

PERCIVAL

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Abstract submissions are invited for PERCIVAL: the first conference dedicated to the work of American author Percival Everett ever held in the UK.

Everett Studies is at a key stage of its development, and 2024 represents a pivotal moment in Everett's career generally – as shown by the publication of his 24th novel *James* by major publishing houses, and the Academy Award and BAFTA wins of *American Fiction*, which is an adaptation of his 2001 novel *Erasure*. The first two Everett monographs were also published in 2019 and 2020 (written by the American scholars Derek C. Maus and Anthony Stewart), and in 2021 and 2022 Everett was a Pulitzer Prize and Booker Prize finalist. In British academia, Everett has been historically underappreciated and underdiscussed despite his increasing reputation elsewhere or in other sectors.

This conference will take place on Friday the 6th of December 2024 at King's College London, with support from the British Association for American Studies. It seeks to accelerate the growing research interest in Everett's work in the UK through collaboration with international scholars (particularly from the US and France) who have worked on or taught Everett for decades. Plans for the event include an "Everett in Context" roundtable featuring a French translator of Everett's work (Anne-Laure Tissut), a publisher of his work from Influx Press (Kit Caless), and a documentary filmmaker who has directed a film about him (Alexandre Westphal). The event will also include a cinema screening of this documentary – *L'écrivain et son double* – as well as a keynote lecture from a guest speaker.

This event invites 250-word abstract submissions for 20-minute individual paper presentations by students and scholars at all career stages, as well as full panel submissions of three 20-minute papers. Postgraduate and early-career researchers are particularly encouraged to submit. Papers are welcome in traditional and new or innovative formats. Abstracts will be gladly received on, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- Everett's novels, short stories, poetry, or children's book and the topics of academia, autofiction, metafiction, or (post-)postmodernism
- Everett's literary work and the detective, western, Greek myth, epistolary, or Choose Your Own Adventure genres
- Everett's work and humour, comedy, parody, or pastiche
- The subjects of race, inequality, or history in Everett's work
- *James* and its position within Everett's oeuvre
- Everett alongside other contemporary American authors, such as Paul Beatty, Ben Lerner, George Saunders, Brandon Taylor, David Foster Wallace, Jesmyn Ward, and Colson Whitehead
- Everett's work in interdisciplinary contexts, alongside fields such as Film and Television Studies or Philosophy
- *American Fiction* or the unmade adaptation of Everett's 1983 novel *Suder*
- Everett's paintings or other non-literary work

250-word abstracts and 75-word bios (with an additional 150-word panel description if submitting as a full panel) should be sent in the body of an email to george.kowalik@kcl.ac.uk.

Abstract deadline: **9th of August**. Confirmation of conference programme: **6th of September**.