

CALL FOR PAPERS

24th Annual Meeting of the British Women Writers Conference

June 2-5, 2016

Hosted by the University of Georgia

Athens, Georgia



Guest Speakers

Ros Ballaster

Professor of Eighteenth-Century Studies
Mansfield College, University of Oxford

Meredith Martin

Associate Professor, Princeton University

Gillian Russell

Gerry Higgins Professor of Irish Studies
University of Melbourne

“I played it with relish.”

-Lucy Snowe

The theme of the 24th annual meeting of the British Women Writers Conference is “Making a Scene,” and we’re excited to welcome papers that play with the elasticity of this phrase vis-à-vis eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writings by women. From the sublime panoramas of “Beachy Head” and the scandalous rehearsals of *Lover’s Vows* in *Mansfield Park* to the landscapes of Helen Huntingdon and the ekphrastic poems of Michael Field, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature by British women writers frequently *makes a scene* as it considers landscape, theatrical performance and the creation or representation of visual art. Additionally, actresses themselves enrich women’s writing of the period; the works and life writings of Charlotte Charke and Fanny Kemble remind us that actresses formed a vital part of the canon of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women writers.

But “making a scene” is also a breach of social decorum; it runs the risk, as Haywood’s *Fantomina* learns despite her calculated use of disguise, of revealing the desire underneath a too ostentatious flirtation. Or it shatters protocol by suggesting the vehemence of any passion. For political radicals also make scenes in British literature, and Barrett Browning’s “Runaway Slave” delivers a powerful one at Pilgrim’s Point. Barrett Browning reminds us that *making a scene* is often a radical, transgressive act, particularly for an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century woman, whose need to be witnessed, heard, or even seen defies the social and political architecture that tries to silence her.

We invite papers and panel proposals that consider any facet of this theme, particularly those in relation to writing scenes, scenes of the mind, landscapes, political demonstrations, courtroom outbursts, and performance more generally. For paper proposals, please send a 300-word abstract and a short bio (in a single attachment) to bwwc2016@gmail.com by **January 5, 2016**. For full panel proposals, please compile all proposals, along with a brief rationale for the panel, into a single document. Papers and panels must address the theme and its application to British women’s literature of the long eighteenth- or nineteenth-centuries. Graduate students whose submissions are

accepted may apply to receive a travel grant sponsored by the British Women Writers Association.

Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

Scenes from the Arts

- Theatrical Performance
- Drama
- Painting
- Sculpture
- Landscapes
- Decorative Arts
- Children's Arts
- Arts and Crafts
- Ekphrasis
- Scenes of Writing
- Travel Writing
- Narrative
- Metafiction
- Settings
- Unrepresentable Scenes

Internal Scenes

- Scenes of the Mind
- Memory
- Daydreams
- Political Dreams
- Utopias

Public Scenes

- The Performance of Everyday Life
- The Performance of Gender
- The Performance of Community
- Emotional Scenes
- Realism

Political Scenes

- Demonstrations
- Courtrooms
- Legislative Scenes
- Campaigns
- Patriotism
- Radicalism

Scenes of the Body

- Bodies on Display
- The Performance of Sexuality
- Sexology
- Flirtation
- Disability and Display

Scenes of the Nation

- Performing Patriotism
- Performing Race
- Performing Empire
- Racism

Scenes of Instruction

- Classrooms and Pedagogy
- Friendships and Performativity
- The Discipline of Children
- Dioramas
- Museums
- Libraries
- The Great Exhibition

Commercial Scenes

- Advertisements
- Window Displays
- Professionalism/Amateurism
- Cosmopolitanism
- Flânerie and Gender

We greatly look forward to your proposals on these and other relevant topics!