



Theatre and Performance Studies

University of Missouri

1/25/2026

Dear Publications Council Chair Sloop:

Please accept this application for editor of *Text and Performance Quarterly*. This journal and NCA have been the most consistent academic home for me across my studies and throughout my career. I have attended the NCA Convention every year since 1992, having only missed the opportunity to participate twice: once for cancer surgery and once for death of a parent. This organization is deeply important to me and I am energized by the prospect of continuing to serve it in the role of journal editor. In this letter I will address the questions asked in the call and also propose ideas for the journal should I be named as editor. I have additionally included a letter of recommendation from the current *TPQ* editor Kimberlee Perez.

I began my entry into the field of performance studies as an undergraduate at Northwestern University, studying with founders of the discipline (Wallace Bacon, Paul Edwards, Frank Galati) and emerging scholars who would later make strong contributions to the field and edit the journal (Trish Suchy, Judith Hamera 1998-2000). As a Master's student at Arizona State University I was able to assist in the collected writing for *HIV Education: Performing Personal Narratives* as Fred Corey (*TPQ* editor 2013-2015) and Kristin Valentine brought scholars from across the country together to see how performance could address societal needs with HIV/AIDS. I was deeply honored to serve as assistant to the editor for Paul Gray as a doctoral student at the University of Texas (1996-1998). There, my work on learning to collaborate with researchers in our field began to blossom. When Heidi Rose, whom I had taken courses from at ASU, invited me to join her editorial team, I was thrilled to serve as editor of "The Performance Space" for three years from 2010-2013 (volumes 30, 31 and 32). "The Performance Space" began as the section of *TPQ* dedicated to performance scripts, performative writing, and experimental forms of performance as communication through dialogue, response, and other means of scholarly/artistic critical engagement. During this time I also served as co-editor with Bryant K. Alexander for a special issue on Oral Interpretation and Ethnography, *Text and Performance Quarterly*, Vol. 32: 3, 2012.

In the years that have followed I have remained an active board member and have made contributions, particularly to issues about the changing nature of our field. Serving as a department chair at the University of Missouri and transforming not only the work, but now officially the department name from Theatre to Theatre and Performance Studies, was an important area of focus for me in recent years. Now, I am more ready to continue my career in focusing on the journal. This is a critical moment in our trajectory. How does performance contribute to society and how does society influence our performance work? These questions pertain not only to academia, but to the larger performance field on a global stage.

The call for editors asks that we share our editorial plans and projections for the journal. I am very interested in creating a platform for more performative research. The field has scholars involved in very rigorous work that draws on performance as a methodology and not just an “end product.” While a decade ago we may have been relegating this work to “The Performance Space” and giving a template on how it was produced (i.e. a script with two to three respondents), I posit that there is performative work that belongs at the heart of the field’s research. *TPQ* is in the position to be a prominent resource for this type of scholarship that bridges other methodologies in performance ethnography, autobiography, critical studies, narrative, etc.

Strategies are vital to increase inclusion, diversity, equity and access in the journal. I would like to include more attention to our work via digital media platforms. There is a great deal of critical understanding about performance to be gained through drawing a wider, and more current audience. As a journal we also need to be exploring the various aspects of digital media and performance, examining how our work contributes to the burgeoning explosion of AI. A special issue on the intricacies of AI and performance would also create a more global audience as well as performers who use this form to express their art.

On a personal level, I would very much like to increase the diversity of contributors to the journal to include more voices of junior scholar/artists. We need to create a stronger bridge of their work to tie in our foundation with the future. This could begin with a special issue dedicated to this work. I envision a call for new voices along with pairing critical responses to their work by more senior scholars in the field. This creation of dialogue between generations would serve to lift the work to a new level as well as show

If selected, I agree to observe and support NCA’s publication policies and commit to using the Taylor & Francis online system for manuscript submission, review and editing. I commit to meeting editorial deadlines and adhering to the NCA policy on affirmative action and nondiscrimination and the NCA statement on diversity, equity and inclusion. I am committed to implementing strategies aimed at increasing inclusion, diversity and access in the journal.

My goals for the journal to draw a more diverse audience are ambitious, but I know that this is the time for unity. As the arts are increasingly more threatened, it is time to show a collective of artist/scholars invested in the research, education, and dissemination of critical engagement with performance.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Heather Carver". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Heather