CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers are invited for a major international, interdisciplinary conference to be held at Senate House, London, June 13-15th, 2013. Coinciding with the 60-year anniversary of the Coronation, this conference will explore the ways in which the ideal of a new (or second) Elizabethan age has been variously defined, promoted, and challenged in Britain and the Commonwealth. Following closely after the London Olympics and Jubilee celebrations, it will also offer a fitting opportunity to explore the ways in which these values continue to present themselves in contemporary definitions of national identity, culture, and character.

In the years surrounding the Coronation of Elizabeth II, British political and cultural life was suffused with a language that both prophesized and idealized the potential for a new Elizabethan era. The self-styled new Elizabethans identified an innate national character in the accomplishments of a vanished age. This age was apparently manifest in ‘Shakespearian’ music, theatre, and poetry — and characterized by imperial expansion and exploration, a clear sense of social hierarchy, a fierce and heroic spirit of patriotic individualism, and the brave resistance of a mighty little people to larger invading forces.

Such constructions inevitably responded to the anxieties and aspirations of a post-war, post-imperial Britain. The new Elizabethans characteristically asserted the latent, continuous presence of the essential spirit of an earlier era, invoking its legacy for the forging of a new, contemporary nation. It is the aim of this conference to explore the informing values and assumptions behind such constructions, to investigate their manifestation in various contexts and forms, and to expose the ways in which they continue to be promoted in contemporary social, cultural, and political definitions of modern identity in relation to Britain and the Commonwealth. To that end, the event will be organized around two complementary themes: ‘Origins and the New Elizabethan Moment’ and ‘Cultural and Social Legacies: Staging a New Elizabethan Era.’

Papers are invited from a variety of critical and disciplinary perspectives. We partic-
ularly encourage contributions from those working in history, literature, politics, religion, music, theatre, film and television, cultural studies, sport, design, and visual art. Ideally, papers will engage with such informing themes as nostalgia, patriotism, heritage, progress, tradition, national character, and/or nation itself.

Possible areas of exploration include (but are certainly not limited to):

- The Festival of Britain
- The Arts Council and cultural policy
- Bloomsbury and Elizabethanism
- Church, Reformation, and devotion
- Jubilee and/or Coronation celebrations
- Everest, exploration, and adventure
- International receptions of New Elizabethanism
- History and modern historiography
- Constitutional definitions
- Political/cultural constructions of Commonwealth
- Power, duty, leadership, and gender
- Human rights and national values
- Class and social hierarchy
- Race, citizenship, and belonging
- Modern theatre and modern Britain
- National iconography and design
- Shakespeare in a new Elizabethan age
- Music and national tradition
- Sport and nation
- National cuisine
- Satire and subversion
- New Elizabethanism and popular culture
- Writing the state-of-the-nation
- National myth and/or ritual

Confirmed speakers include:

Michael Bogdanov
Edward Bond
Richard Eyre
Michael Hirst

Dr Scott Anthony (History, University of Cambridge)
Professor Arthur Aughey (Politics, University of Ulster)
Professor Stephen Banfield (Music, Bristol University)
Professor Vernon Bogdanor (Institute for Contemporary History, King’s College London)
Professor Rob Carson (English Literature, Hobart and William Smith)
Professor Becky Conekin (History, Yale University)
Dr Rob Gossedge (English Literature, Cardiff University)
Dr Ankhi Mukherjee (English Literature, University of Oxford)
Professor Helen Phillips (English Literature, Cardiff University)
David Prosser (Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada)
Professor Jeffrey Richards (Cultural History, Lancaster University)
Professor Paul Stevens (English Literature, University of Toronto)
Professor Heather Wiebe (Music, University of Virginia)
Professor Richard Wilson (Shakespeare Studies, Kingston University)
Ghislaine Wood (Senior Curator, Victoria and Albert Museum)

Proposals (max. 250 words) for papers of 20 minutes should be sent to the conference organizer, Dr Irene Morra (Cardiff University), at newelizabethanconference@hotmail.com by 15 December 2012.

REFERENCE: