CFP: Civic Performance: Pageantry and Entertainments in Early Modern London

Proposals are sought for a collection of essays on the topic of Civic Performance: Pageantry and Entertainments in Early Modern London, edited by J. Caitlin Finlayson (University of Michigan-Dearborn) and Amrita Sen (Oklahoma City University).

Pageantry in sixteenth and seventeenth century London played a major role in civic life not merely as spectacle but as a means of formulating, articulating, and often transforming civic identity. Residents and visitors to the city partook of these entertainments on the very streets that came to physically and symbolically define the urban space. Civic Performance: Pageantry and Entertainments in Early Modern London, seeks to bring together essays that explore the civic nature of these events, including civic identity and values, civic history, and Early Modern London's socio-political controversies. This collection also seeks to address how these London pageants and entertainments negotiate the nature and limits of civic space, citizenship, and commerce.

There has been a recent upsurge of critical interest in Early Modern pageantry in part generated by research initiatives such as the Nichols project at the University of Warwick and also by recent critical works such as Tracey Hill’s Pageantry and Power: A Cultural History of the Early Modern Lord Mayor's Show 1585-1639 (2011) and David Bergeron's English Civic Pageantry, 1558-1642 (rev. ed. 2003). While current criticism provides important insights into the context and mechanisms of civic pageantry and entertainments, our proposed collection of essays aims to juxtapose questions of civic negotiation with global trade and the influx of foreigners, draw upon digital humanities to better understand the route of pageants and the representation of Early Modern urban space, and bring together different modes of civic pageantry, entertainments and spectacle.

Essays for this collection may be on any form of civic pageantry and entertainments, including (but not limited to) processions, royal entries, Lord Mayor's Shows, water pageantry, the public pageantry of funeral processions, civic entertainments for visiting dignitaries or the opening of new buildings/spaces/utilities, etc.

Topics for this collection might address (but are not limited to):
• good governance and civic pride;
• civic history and myth;
• London as myth, ideal or gritty reality;
• London as a performance space;
• water pageantry and the Thames as a site of performance;
• the role of the civic funding (e.g. Livery Companies) and organization;
• civic drama and civic pageantry;
• eyewitness accounts and the London audience;
• how music, costumes, architectural devices, stage properties, etc. shape the experience of spectacle and pageantry;
• how the limitations of different London venues or the history of specific public performance sites impacts the enactment and reception of pageantry/entertainments;
• the role of print in the circulation of (and codification of) pageantry/entertainments between social and literary contexts.

Submit a 500-word abstract and c.v. by December 15, 2013 to both J. Caitlin Finlayson (Associate Professor, University of Michigan-Dearborn) at efinlay@umd.umich.edu and Amrita Sen (Assistant Professor, Oklahoma City University) at asen@okcu.edu.