



Arts and Artistry from the New Deal and Beyond  
October 19-21, 2017

**CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS**

Arkansas State University opens a call for presentations for a public symposium in conjunction with the inaugural Johnny Cash Heritage Festival to be held in Dyess, Arkansas, Oct. 19-21, 2017. The symposium, “Johnny Cash Heritage Festival: Arts and Artistry from the New Deal and Beyond,” is co-sponsored by the Historic Dyess Colony: Johnny Cash Boyhood Home and the A-State Heritage Studies Ph.D. Program.

Symposium organizers particularly seek proposals that address how the New Deal era resettlement colony influenced the life and music of Johnny Cash. Many of his songs are stories of actual experiences in Dyess, while others reflect values shaped in Dyess, including love of family, a strong work ethic, and concern for the downtrodden and marginalized groups and individuals in society. Though the focus is on his early life, all Johnny Cash-related topics will be considered.

Additionally, we welcome presentations that provide insight in the New Deal heritage that shaped the life of Johnny Cash and those around him. Cash’s childhood spent in one of the New Deal’s greatest social and economic experiments placed him squarely in the center of New Deal cultural programs focused on common men and women. Cash not only experienced daily life in a federal colony, but other New Deal cultural programs were all around him: the mural painted in the nearby Osceola post office, the WPA film “Life On the Colony” presented at the Dyess Community Building, the WPA posters on bulletin boards in the Dyess Administration Building, the music coming over the battery-operated radio in the Cash home, the government photographers who roamed the colony capturing the faces of rural America, and numerous other such efforts to put Americans to work.

Organizers primarily are interested in presentations that break away from the standard format of reading research papers. Research and artistic presentations that incorporate music, images, film, computer graphics, and other interactive elements will be given first preference. The scholarly content also should be presented in ways that appeal to more generalized audiences and non-specialists in particular disciplines.

The symposium is a rare opportunity for participants to embrace the environment in which Cash grew up – with sessions taking place at the Visitors Center in his hometown of Dyess. For further information, contact the symposium chair or visit <http://johnnycashheritagefestival.com>. Deadline for entries is June 16, 2017. Each entry should consist of:

Presenter’s name and affiliation and a 150-word abstract of the presentation as well as a current Vita (2 pages max). Please include your address, phone number, e-mail address, and the technical needs for your presentation.

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