



2024 LMDA Conference

DRAMATURGY CROSSROADS

Kansas City, Missouri

June 2024



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LAND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory we reside on and a way of honoring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial. It is important to understand the long-existing history that has brought us to reside on the land and to seek to understand our place within that history.

We would like to acknowledge KC Rep's theatre sits on the traditional, ancestral, and current home of Native Americans, Indigenous, and First Nations people. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the many tribal groups from our area including the Osage, Kaw, Missouriia, Shawnee and Wyandot tribes. We honor the elders both past and the present and this calls us to commit to continuing to learn their stories as well as how to be better stewards of the land that we occupy.

LMDA 2024

WELCOME!

Greetings LMDA Conference guests! I am thrilled to serve as the 2024 LMDA Conference Producer, and it is my pleasure to welcome all of you to Kansas City!

Here you will find a beautiful and fitting backdrop for our conference theme: Dramaturgy Crossroads. Kansas City is known for being a cultural and historical crossroads of its own. Our region was originally home to various Indigenous Tribes including the Osage and Kansa (Kaw), whose influence continues to permeate this area. During the 1920s and 1930s, Kansas City also became a major epicenter of jazz and nightlife.

Today, our city continues its long tradition of being a crossroads of culture, music, and artistry. During the 2024 LMDA conference weekend, we look forward to cultivating spaces where the crossroads of cultures, identities, abilities, and generations will thrive. Welcome to Kansas City!

Melonnie Walker
2024 LMDA Conference Producer



CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Registration

On Thursday, June 27th the Registration Desk will be on the first floor of the H&R Block training center (1 H and R Block Way, Kansas City, MO 64105).

On Friday and Saturday, the registration desk will move to the second floor, where many of the conference sessions will be held.

Meals

The only meal provided with full conference registration is Saturday evening's banquet. However, there are plenty of places nearby to grab a bite to eat throughout the conference.

If you purchased a regional lunch with your registration, volunteers will direct you where to go on Friday afternoon. If you didn't purchase a regional lunch in advance, you can do so at the Registration Desk for \$20.



CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Conference Bar

Want to keep the conference comraderie going after the day's sessions have ended? Join us at the conference bar!

Folks can take in food, libations, and good conversation at BARCENTRAL, located on the first floor of the conference hotel.

Conference Hotel Address (KC Marriott Downtown):
200 W 12th Street, Kansas City, MO, 64105

Accessibility

LMDA strives to create fully accessible programming at all of our events and gatherings. If you have accessibility needs that have not yet been addressed, please reach out to a member of the conference team at conference@lmda.org.

Select conference sessions will be ASL interpreted by Turner Interpreting.



CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Slack

LMDA is now using Slack as a communication platform for the membership and we are happy to provide a Slack channel specifically for keeping in touch before, during and after your time in Kansas City.

We hope that Slack can be a useful tool for conference registrants to receive conference announcements as well as communicate with one another about about ancillary activities like carpooling/ridesharing, tourist activities, photo sharing, and emergent events.

As a member benefit, you should have received information on joining our Slack channel in the welcome letter you received when purchasing or renewing your membership. If you did not receive the letter or have questions about our Slack community, you can contact Heather Helinsky, LMDA's VP of Membership, at membership@lmda.org.



KANSAS CITY

INFORMATION

Getting Here

The closest airport to both the conference accommodations and venue is [Kansas City International \(MCI\)](#) (hyperlink attached), which is located approximately 22 miles away (25 minute drive).

At the Kansas City International airport, you can rent a car, use app-based ridesharing services (~\$30 - \$45), schedule a shuttle, or catch a taxi downtown to the hotel or venue. For more information about transportation services from the airport to downtown Kansas City, please visit [FlyKC's website](#) (hyperlink attached).

KANSAS CITY

INFORMATION

Getting Around

While app-based ride-sharing services are available throughout the city, you may want to make use of Kansas City's public transportation to get around:

- The Kansas City Streetcar is an electric streetcar that runs from the River Market to the Crown Center. It is free to ride and provides an easy way around the downtown area.
- RideKC is the local transportation authority, providing free or low-cost bus and bike options for getting around the city.
- Bird hosts electric scooters for private use in the city! Download their app for more details.

Some conference events take place off-site (Hot Topics, LMDA + Dramatists Guild Mixer, and the banquet), and attendees are responsible for transportation to and from these events if they'd like to attend.

KANSAS CITY

INFORMATION

Important Addresses

While a bulk of conference programming will take place at the H&R Block Center, some events will occur off-site.

Here are the addresses for the conference venue and off-site spaces:

Conference Venue (H&R Block Center)

1 H and R Block Way, Kansas City, MO 64105

Conference Hotel (KC Marriott Downtown):

200 W 12th Street, Kansas City, MO, 64105

Hot Topics & DG Mixer (KC Melting Pot Theatre)

3051 Penn Valley Drive, Kansas City, MO 64108

Conference Banquet (Rockhill Grille)

2000 Grand Boulevard, Kansas City, MO 64108

COVID

INFORMATION

LMDA adapts to each conference location's up-to-date guidelines and we will continue to be mindful in addressing Covid protocols in Kansas City. For the most up-to-date information regarding Covid protocols, please visit the [Jackson County website](#) (hyperlink attached).

Testing

We suggest that you take a rapid antigen test on your day of travel and again on the day you return home.

If you develop symptoms that could be Covid-19, please refrain from attending conference events. Be in touch with a member of the conference committee for assistance and support.



CONFERENCE

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

11AM - 1PM	Conference Registration Opens Copaken Stage Lobby
1:30PM - 3PM	Welcome Plenary with Mary Kathryn Nagle Copaken Stage
3:30PM - 4:30PM	“Crossroads of Career and Life as BIPOC Dramaturgs: An Introduction and Guided Conversation for All” hosted by the LMDA BIPOC Affinity Group Room A
5PM	End of conference day 1

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

	Room A	Room B	Room C	Other (Off-site or Copaken)
9AM - 10AM	Dramaturging the Degree: MFAs at the Crossroads		Italy at a Dramaturgical Crossroads: A Dramaturg's Unofficial Practices, Formation & Networking	
10:20AM - 11:20AM	New Paths & Methods: The Crossroads of Translation at Play On Shakespeare	Dramaturgs & Dancewrights : Exploring the Nature and Pedagogy of Dance Dramaturgy	Audience Crossroads of Theatre, Film, and Live Music	
11:40AM - 12:40PM				Black Directors Panel: Cultural Crossroads Illuminated Copaken Stage
12:50PM - 2:20PM	Regional Lunches			



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

	Room A	Room B	Room C	Other (Off-site or Copaken)
2:30PM - 3:30PM	Co-writing the Future: Global Protections in the American New Works Development Market	Design Basics for Artists: Meeting at the Crossroads of Aesthetics and Information	Archiving Dramaturgies: Collecting and Digitizing a Dramaturg's Work	
3:50PM - 4:50PM	New Dramaturgy Tools in the New Play Exchange	Disability Dramaturgy: A Canadian Perspective	A Literary Office Under Construction: Slow Down and Proceed with Care	
5:30PM - 7:30PM				Hot Topics KC Melting Pot Theatre
7PM - 8:30PM				Dramatists Guild & LMDA Mixer KC Melting Pot Theatre

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

	Room A	Room B	Room C	Other (Off-site or Copaken)
9AM - 10AM	KCACTF & the Regional Festival: Mentoring the Next Generation	Intimate Dramaturgies in a Post- Covid Theatre	Cross- Cultural Production Dramaturgy in Action	
10:20AM - 11:20AM	Growing Indigenous and Other Marginalized Dramatists	NPX Recommend -a-thon: In person and on Zoom!	Robots, Aliens, and Deep Waters	
11:40AM - 12:40PM				Interview with Dr. Felicia Hardison Londré Copaken Stage
12:50PM - 1:50PM	Lunch On your own			

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

	Room A	Room B	Room C	Other (Off-site or Copaken)
2PM - 3PM	LMDA Dramaturgy Debut Panel	Meeting Grief at a Crossroads: Ritual Dramaturgy	Potato Chip Dramaturgy	
3:20PM - 4:50PM				Annual General Meeting Copaken Stage
7PM				Annual Banquet Rockhill Grille



PANEL

DESCRIPTIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 27

Welcome Plenary with Mary Kathryn Nagle

Copaken Stage

1:30 - 3PM

Join us for a conversation with playwright Mary Kathryn Nagle, who is part of the KC Rep American Crossroads Residency program.

Mary Kathryn Nagle is a playwright, lawyer, and citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. She is a leading voice among indigenous theatre artists and the majority of her work utilizes drama and history to promote the rights and sovereignty of Native nations. Her plays include *Manahatta*, *Sliver of a Full Moon*, *Sovereignty*, *Reclaiming One Star* and *Crossing Mnisose*. Her work has been developed and produced, most notably at the Public Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arena Stage, Denver Center Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center.



THURSDAY, JUNE 27

Crossroads of Career and Life as BIPOC Dramaturgs: An Introduction and Guided Conversation for All

(Suzi Elnaggar, Martine Kei Green-Rogers, Yasmin Zacaria Mikhael,
Jenna K. Rodgers, Lynde Rosario, Melonnie Walker)

Room A

3:30 - 4:50PM

In this session, we will have a guided conversation with members and supporters of the BIPOC Affinity Group. Each speaker will share a bit about their creative work and/or dramaturgical practice. This session is open to all but will prioritize BIPOC voices in a discussion led by VP of Freelance Yasmin Zacaria Mikhael. The session will cover questions of culturally conscious and informed work, self-advocacy, the power of artistic relationships, the joys and traps of navigating the private/public life, and more.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Dramaturging the Degree: MFAs at the Crossroads

(Art Borreca, Sarah Johnson, Megen Lederman, Bo-Hua Lin, Sheriden Schreyer, Kelly Margaret Smith, Rebecca Weaver, Spencer Wilkes Fields)

Room A

9AM - 10AM

This panel discussion brings together current students and faculty of Dramaturgy MFA programs to discuss the state of the degree and landscape of this particular form of graduate training in dramaturgy. The goal is to end the session with a list of Dramaturgy MFA best practices to be used by MFA program heads to advocate for their students and programs within their institutions.



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Italy at a Dramaturgical Crossroads: A Dramaturg's Unofficial Practices, Formation, and Networking (Davide Cioffrese)

Room C

9AM - 10AM

The session will focus on an analysis of Italy's contemporary dramaturgical situation: one which includes several efficient professionals, but which has yet to properly welcome them in an official capacity within the reality of theatre-making and production. The feedback of LMDA members will be gladly accepted.

New Paths and Methods: The Crossroads of Translation at Play On Shakespeare (Lezlie Cross, Liz Engelman, Andrea Thome, Alex Vermillion)

Room A

10:20AM - 11:20AM

This panel will not only talk about a new method of translation using the Play On Method but to also have a conversation about the crossroads of translating Shakespeare's plays and how the playwrights and dramaturgs approached the task. Our panel will consist of a Play On Shakespeare member who will moderate the conversation; a Play On Shakespeare playwright; and their collaborator and dramaturg on the project.



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Dramaturgs and Dancewrights: Exploring the Nature and Pedagogy of Dance Dramaturgy

(Shelley Graham, Belle Frahm, Emma Rollins, Thomas Jensen)

Room B

10:20AM - 11:20AM

We've found some commonalities in the process of working with dancers on devised projects, dance adaptations, dance theatre, and multicultural dance. Among the four presenters, we have discovered the role of a “dancewright” at the crossroads of playwriting, dramaturgy, and choreography. We will explore with the panelists and attendees the perceived boundaries of dance dramaturgy and where they continue to be challenged.

Audience Crossroads of Theatre, Film, and Live Music

(Liana Irvine)

Room C

10:20AM - 11:20AM

The dramaturgical job can include watching the audience; therefore, understanding an audience's relationship to the format of the material is necessary. This panel explores the intersections of theatre and other media in order to inform dramaturgs about how audiences receive entertainment forms. From this inquiry, we will ask how to use this knowledge to uplift universal-audienceship and put-down competition for "butts in seats".



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Black Directors Panel: Cultural Crossroads Illuminated

(Ile Haggins, Nicole Persley Hodges, Lewis Morrow, Melonnie Walker,
Harvey Williams, Lynn Williams)

Copaken Stage

11:40AM - 12:40PM

"Black Directors Panel: Cultural Crossroads Illuminated" will be a panel discussion of theatre directors and artists who are committed to storytelling. They will be sharing their experiences on productions with and without access to dramaturg professionals.

Regional Lunches

Get to know your fellow conference attendees from your region! If you pre-purchased lunch, you can head to the main lobby to grab your food and then follow your region's representatives to share in conversation with your colleagues.

If you did not pre-purchase lunch with your registration, there are a limited number of spots left that you can purchase at the registration desk. The cost for a regional lunch is \$20 per person.



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Co-writing the Future: Global Protections in the American New Works Development Market for Dramaturgs and Theatre Writers (Emmanuel Wilson)

Room A

2:30PM - 3:30PM

New work development and production is in crisis. Dramaturgs and literary managers stand at the crossroads of the new play development market: alongside theatres, arts organizations, and writers alike. As LMDA and the Dramatists Guild are the two organizations serving and protecting their respective best interests, we hope for a session of this nature to serve as a bridge for re-establishing collective efforts and discussing forward movement between all involved toward a future wherein we feel supported and in dialogue regarding future global protections.

Design Basics for Artists: Meeting at the Crossroads of Aesthetics and Information (Suzi Elnaggar and Yasmin Zacaria Mikhael)

Room B

2:30PM - 3:30PM

Whether it's an educational packet, audience guide, or internal resources for the creative team -- having the basics of design elements and how to use them is a vital skill. This hybrid workshop is open for all skill levels and will have two project choices. Participants may bring their own projects to work on. Laptops are encouraged with at least a free Canva account set up.



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Archiving Dramaturgies: Collecting and Digitizing a Dramaturg's Work as a Crossroads Between Universities, Theatre, LMDA, and ATAP (LaRonika Thomas)

Room C

2:30PM - 3:30PM

How do theatre history archives preserve the work of dramaturgs? What place does a dramaturg's work have in an archive? What might a dramaturgy archive look like? A dramaturg's archive? What effects might an archive of a dramaturg's body of work have on the profession, the discipline, and the scholarship, and the artistry of dramaturgy? How do these questions intersect? I, along with members of LMDA, ATAP, and archivists and librarians across the country, have begun diving into the project of digitizing, archiving, and preserving work. This panel will share lessons learned, future plans, and the many intertwined dramaturgical questions and insights this project has prompted.

New Dramaturgy Tools in the New Play Exchange (Gwydion Suilebhan)

Room A

3:50PM - 4:50PM

The theater field is undergoing radical transformation. Artists in all disciplines are more marginalized than ever, and they need tools to be seen and discovered and to connect with one another. The New Play Exchange has proven to be the single most effective way to make that happen for playwrights, and with the new features you'll learn about in this session, it hopes to provide the same possibility for dramaturgs as well.



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Dissability Dramaturgy: A Canadian Perspective (Jessica Watkin and Eden Middleton)

Room B

3:50PM - 4:50PM

A conversation between Eden Middleton and Dr. Jessica Watkin about recent collaborations in Toronto, Ontario and Calgary, Alberta supporting disabled and non-disabled artists by paying artistic attention to access for artists and audiences. An exploration of disability dramaturgy.

A Literary Office Under Construction: Slow Down and Proceed with Care (Or, Playwrights Foundation, a Case Study) (Heather Helinsky)

Room C

3:50PM - 4:50PM

Literary Offices for new play festivals were not originally constructed to receive the high volume of scripts they receive today. In this session Heather shares a case study the shifting dramaturgical practices at Playwrights Foundation, including transparency with the writing community while making intentional changes from within. Questions addressed may include: How does the dramaturgy of writers responding to the current moment demand new practices? What does a values-centered selection process look like? In a time of scarcity of resources, what opportunities are emerging to celebrate abundance?



FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Hot Topics!

(Emceed by Jane Barnette)

KC Melting Pot Theatre

5:30PM – 7PM

HOT TOPICS speakers present a provocative question, assertion, issue, or project with which they are currently (passionately) engaged to initiate conversations and collaborations, or to address pressing issues for our community. Speakers have just five minutes each to open a door onto their topic.

Presenters: Karen Jean Martinson, Ethan Perskyo, Tiffani Hagan, Jocelyn Buckner, Sierra Rosetta, LaRonika Thomas, Marzi Ashrafian, Amanda Dawson, Suzi Elnaggar

Dramatists Guild + LMDA Mixer

(Sponsored by the Dramatists Guild of America)

KC Melting Pot Theatre

7PM

Join us to meet with theatre writers, dramaturgs, and industry workers with a passion for uplifting new theatre writing! This event is open for all to attend. Light food and drinks will be provided. Representatives from the Dramatists Guild and LMDA will be in attendance.



SATURDAY, JUNE 29

KCACTF & the Regional Festival: Mentoring the Next Generation

(Diane Brewer and Cat Gleason)

Room A

9AM - 10AM

In recent years KCACTF regional festivals have included new programs that respond to the dramaturgical needs of digital and long-distance production as well as include dramaturgs in new play development for a 10-minute play festival. This session will welcome anyone interested in finding out more about KCACTF, those who mentor student dramaturgs, as well as Regional and National Leadership. We will provide an overview of national and regional programs and then lead a discussion and brainstorming session.

Intimate Dramaturgies in a Post-Covid Theatre

(Kate Mulley)

Room B

9AM - 10AM

This interactive workshop invites participants to engage in the question of intimacy on stage in a post-COVID world. Providing a framework for thinking about onstage intimacy in new work using consent-forward practices and creative intimacy direction, the workshop will invite participants to discuss case study plays.



SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Cross-Cultural Production Dramaturgy in Action: “the ripple, the wave that carried me home” and “Wish You Were Here” at Yale Repertory Theatre (Hannah Fennell Gellman)

Room C

9AM - 10AM

This presentation uses the case studies of *the ripple, the wave that carried me home* by Christina Anderson and *Wish You Were Here* by Sanaz Toossi, recently produced at Yale Repertory Theatre. It will discuss how strategies for cross-cultural collaboration informed the dramaturgy work for each production, highlighting both successes and the possibilities for continued growth in myself and the theater industry.

Growing Indigenous and Other Marginalized Dramatists

(Hannah Il-Epstein, Keali'iwahine Hokoana, and Kevin Sparrow)

Room A

10:20AM - 11:20AM

By nurturing local playwrights, actors, and audiences, promoting indigenous narratives, and consulting cultural specialists, we cultivate authenticity and pride in local Hawai'i and Hawaiian culture. Incorporating mo'olelo ensures a vibrant theatrical tradition, bridging the past and present for future generations, both within and outside Hawai'i.



SATURDAY, JUNE 29

NPX Recommend-a-thon: In Person and on Zoom!

(Karen Jean Martinson and Dan Smith)

Room B

10:20AM - 11:20AM

The NPX Recommend-a-Thon (NPX RAT) was dreamed up at the Banff conference and implemented in Fall 2023. These quarterly working sessions provide a calendar slot during which dramaturgs can take some time to promote work that they love. We often find ourselves in a crossroads of urgency - doing work that addresses the most immediate issues that we have. The NPX RAT allows us to carve out co-working time to do the work that sustains us.

Robots, Aliens, and Deep Waters: Exploring the Relationship Between TYA and Speculative Future

(Ashley Chodat)

Room C

10:20AM - 11:20AM

How do we use speculative futures to inspire hope for the next generation? Join emerging Canadian playwright Ashley Chodat as she dives into three of her new TYA works.



SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Interview with Dr. Felicia Hardison Londré

(Jane Barnette)

Copaken Stage

11:40AM - 12:40PM

For over four decades, Dr. Felicia Hardison Londré (Curators' Distinguished Professor of Theatre Emerita,) taught theater history and dramaturgy at UMKC. Most recently, Dr. Londré was president of the nonprofit KC MOlière: 400 in 2022, a city-wide omni-arts initiative to celebrate Molière's 400th birthday and the 200th anniversary of Kansas City's French heritage. In this exclusive interview, moderated by your conference producer Melonnie Walker and conducted with Jane Barnette (University of Kansas), we will discuss Dr. Londré's research about the history of KC theater as well as the state of dramaturgy at the crossroads.

Dramaturgy Debut Panel

(Jane Barnette, Shelley Graham, Karen Jean Martinson, and Suzi Elnaggar;
Debuts: Na An, Liz Bazzoli, Juliet Chia, Aislin Dyer, Belle Frahm, Neah Lekan)

Room A

2:00PM - 3:00PM

This debut panel will offer an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate (or recently graduated) students new to conferencing to present a provocation about a dramaturgy project. Each of the selected student panelists will present for 5 min on their project. This will be followed by a short Q&A session to allow the audience to engage with the presenters



SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Meeting Grief at the Crossroads: Ritual Dramaturgy (Jen Shook and Heidi Wiren Bartlett)

Room B

2:00PM - 3:00PM

If a crossroads is a liminal space, a space of encounter, exchange, and change—a place between and a place of convergence—then grief is a crossroads, a place both of pause and of passing through. This performance presentation offers rituals for navigating this passage, performing embodied research through film, puppetry, collective gesture, and reflective discussion

Potato Chip Dramaturgy

(Lindsay L. Barr, Lydia Cochran, Arly Rubens, Agatha Woodbury)

Room C

2:00PM - 3:00PM

A dramaturgical brain is not something you can really turn-off. Despite our best efforts, even when engaging in "casual" content we find ourselves thinking through the structure, context, and larger societal implications of our consumption. In a time when theaters are struggling to bring audiences back post-covid, what can we learn from mass market consumption? What can we learn from meme-culture? And where does theater fit in to a well balanced media diet?



SATURDAY, JUNE 29

LMDA Annual General Meeting

(Lindsey R. Barr, Jenna K. Rodgers, Anne G. Morgan, Lynde Rosario)

Copaken Stage

3:20PM - 4:50PM

Join LMDA as the organization looks back on the past year of activity and achievement, and looks forward to the 2024/25 season of dramaturgical events and gatherings, including the announcement of the location of the 2025 conference. The AGM is a great opportunity to review all of LMDA's activities, hear from Board and Executive members, and celebrate the volunteers who make all of this possible.

Annual Banquet

Rockhill Grille

7:00PM

Join us at the Rockhille Grille to close out our conference with a communal gathering! Awards presentations and highlights from previous award winners will add extra celebration to the night.

The venue is a little over one mile (~25 minute walk; ~10 minute drive) from the conference hotel and is two stops down on the KC Streetcar (~15 minutes).

There will be a buffet dinner and cash bar.

A banquet ticket is included in the full conference registration rate. If you didn't purchase a full conference registration but would still like to join us at the banquet, you can purchase tickets for \$50. See anyone at the Registration Desk if you'd like to join us!



CONFERENCE SPONSORS

This year's LMDA conference is made possible in part by the generous support of:

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 [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov)

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KANSAS CITY REPERTORY THEATRE

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Thank you for making the LMDA conference all it can be through your financial and in-kind contributions!