

Doctoral Research Awards Report
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In June 2023 I had the opportunity to go to Germany for two weeks funded by the Doctoral Research Awards. My first stop was at the *Journal for Contemporary Drama in English* Conference in Erfurt. The theme of the conference was “Theatre and Community” which explored and problematised theatre for, in, and by communities. Here I presented a paper called “Working-Class Anger, Breaking Community and Creating Coalition in Scottee’s *Bravado* (2017) and *Class* (2020)” which explored queer solo performance, working-class representation, and the disruption of community. Despite my nerves the presentation went well and I received helpful feedback from scholars in my field. Since attending this conference, I have expanded this talk into an article which will be published with *JCDE* in Summer 2024.

After Erfurt my next stop was Berlin. I had a pretty packed schedule whilst in Berlin which involved theatre, museums, interviewing drag artists, and the occasional stop for a bratwurst and a beer.

On my first evening I attended the (in)famous Silverfuture Bar, a queer and trans* staple and performance venue in the Neukölln district. The night I was there drag troupe “Chaos Uranus” performed a set that explored queer futurity and joy through lip sync, song, and indeed a little chaos. The queer performance scene in Berlin remains strong and funded, unlike that of London. Experiencing it first-hand gave me insight into the lineage of queer community and performance as it could be London and the UK, helping me to build my methodologies for my thesis. I had the chance to interview some of the performers afterwards which will be a vital aspect of my consideration of the migration of queer forms to the mainstream.



Between queer performance venues I paid a visit to the Schwules Museum (gay museum) which had an exhibition on important LGBTQ+ figures and their time in Berlin. This featured Audre Lorde whose theories on Black feminism play an important part of the theoretical framework of my thesis which aims to use an intersectional approach to social class in queer solo performance.

On the last nights of my trip, I attended the “Performing Exiles” theatre festival. The festival related directly to my research as it presented a programme of

performance, discourse, and literature on diaspora and making community through art. In particular, I found Lina Majdalanie's and Rabih Mroué's *Hartaqāt (Hérésies)*, based on three texts by the Lebanese authors Rana Issa, Souhaib Ayoub and Bilal Khbeiz, particularly moving. This performance explored how race, class, queerness and forced exile interact in identity building.

I'm incredibly grateful to the Doctoral School for funding this travel. The financial implications of COVID-19 on higher education alongside the worsening cost of living crisis directly affect queer and working-class researchers, such as myself.

This award helped me strive towards amplifying my research internationally and bringing about positive change in UK performance practice and scholarship through widened perspectives.

