



OPEN TO PERSUASION

An Online Mini-Conference on Jane Austen's Last-Completed Novel
To Benefit The Holy Theatre's *Persuasion* Workshop Fund

Saturday, August 13 and Sunday, August 14, 2022

www.theholytheatre.org

<https://www.theholytheatre.betterworld.org/donate>

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Saturday, August 13, 2022 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. EDT

Alteration and Perhaps Improvement: Four Artists on Adapting *Persuasion*

Panel discussion featuring David Fernandez, Sarah Rose Kearns, Noreen Mughees, and Damianne Scott, moderated by Janet Saidi

David Fernandez is a choreographer and filmmaker whose dance film *Courage*, which tells the story of Jane Austen and her heroines through the medium of ballet, is now in pre-production and scheduled for release in 2023.

Sarah Rose Kearns is a playwright and performer whose stage adaptation of *Persuasion* debuted off-Broadway last year and will be produced in Warwick, NY later this month.

Noreen Mughees is the author of the forthcoming *Sana's Suitors*, a contemporary novel inspired by *Persuasion*, set to be published in the fall of 2023 by Alcove Press.

Damianne Scott is a writer, professor, and the creator of the popular Black Girl Loves Jane Facebook page; she is currently in the process of editing her *Persuasion*-inspired novel *Persuaded* for publication.

Janet Saidi has written and produced stories for National Public Radio, PBS, the BBC and BBC World Service, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor* and more; as “Plain Jane,” she is the creator of the Austen Connection newsletter and podcast.

SATURDAY EVENING

Saturday, August 13, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. EDT

The Loveliest Medium: Character and Characterization in *Persuasion*

Scholarly talks by Jocelyn Harris and Wendy Jones, moderated by Tabrizia Jones

Jocelyn Harris is professor emerita of English at the University of Otago, New Zealand, and the author of many books and essays including "Captain Wentworth and the Duke of Monmouth: Brilliant, Dangerous, and Headstrong" *Persuasions On-line* 31 (2018); *Satire, Celebrity, and Politics in Jane Austen* (2017); *A Revolution Almost beyond Expression: Jane Austen's "Persuasion"* (2007); and *Jane Austen's Art of Memory* (1989).

Wendy Jones is a former English professor and practicing psychotherapist known for her work on the connection between literature and the mind-brain sciences. Her recent publications include *Jane on the Brain: Exploring the Science of Social Intelligence with Jane Austen*, "Jane Austen and the Social Sciences" (in *The Routledge Companion to Jane Austen*), and the ongoing blog Intersubjective for Psychology Today.

Tabrizia Jones is a Young Adult Librarian at the Pelham Parkway-Van Nest Branch of The New York Public Library and the co-editor of the NYPL patron-submitted literary magazine, Library Zine! Voices Across the New York Public Library. She has also served as a volunteer reader for The Highland Book Prize and as a judge for The Diverse Book Awards. She currently expresses her love for books and Jane Austen on her blog, which is titled cup of tea with that book, please.

SUNDAY MORNING

Sunday, August 14, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. EDT

Ask Me Anything (About *Persuasion*): In the Weeds with Resident Experts

Open discussion with David Shapard and Lena Yasutake, moderated by Lakshmi Gandhi

David Shapard is a frequent speaker on Austen who has edited and annotated all six of her novels for Anchor Books. He graduated with a Ph.D. in European History from the University of California at Berkeley, where he specialized in the eighteenth century. His deeply-researched and popular edition of *Persuasion* has remained in print continuously since 2010.

Lena Ruth Yasutake is an educator, activist, and community-builder who is currently serving as dramaturg for The Holy Theatre's workshop production of *Persuasion*. She presented a talk called Accessibility Through Adaptations of Austen at the JASNA AGM in 2021 and she serves as a member of the JASNA committee for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. She dedicated to bringing the joys of Austen's writings to new, younger, and even more diverse audiences.

Lakshmi Gandhi became enthralled by Jane Austen after her mother bought her a paperback copy of *Pride and Prejudice* just before a cross-country airline trip. Since then, she's taken every opportunity to write about Austen adaptations and other historical dramas through her work as a freelance journalist and has covered everything from the South Asian representation in *Bridgerton* to Freida Pinto's influences in *Mr. Malcolm's List*. Along with her close friend Asha Sundararaman, she also writes and edits The Lakshmi and Asha Show, a popular weekly newsletter that covers books, movies and South Asian identity.