Performing for God and Country: Branson Entertainment and The Rise of the Christian Right

*a Performing Arts Department colloquium*

Friday, October 1, 2021 | 4:00 p.m. | Umrah Hall 140

This colloquium is free and open to the public.

This presentation examines how performers in the popular tourist destination of Branson, Missouri manifest the idea of “family values,” a key phrase in the lexicon of the Christian Right political movement in the United States. Over the past sixty years, Branson shows have created experiences for their audiences that tie normative ideas of family to support for free market capitalism and a narrow, racialized definition of American citizenship. At the same time, this talk will examine the tension inherent in performing normative “family values” in the queer space of the theatre.

Joanna Dee Das is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Washington University in St. Louis. Her research interests include dance in the African diaspora, musical theater dance, and the politics of performance in the twentieth century.