

Eudora Welty Society

Call For Papers

American Literature Association

May 26-29, 2022 / Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois

### ***Welty and Performance***

This panel will consider any of the many relationships between Eudora Welty and performance. Topics include but are not limited to 1) Welty's own artistic interactions with performance, 2) performances and technologies of performance such as film that influenced her work, 3) performances of Welty's work in theatre or on film, 4) Welty's performance of self in letters, lectures, book covers, and selfies. Papers might, for example, consider Welty's flirtations with writing for theater (*The Robber Bridegroom*, *Bye-Bye Brevoort*), her attendance at theaters in London and New York, the plays she saw, or her role in founding and supporting New Stage Theatre. They could mull the work of adapting her texts for performance (for instance, "Moon Lake" "Asphodel," "A Fire Was In My Head," "Sister and Miss Lexie"), the process of adaptation, and/or adaptation and performance as interpretation. Or they might consider specific film and stage performances of her work (such as "The Wide Net," "Why I Live at the P.O.," *The Robber Bridegroom*, *The Ponder Heart*). Productive framings include more than theatre. Subjects such as the influence of film performance and technology, the development of television, or histories of dance, song, and music on Welty's writing are most welcome. Papers also might consider her photographs displayed, framed, understood and re-interpreted in varying performance venues. Or investigate Welty's habit of creating amusing alternate identities in her letters, selfies, etc. Performance theory might be relevant across the board. Papers appropriate for this session might also be developed for the planned volume *Welty, Modernism, and Media*, anticipated for inclusion in the University of Mississippi series, *Critical Perspectives on Eudora Welty*.

Please send 250-word abstracts to [pollackh@cofc.edu](mailto:pollackh@cofc.edu) by Dec.1, 2021. Early expressions of interest requested.

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### ***Welty and Ecology***

Eudora Welty's stories attest to her acute attention to the natural world, an interest fed in part by her devotion to her garden. Always careful, as she puts it, to depict "the moon in the right part of the sky," Welty portrayed nature as both setting and agent. The Eudora Welty Society is seeking papers that examine the intersection of Welty's work with ecology, ecocriticism, ecofeminism, and the ecogothic. Also of interest are papers exploring environmental concerns in Welty's fiction, from the clear-cutting of farmland in the Delta to the logging in the hills of Mississippi. We welcome papers that compare Welty's works with those of other writers as well.

Please send 250 word abstract to [sarah\\_ford@baylor.edu](mailto:sarah_ford@baylor.edu) by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

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***Radical Welty Roundtable***

Eudora Welty has never been seen as a conventional /southern writer, but in the last two decades critics have been unearthing the textual and biographical evidence proving just how unconventional for her place and time she really was. In many articles, edited collections, and critical books, the full dimensions of Welty's critique of southern racist ideology from slavery to Jim Crow and the early Civil Rights Movement has been fully contextualized. Her awareness of gender, identity, and sexual diversity, her ability to see the positionality of her characters from a multi-ethnic and global perspective, and her true reworking and transformation of racist and stereotyping norms is being fully explicated. We now can safely state that in her novels, short stories, and essays, Welty was not just commenting on her society, but was using radical creative choices, transforming narrative structure, experimenting with symbols, figurative language, plot and character development to question the accepted norms of social order. Radical Welty was a social justice artist and writer of experimental fiction. We will be looking for brief, ten-minute presentations for this roundtable that address the Radical Welty in any way that this theme sparks your research on her work.

Please send brief proposals to [rebecca.mark@rutgers.edu](mailto:rebecca.mark@rutgers.edu) by December 1<sup>st</sup>.