funded PhD studentship; see our website for details.**

### Steering Committee

Dr M A Katritzky – Director of GOTH; Senior Research Fellow in Theatre Studies, OU

Dr Christine Plastow – GOTH Web and Media Manager; Lecturer in Classical Studies, OU

Dr Gemma Allen – Lecturer in Early Modern History, OU

Dr Clare Taylor – Senior Lecturer in Art History, OU

### Advisory Board

Professor Pavel Drábek – Professor of Drama and Theatre Practice, University of Hull

Professor Suman Gupta – Professor of Literature and Cultural History, OU

Professor Natasha Korda – Director of the Centre for the Humanities and Professor of English, Wesleyan University

Professor Noémie Ndiaye – Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Chicago

Professor James Robson – Professor of Classical Studies, OU

Dr Hole Rößler – Acting Head, Research Planning and Research Projects, Herzog August Library

Dr Shafquat Towheed – Senior Lecturer in English, OU

### Our Donor

We wish to thank and register our deep appreciation for the great generosity of an anonymous foundation, which has donated full external funding for the 3-year GOTH doctoral studentship 2020-2023 and a significant contribution towards costs associated with the GOTH programme during its first 3 years.

Website: <http://fass.open.ac.uk/research/centres/goth>

Blog: <http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/goth/>

Twitter: @OU\_GOTH