



ARTiculating Deaf Experiences Conference Nov 6-9, 2019

Sessions

Thursday, November 7

IVT: The Art of Emancipation Contribution to a History of Deaf Art: a selection of contemporary cases

Olivier Schetrit

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (9:15 – 10:30 am) [\(video\)](#)

In the past, Deaf Art has been little known and even ignored. Following the wave of student and social protest movements in 1968, it found new expression, recognition and freedom. The protest movements, which began in the United States, stimulated the founding of the International Visual Theatre (IVT) in Paris in 1976. IVT became a cultural hub for Deaf people where individuals came together through a shared passion for theatre and the Arts. It gave birth to a plethora of artistic projects incorporating sign language and visual culture practices. For a new generation of French Deaf artists, IVT was a starting point, which gradually freed them to create authentic expressions. Thanks to those creative visions, a vibrant contemporary Deaf Arts scene has emerged in France; however, this movement is still fragile and heavily dependent on the internet as there are few face-to-face forums for meetings, exchanges, and dissemination.

De'VIA Manifesto

Paul Johnston and Amy Stevens

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (11:00 – 11:30 am)

When the De'VIA Manifesto was written in 1989, a group of fine artists, led by painter Betty G. Miller, and sculptor Paul Johnston, gathered for a four-day workshop to focus on how to educate the community about Deaf art and artists. This happened within a short amount of time and without the benefit of Internet resources or a large cross-sampling of work. Consequently, common terminology such as Deaf experience, fine art, applied art, or design was not defined nor discussed.

This presentation will revisit the De'VIA Manifesto, 30 years later, to allow for a reinterpretation of its original mission and present an expansionist view to the artistic, Deaf communities. For an expansive vision to thrive, we will propose that the Deaf community must take up this challenge: to engage in more scholarly research, to develop theory, design curriculum, and publish criticism to push forward an all-encompassing vision of De'VIA.

On Deaf (Creative) Writing: Past, Present, and Future

Kristen Harmon

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (11:30 – 12:00 pm) [\(video\)](#)

This presentation builds on my previous and ongoing research into how past and present Deaf authors (especially Deaf of Deaf) are writing creatively, using English to convey Deaf lives and languages. I will review some of the strategies previous Deaf creative writers (using Deaf family newspapers and the Buff and Blue) showed in writing Deaf lives and then will move into the present, where contemporary Deaf authors are finding ways to convey the fullness of Deaf lives and ASL/sign language on the printed page, using a variety of strategies from full gloss to full translation to a range of strategies in the middle. This presentation will discuss some of the challenges, limits, and opportunities that writing creatively in English provides for Deaf authors who sign.

Nordic Deaf Theatre Co. Panel

Mira Zuckermann, Marita S. Barber, Mindy Drapsa

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (12:45 -1:25 pm) [\(video\)](#)

How has the process of Nordic co-production in past looked alike and how will it look alike in the future? The panel will highlight Nordic cooperation in sign language theatre, and how we adjust sign language on stage to reach an international audience to bringing an International Sign Dramaturgy to life.

The panel will also highlight the work in the field of Deaf theatre and projects with challenges and possibilities due to different organizational structure and opportunities, translational process, capacity. We learn from each other, grow and understand what specificities are for Deaf performing arts through cooperation.

Tyst Teater - Riksteatern's Tyst Teater is a pioneer in the production of groundbreaking dramatic art in Swedish Sign Language. Ever since the start in 1970, we have offered a unique selection of dramatic arts, seminars and meetings. Tyst Teater has been part of Riksteatern since 1977.

Teater Manu - Teater Manu is a leading theatre in Europe and the only professional sign language theatre in Norway. The government grants are 2,5 million US dollars per year, for creating a touring, high-quality, sign language theatre.

Teatteri Totti - Teatteri Totti is a non-profit organisation and is the only professional sign language theatre of its kind in Finland. Ministry of Education and Culture has financially supported Teatteri Totti's operation since 2006 under the cooperation of Finnish Association of the Deaf, and became an independent theatre in 2015.

Documenting Deaf NYC Stories

Brian H. Greenwald and Brianna DiGiovanni

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm)

This presentation will focus on collecting and documenting Deaf NYC stories. This multiyear project aims to document diverse yet interconnected current and long-time former NYC residents. We have sought to gain an understanding of 19th and 20th century urban deaf community life. As we have worked to document the experiences of Deaf New Yorkers across race, generational, and borough boundaries, we hope to gain an understanding of this community. This presentation explores the different ways of gathering information through narrative (interviews) history, primary source material, and mapping deaf

spaces in New York City. These approaches help us learn more about the largest urban deaf community in the United States during the mid-20th century.

Golden Years for Deaf Lesbians? An Exploration of Deaf Lesbian Options in Life's Last Chapter

Bridget Klein

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm)

Deaf lesbians and gay men over 60 have paved the path for us to be out today. For most of their lives, they have experienced stigma, marginalization and a strict adherence to so-called normalcy. These struggles have been revealed with the help of several theories including: CRIP theory, stigma theory and intersectionality identity theory. Gleaned from life story interviews, Deaf women share their experiences with stigma, passing, and resistance. Given that they have paved the path for youth LGBTQIA like us, how do we honor the last chapter of their lives?

Yours Most Sincerely: A Study of the Friendship of a Nineteenth-Century Deaf-Mute Artist and Prominent Political Couple

Corinna Hill

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm) [\(video\)](#)

How did deaf and hearing people communicate with each other in the nineteenth century? How did deaf people befriend hearing people? Was there a sense of egalitarianism within those cross-cultural friendships? The relationship between John Carlin and the family of William Henry Seward helps us analyze those questions and this presentation will discuss the physical artifacts of their relationship. Their letters and a hand written conversation from 1842 expand and challenge our perception of how hearing people befriended and interacted with deaf people in the nineteenth century.

Two Nations, Sign Languages and Sexes but One Shared Identity: Signed Poetry on Intersectionality of Deaf Queer African

Rezenet Moges Riedel

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (3:45 – 4:15 pm) [\(video\)](#)

This talk will cover a phenomenology of an unplanned signed poetic collaboration of three bodies who are all identified as Black Deaf Queer Africans. Two South Africans and an Eritrean-American gathered up during a class with a topic covering "Deaf Lesbians and Gay Men" at an university in Johannesburg, South Africa. The actors were not prepared but formed a "renga," which is a collaborative poem created with multiple poets. The renga was led by the local Deaf gay poet/archivist, John Meletse whose poem "Rainbow" (Morgan & Meletse, 2017) with a Queer theme. This performance is a crippling practice, a process of reclaiming their intersectionality with disabled and queer bodies (Moges, 2017). Our poem is titled as "TROUSER 2, DRESS 1" perpetuating gender issues between masculinity and femininity. Finally, this talk will explore the negotiations of multiple cultural values and the impacts of signed literature by increasing Deaf Queer scholarship.

Contribution of Black Deaf Performing Arts

Fred Beam

Thur, 7 Nov 2019 (4:15 – 4:45 pm) [\(video\)](#)

This presentation will include the history of black deaf performing arts, black deaf performing artists and their accomplishments in theater. Also, presented will be a list of "Firsts" in the field of Black Deaf Performing Arts.

The contributions of "Black Deaf" Performing Arts offers insights into the Deaf Community and African American Community. Historically, Deaf people have focused on the majority-- Deaf people who are non minority--while African Americans typically ignore Deaf people. Black Deaf Performing Artists look at themselves as not just deaf or black, but as whole people--"Black Deaf". Portrayals of Deaf African Americans are for all of us because issues of identity, culture, and language are related to the experiences of all individuals who have wondered who they are and to every group that have felt "invisible" in the eyes of our country.

Friday, November 8

"Do It For the Culture": A Critical Look Into The Evolving BlackDeaf Expressions in Written English

Kristi Merriweather

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (9:15 – 10:30 am) [\(video\)](#)

This presentation will highlight certain synthesized cultural features in BlackDeaf word art/lit and their potential impact in the multifaceted Deaf World. "Do It for The Culture" is a relatively new tagline, proposing an external or internal challenge for us to "carry out a specific action for the benefit of our shared culture." For a long time, BlackDeaf voices have been largely silent in Deaf literature which also is mirrored in other creative mediums. This presentation will touch upon how semi-invisibility ties into both the lived and written narratives of BlackDeaf experiences and being. It will also explore both potential and actual inclusion of certain cultural features in BlackDeaf word art/literature.

De'VIA: Understanding the Themes and Motifs

Nancy Rourke

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (11:00 – 11:30 am) [\(video\)](#)

De'VIA artists create art in many forms which express what they see, think and feel—often resulting in an artwork communicating a collective consciousness—frequently occurring themes or motifs. These themes and motifs have been analyzed and utilized in De'VIA art challenges and in the development of a K-12 De'VIA curriculum for schools. In particular, teaching De'VIA motifs can promote identity explorations through art and can lead to the creation of new motifs. In addition, exhibiting De'VIA artworks can spark a critical analysis of themes and motifs which can awaken Deaf cultural resistance to oppression and affirmation of Deaf culture.

Highlighting Intersectional Deafnicity: From Theory, to Experience, to Literature

Rachel Mazique

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (11:30 – 12:00 pm) [\(video\)](#)

This talk seeks to highlight the multiple intersectional ethnic identifications that Deaf people of color may experience. Starting from the theorization of Deafnicity, I move to feature the significantly underresearched topic of intersectional experiences of Deaf people of color. I will discuss how the conceptualization of Deafnicity is not to erase or overpower Sign Language Peoples' (SLPs) multiple ethnic or racial identities for the sake of a unifying power among SLPs.

This analysis of the tensions between Deafnicity and intersectionality will move from the academic theorizations of the concepts to Moges' (2016) and my own personal experiences of "DEAF-SAME," or Deafnicity—even with our respective intersectional identities. This talk seeks, in the end, to tie theory and the experiences of several intersectional Deaf scholars who have written on the topic, to highlighting fiction and nonfiction stories and poems written by intersectional Deaf authors.

TDG LOL: Teaching Deaf Culture through Humor

Matt Daigle

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm) [\(video\)](#)

Visual art is one of the best story-telling tools in the classroom and what better way to tell a story but through cartoons? Cartoons are colorful, funny, and drive the point home. Matt Daigle, the co-creator of "That Deaf Guy" uses his own comic strip as a teaching tool with very successful results.

Teaching Deaf culture to students can be very tricky. That is why Matt decided to show, rather than tell, students about Deaf culture. What better way than through a funny cartoon to explain to a hearing person that over-enunciating to deaf people doesn't really help them read lips? Humor can be used to teach hearing students that their values, norms, and priorities are not always shared by the Deaf community.. Matt will show how to use cartoons and visual storytelling to engage students and enhance ASL and Deaf culture studies.

Justin Perez's Visual Vernacular

Justin Perez

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm)

Visual Vernacular (VV) is a diverse, expressive mode of communication using gesture for storytelling in American Sign Language (ASL). Visual Vernacular includes techniques such as: long shot, fast/slow motion, zoom, panoramic view, role shifting and many more. Justin Perez will provide examples and explain how these features enhance storytelling ability.

From Deaf Eyes: Photography As A Visual Storyteller

Orkid Sassouni

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm)

This presentation will showcase selected d/Deaf photographers who have created unique projects—from empty-looking room images to full naked body or figurine portraits—with works in black and white, color, and/or mixed media images. While photography is an everyday tool as a way to communicate with the world, many photographers look for subjects that have meaning from subtle to deep. Some of these topics focus on d/Deaf people and others with objects, like flowers, landscape, street life, etc. Some just to capture the moment. These photographers use photography as a visual tool to tell stories to the audience. Some photographers use this type of medium to represent their true identity as relevant to everyday life or situations.

Journey of ASL Literature and Deaf Art in Digital Media

Ruthie Jordan

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm) [\(video\)](#)

This presentation will demonstrate how Deaf artists are influenced by Sign Lit, Deaf Cinema, Deaf Theatre, and their language to express works creatively and artistically. Included will be a discussion of language in various art forms such as gender in arts and empowerment in arts. Additionally, I will explain how recognition of symbols/motifs in Deaf experiences and of the intersectionality in ASL Literature and Deaf arts can be applied in a Digital Media format.

Making of an Epic in American Sign Language: Tapping into Martha's Vineyard to Shed New Light on Deaf Storytelling

Samuel J. Supalla and Andrew Byrne

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (3:45 – 4:15 pm)

This presentation will focus on "Martha's Vineyard," a one hour and ten minutes ASL epic created and performed by Dr. Samuel J. Supalla. Some of the challenges associated with the epic's creation will be discussed along with an elaboration on the essentials of an ASL epic and how it produces rich opportunities for literary criticism and learning in a classroom setting.

Drs. Byrne and Supalla will address the value of promoting intersectionality of different experiences for Deaf people assigners when it comes to Martha's Vineyard and the American mainland. Social issues

associated with how to best combat audism affecting Deaf Americans and for many parts of the world will be addressed with possible solutions as inherent to the "Martha's Vineyard" epic. A short video clip will be shown confirming both the aesthetic and literary value of ASL and the story's content as historically and socially informative.

What are the ties between the film industry and us?

David de Keyzer

Fri, 8 Nov 2019 (4:15 – 4:45 pm)

This is a presentation of my experiences through Cinema in which I have worked for some films. Through these experiences, I will introduce my personal observation of Cinema in relation to our community.

Saturday, November 9

Anthology of Poetics in Brazilian Sign Language

Fernanda de Araugo Machado

Sat, 9 Nov 2019 (9:15 – 10:30 am) [\(video\)](#)

Fernanda de Araújo Machado's presentation focuses on her doctoral thesis project which is the creation and analysis of an anthology of poetry in Brazilian Sign Language (Libras). Following a careful and thorough investigation and collection process, the Anthology features beautiful poetic productions of various styles produced by Deaf authors highly proficient in sign language. Their poems are analyzed in terms of characteristics, stylistics, profiles, senses, contents, influences, themes, and patterns. Additionally, attention is paid to the context of publication and the poetic elements including: rhythm, rhyme, repetition, verse, symmetry, neologism, replacement of lexical sign, and use of differentiated language. Deaf authors further share reflections about their works. This Anthology records poetic productions in Libras preserved in video similar to records of poetic productions in written language.

Political Artivism through Deaf Lenses

Amy Cohen Efron

Sat, 9 Nov 2019 (11:00 – 11:30 am) [\(video\)](#)

This presentation will emphasize the importance of bringing art with Deaf experience and lenses to the political arena. It will include an introduction to artivism and its history, purposes and intentions of combining art and activism for social change. Historical examples will show how Deaf people used their De'VIA artwork for systematic change and challenging the system which oppresses Deaf people. Further, I will explore a new way of presenting more specific Political/Deaf-centric artwork to make a larger social change and influence perspectives.

My art is about my Deaf experience and is a constant search for the best way to interpret the absurdity, resistance, and celebration I experience everyday. I try addressing controversial themes and raising thought-provoking questions through art. I believe advertising imagery, with hidden messages, bold colors, strong lines, and symbolism, serve as significant influences in my art. It is my goal for creating art as an agent for social change.

The Rise of Aesthetics and Intersectionality in Signed Language Performance Arts: Poetry and Music in

Valli's "Dandelion"

Jody Cripps

Sat, 9 Nov 2019 (11:30 – 12:00 pm)

The historical and largely underappreciated evidence on how Deaf people have generated songs entirely in ASL suggests a re-evaluation regarding the concept of music. In this presentation, Dr. Cripps will review the historical context of music concerning Deaf people and move on to the concept of signed music and its influence on Valli's poetic work "Dandelion". The principles of aesthetics along with an understanding of the categories of aesthetics will be identified for all literary works under study. The audience will be introduced to culturally authentic musical material as created by a rapidly growing group of Deaf musicians. This will serve as a preparation for understanding how music interacts with poetry in Valli's "Dandelion". Dr. Cripps will emphasize the fundamental elements of aesthetics, poetry, and music in analyzing "Dandelion". In the end, it is expected that the audience will both understand and appreciate the ongoing evolution of signed language performance arts.

Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies—Deaf Artists Residency Program

Cynthia Weitzel

Sat, 9 Nov 2019 (1:30 – 2:50 pm)

In this panel session, Deaf Artists Residency Program alumni share their experiences and perspectives while moderated by artist and program coordinator, Cynthia Weitzel. Anyone interested in learning more about Deaf-friendly residencies (or residencies in general) will benefit from this session. How they differ, inform and inspire while serving as catalyst in the careers of most.

Established in 2014 and funded by National Endowment for the Arts, the Deaf Artists Residency Program has become a strong example for barrier-free, Deaf-friendly residency based on common language and culture. The month-long residency, based within an interdisciplinary residency center known as the Anderson Center in Red Wing, Minnesota, has just one minimum requirement for qualified Deaf applicants—native or adoptive language must be American Sign Language. The program is open to both emerging and established professional artists (visual, literary, performing) and scholars (academics within the arts, humanities, sciences) based in the U.S.

Embodying Theory in the Classroom: Politics, Poetics and Pedagogy

Dirksen Bauman and Douglas Ridloff

Sat, 9 Nov 2019 (3:45 – 4:15 pm)

This presentation explores the dialogic relationship between pedagogy and poetics, based on the collaborative work of ASL poet, Douglas Ridloff and Deaf Studies scholar, Dirksen Bauman. Together they will discuss their process and show the final product of a series of ASL poems composed during the course, "Enforcing Normalcy: Deaf and Disability Studies" in Gallaudet Deaf Studies MA program. They will reflect on the ways in which such transdisciplinary work expands on the potential uses of poetics as a means of teaching theory and history; and, in addition the ways in which pedagogy and curriculum may serve as a wellspring of source material for cultural production. The ultimate integration of pedagogy and poetics is a political act--of giving "voice" to the long history of ableism and audism, and what's more--to forms of resistance through the performing Deaf body.

Screening of "Signing Black in America"

Joseph Hill

Sat, 9 Nov 2019 (4:15 – 4:45 pm) **(video)**

Signing Black in America, produced by the Language & Life Project of North Carolina State University (with Walt Wolfram, Executive Producer; Danica Cullican and Neal Hutcheson, Co-Producers and Co-Directors; and Joseph Hill, Ceil Lucas, and Carolyn McCaskill, Associate Producers), is the first documentary to highlight the development of Black American Sign Language. Based on extensive interviews with Black signers, linguistic experts, interpreters, natural conversations, and artistic performances by Black ASL users, it documents the development and description of this unique variety of ASL. Different uses of space, directional movement, and facial expression are exemplified by Black ASL users, including a larger signing space for hand movement, the use of two-handed vs. one-handed signs, facial expressions, and borrowing from spoken African American Language leading to a variety of ASL in a way that is similar to the variety used in spoken African American Language. The Black Deaf Community is now embracing the notion of Black ASL as a symbol of solidarity and agency in constructing ethno-linguistic identity.