RIDCH 10th Seminar


Speaker: Professor Joanne Tompkins
Professor in Drama at the School of Communication and Arts, The University of Queensland, Australia.

Language: English
Date: 27 November 2015 (Friday)
Time: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Venue: C0721, 7/F, Ho Man Tin Campus, The Open University of Hong Kong

Abstract:
This paper provides a glimpse of the kind of research that is possible in the humanities (specifically theatre) using large database resources. Based on over 80,000 events in AusStage, the research resource database of Australian performing arts events, this paper focuses on some of the ways in which we can think about performance and performance research quantitatively. This presentation takes as its foundation the differences between the theatre research that helped produce Women’s Intercultural Performance (co-authored in 2000 by Julie Holledge and Tompkins) and intercultural research today. The decade of the 1990s was shaped by political and aesthetic forces that no longer operate in the same ways. Australia has moved from state multiculturalism to an implicit national policy of cultural assimilation with draconian border protection practices. AusStage permits the interrogation of data to analyse cultural transmission across the national borders of Australia. These borders appear to be controlled by transnational and national forces, but network analyses provide a glimpse of how intercultural encounters by artists operate in far more random and chaotic ways. Methodologies that are now available permit the application of techniques of quantitative analysis which significantly change qualitative interpretations. The presentation introduces a digital humanities methodology to intercultural studies of global transmission, with particular reference to maps and networks. The major questions are: what are the forces of border protection operating in Australia (and the region) that attempt to limit the movement of artists, and what does this mean for research in the twenty-first century?

All are welcome.

Enquiry: Ms. Agnes Lam
Tel: 3120 2782
Email: ridch@ouhk.edu.hk
Registration: Please click here for registration.

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