

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# Remixing the Classics: Digital Adaptation and the Literary and Dramatic Canon

A free, online conference on Tuesday 9 August 2022

Sponsored by the Association of Adaptation Studies and  
the Remixing the Classics Research Network

What does the adaptation of literary and dramatic classics look like in an increasingly digital age? How might mixed and virtual realities, immersive and multimedia environments, videogames and creative applications of social media rewrite canonical texts in ways that are provocative and illuminating, but potentially also reductive and limiting? We are seeking contributions for a one-day, online, free conference on digital adaptations of canonical texts, and a follow-on special issue of the journal *Adaptation* exploring this subject matter.

When Linda Hutcheon published the second edition of *A Theory of Adaptation* in 2012, she began by considering the rise of digital media since the book's original debut. Was the resulting 'shift' in adaptation practices—characterised by a proliferation of platforms, more involvement from fan communities, new creative forms and greater slippage between creation and reception—'one of degree or, more radically, of kind'? In the book's epilogue, Siobhan O'Flynn outlined some of the effects of 'the social web' on transmedia storytelling, but both noted that there was still much research to be done in this rapidly evolving field.

A decade later, further scholarly work on digital adaptations of classic texts has appeared, though much of it has focused on specific authors or texts. Such research has highlighted how digital adaptations blur the lines between authors/performers and readers/audiences, extend the literal and figurative space of the book/stage, and provoke debates about what constitutes a thoughtful, engaging, significant—in a word, 'good'—adaptation of a classic text. This conference and special issue aim to bring such work together, and to explore digital adaptation as a phenomenon across authors, time periods, genres, and disciplines.

Papers from theoretical, practice-based, and pedagogical perspectives are all welcome, and questions for discussion might include:

- What do new digital technologies bring—artistically, pedagogically, politically—to the re-telling of old stories?

- What kinds of knowledge and access can digital adaptations open up for audiences, and what sorts of engagement might they inhibit?
- To what extent do digital adaptations reinforce the hegemony of existing literary and dramatic canons, and to what extent do they destabilise them?
- What impact do the interactive capabilities of many digital technologies have on the way audiences engage with canonical texts, and how does this relate to other work understood as transmedia?
- What are the ethical implications of digital adaptations that elicit or make use of audiences' biofeedback or other forms of embodied identity?
- How might digital adaptations aid in the teaching of classic texts and how might they disrupt or hinder it?
- How does the digital divide and unequal global access affect the creation and distribution of digital adaptations, and how can such issues be addressed?
- What are the challenges facing both creators and audiences when it comes to realising the creative, experiential and educational potential of digital adaptations?
- To what extent can digital adaptations be considered a cohesive genre, and to what extent do the differences between digital technologies mean that we must examine them separately?

Please submit abstracts (up to 200 words) for 15-minute papers to Erin Sullivan ([e.sullivan@bham.ac.uk](mailto:e.sullivan@bham.ac.uk)) and Deborah Cartmell ([djc@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:djc@dmu.ac.uk)) by 1 June 2022.

Papers from the conference will be considered for a special issue of *Adaptation*: <https://academic.oup.com/adaptation>.

For more information on the Remixing the Classics network, which is hosting a series of free events on digital adaptations during 2022, see <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/remixingtheclassics>.