

Level: undergraduate upper division
Focus: history
System: semester
Class size: 10-15

Theatre History II: The 18th Century to the Present

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Office: Jones 101
Office Hours: M 11am-12pm
F 1-2pm

Course Intro:

Welcome to Theatre History II! This class covers the major movements and traditions in world theatre during the modern period: the 18th century to the present. In this course, we will look at modernism as a global phenomenon, examining the ways in which theatrical practices became more and more interconnected as nations came into contact with one another through the improved transit, improved communication, and colonial ambitions that have shaped our world from the 18th century to now.

The course is split into two distinct halves:

The first half of the course is a sweeping geographical survey of modernism across the major continents. Every play we read in this half will be from a different country and represent a different theatrical movement within modernism. Going in chronological order as well as by region, we will see how time and place influence the trends of modernism as they emerge and react to one another.

After midterms, our orientation will shift to viewing a grab-bag of plays from different times and cultures through the lens of modernism's several defining traits. Each week will "spotlight" one aspect of modernism and give examples of plays that use it. So, for example, one week will focus on interpretation as a dominant feature of modernist play-making, while another will look at the influence of realism as a new mode particular to the modern era. In this way, we can see commonalities across the modern era that transcend geography.

The format of this course is lecture-discussion.

Grade Breakdown and Assignments:

Your grade in this course will be determined as follows:

- Attendance and Participation – 21%
- Reading Responses – 17%
- Midterm Presentation – 9%
- Written Midterm – 9%
- Paper I: Modernist Playwrighting Exercise – 10%
- Paper II: Geographical Compare/Contrast Essay – 10%
- Paper III: Influential Playwright Research Paper – 10%
- Performance Lab – 5%
- Final Exam – 9%

Each of these components is explained in detail below.

Attendance and Participation:

Theatre-making is a group effort, and requires the presence and active participation of all involved. Even the more “academic” aspects of theater (like dramaturgy) require that you be a team player, show up when you are needed, share your ideas verbally in group settings, and actively engage with the ideas of others. Because these skills are so important to our field, attendance and participation is the largest single portion of your grade in this class. Coming to class on time, committing to being present (i.e. not on your phone), and engaging respectfully with your classmates are practices that you will need to cultivate in order to earn a good attendance and participation grade in this class.

Respectful Engagement: The free and critical exchange of ideas is largely what a university education is all about, and there is no topic that is off-limits in this class. Because of this, and because the plays that we will be reading engage with many aspects of the human experience (some of which may be sensitive or politicized), it is vital that we approach all class discussions with respect for one another. While it is perfectly acceptable to disagree with ideas expressed by your classmates, and to refute those ideas with your own points, you must always direct your criticisms toward the points made and not toward the speaker. There is a difference between a disagreement and a personal attack, and personal attacks or insults toward a classmate will not be tolerated. Furthermore, personal attacks against a classmate that are based in their membership in a protected identity category (on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.) may put the attacker in violation of the Campus Policy Prohibiting Harassment & Sexual Misconduct (viewable at <https://www.pugetsound.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/policies/campus-policies/campus-policy-prohibiting-hara/>) and make them subject to official disciplinary action on the part of the university. It is important that you do participate in

class discussion and engage with your classmates, but equally important that you do so in a manner that fosters respectful dialogue.

Calculating Attendance and Participation: We have a total of 43 class sessions this semester, each worth 0.5% of your final grade. Each day that you show up to class on time, stay the whole time, and participate productively in class discussion will earn you the full 0.5%. Days that you are late, leave early, do not participate, or some combination of the three will earn you partial points for the day in proportion to the severity of the partial absence or lack of participation. Days that you are absent will be recorded as zeros. At the end of the semester, I will drop one zero from each student's grade, so you get one free absence.

Excused Absences: I grant excused absences for illness or family emergency only, and even then you must e-mail me *in advance* of the class you are going to miss. Absences will not be excused retroactively. Excused absences earn half credit for the day missed.

Reading Responses:

For each day that reading is assigned, you will send me your (quick and informal) first impression of the reading over Moodle. These impressions need not be long; in some cases just a sentence will do. In whatever number of sentences you need, tell me your gut reaction to the reading and why you felt that way. This is a subjective exercise, so there are no “wrong” reactions. If you find something particularly interesting, tell me about it! If you were bored to tears, tell me about it! If you found the reading confusing, frustrating, and deliberately obtuse, tell me about it! In each case, though, remember to include a “because” that relates back to the reading itself (interesting because that was an unusual plot twist, boring because there was no narrative, etc.). Reading makes up the bulk of the work that you will do in this course, and these responses will ensure that you receive concrete grade credit for having done it.

Calculating Response Credit: There are 36 class days for which reading is assigned, and for each you will send me a response worth 0.5% of your final grade. Because it is important for discussion that you come to class having already completed the day's reading, I only give credit for responses sent *before* the start of class on the corresponding day. However, at the end of the semester I will drop two zeros from each student's response grades. This means that if you forget to send your reaction on time, you will still be able to earn the full 17%—provided that you do not do so habitually. Responses are not graded; each is a full- or no-credit assignment. Be forewarned that if your response is not grounded in the reading (i.e. missing the “because” portion), you will not receive credit for that response.

Projects:

There are five major projects in this class: three papers and two presentations given as part of midterm & final exams, respectively.

Papers:

1) **Paper I: Modernist Playwriting Exercise**

Write a short scene or one-act in a “modern” style, then write a short position paper saying why you made the choices you did and what makes your scene particularly modern. **Due Monday, February 12**

2) **Paper II: Geographical Compare/Contrast Essay**

Compare and contrast any two plays from different regions we studied in the first half of the course. Try to draw links and trace lines of influence across continents, as well as specifying how they differ and fit in with their respective regions. What makes both these plays “modern”? **Due Monday, April 2**

3) **Paper III: Influential Playwright Research Paper**

Pick one of the playwrights below, explain how his Norton play fits into trends in modernism we’ve studied, and weave in your own research on how that playwright has been influential. **Due Monday, April 23**

Choices: Büchner, *Woyzeck*; Strindberg, *Miss Julie*; Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*; O’Neill, *Long Day’s Journey into Night*; Genet, *The Maids*; Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Miller, *Death of a Salesman*; Pinter, *The Homecoming*; Shepard, *Buried Child*; or Mamet, *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

Presentations:

Midterm Research Project

The modern period saw the rise of the star actor as a phenomenon. For the presentation component of your midterm, you will pick one of the early star actors listed below, research that person, and give a presentation on their life and influence on the theater. Presentations are to include a short acting demonstration given in the style of your chosen actor, as nearly as you can reconstruct. If you like, you may team up with a classmate or two to present a scene for the acting demonstration portion, with each of you acting in the style of the actor you presented on. Only one student may present on any given actor. Presentations will be given **Monday, March 5** and **Wednesday, March 7**.

Choices: David Garrick, François-Joseph Talma, Madame de Stael, Konrad Ekhof, Caroline Neuber, Karoline Jagemann, Sarah Siddons, Edmund Kean, Siri von Essen, Sarah Bernhardt, Ira Aldridge, Edwin Booth, Buffalo Bill Cody, Ellen Terry, Konstantin Stanislavski, Mei Lanfang, or Stella Adler

Performance Lab

The practice of new play development—editing a new script through a rehearsal process—is a characteristic trait of modernism. As part of your final exam for this course, the class will be split into two groups. Each group will develop one of the plays written for the modernist playwrighting exercise through rehearsal and perform it on the day of the final exam. Each group will designate one student as writer-in-residence, another as director, and the rest as actors (if there is disagreement about how to assign these roles, roles will be chosen by lot). Groups will rehearse independently and continuously rewrite the script as needed. On the day of the final, each group will give a 15-minute performance and then we will have a short talkback with the entire class about the process. The written final will constitute the second hour of the final exam.

Schedule: Groups will be assigned at the beginning of week 7, after all scripts have been returned to their authors with feedback. By the end of week 7 (**Friday, March 2**) you will decide who will perform which roles and send me group job assignments via e-mail. You may then work at your own pace until the day of the final exam (**Monday, May 7**) when you will present your scenes.

Required Reading:

The required course materials for this class are the following:

- Gainor, J. Ellen, Stanton B. Garner Jr., and Martin Puchner, eds. *The Norton Anthology of Drama, Second Edition* (volumes 1 and 2). New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company (2014). ISBN: 978-0-393-92151-9 and 978-0-393-92152-6
- Gerould, Daniel, ed. *Theatre/Theory/Theatre: The Major Critical Texts from Aristotle and Zeami to Soyinka and Havel*. New York: Applause Theatre & Cinema Books (2000). ISBN: 1-55783-527-6
- Course reader (available in the bookstore)

You will additionally be conducting independent historical research for which you will need to utilize outside resources through Collins Library or Summit. Our department liaison librarian is Lori Ricigliano (ricigliano@pugetsound.edu). She is available to help you with any research questions pertaining to theatre.

Copyright and Fair Use: Course materials are for educational purposes only and limited to students enrolled in the course. They are protected by copyright law and may not be copied, downloaded, stored, transmitted, shared or changed in any way.

Policies:

Turning in work:

E-work: I prefer to receive assignments electronically. Please turn in all papers, bibliographies, and other written assignments via email, not in hard copy. I will return assignments with corrections and comments by email. Reading responses will be submitted through Moodle.

Late Work: All assignments are due by the start of class on the due date. I do accept late work, but all late assignments will be graded down by *half a letter grade per day that it is late*. This means that an assignment that would have earned a B+ but is one day late would earn a B-, if two days late a C, etc. Assignments that are turned in on the due date but after the start of class time count as one day late already.

Extensions: If there is some urgent reason you will not be able to get me your work by the deadline (family emergency, technological failure, etc.), please email me *before the deadline* to explain your situation and request an extension. Extensions exist at my discretion. Extensions will not be issued retroactively, so be sure to email in advance of the deadline.

Email: I check my email once per business day. If you send me an email, please allow me at least 24 hours to respond. Also, please read through the syllabus and any available prompts before emailing me. It may be that your question has already been answered there.

Plagiarism: All students are expected to be familiar with policies against plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty as laid out in the Academic Handbook (<https://www.pugetsound.edu/files/resources/academic handbook2017-2018.pdf>).

If I discover an instance of plagiarism, including failure to cite sources, the student will receive a zero on the assignment in question, be required to attend a meeting with me and possibly the department chair, and may be subject to further disciplinary actions on the part of the university. If you are confused about what constitutes plagiarism, both the Writing Center and Collins Library can be helpful resources. Their pages on plagiarism are a good place to start:

Writing Center: <https://www.pugetsound.edu/academics/academic-resources/cwlt/writing-advisor-schedule/writing-resources/plagiarism/>

Collins Library: <http://research.pugetsound.edu/academicintegrity>

Student assistance:

Office of Accessibility and Accommodations: If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Peggy Perno, Director of the Office of Accessibility and Accommodations, 105 Howarth, 253.879.3395. She will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Emergency Preparedness: Please review university emergency preparedness, response procedures and a training video posted at www.pugetsound.edu/emergency/. There is a link on

the university home page. Familiarize yourself with hall exit doors and the designated gathering area for your class and laboratory buildings.

If building evacuation becomes necessary (e.g. earthquake), meet your instructor at the designated gathering area so she/he can account for your presence. Then wait for further instructions. Do not return to the building or classroom until advised by a university emergency response representative.

If confronted by an act of violence, be prepared to make quick decisions to protect your safety. Flee the area by running away from the source of danger if you can safely do so. If this is not possible, shelter in place by securing classroom or lab doors and windows, closing blinds, and turning off room lights. Lie on the floor out of sight and away from windows and doors. Place cell phones or pagers on vibrate so that you can receive messages quietly. Wait for further instructions.

If you have special medical or emergency-related information you need to share with me (EpiPen, special evacuation needs, etc.), please see me privately after class or during office hours as soon as possible, so that I can be adequately prepared to assist you if need be.

Trigger Warnings: Because what triggers any given individual is highly variable and subjective, I do not issue specific trigger warnings in this class. In a general sense, students should be aware that this course covers stories from many different societies on many different topics, some of which are violent, sexual, religious, or otherwise highly charged. If you would like to discuss this policy or your individual needs with me surrounding trigger warnings, you are welcome and encouraged to schedule a meeting with me or to come see me during office hours.

Schedule

Week 1: Course Intro: the Modern Period

Jan 15 M **MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY – NO CLASS**

17 W – Course intro

19 F – What is modernity? **Midterm presentation actor choices due**

Week 2: Modernity in Asia

Jan 22 M – Modern India: *Kathakali*

Readings: Zarrilli, “The History of Kathakali in Kerala” (Reader p. 1-6)

Tampuran, *The Flower of Good Fortune* (Reader p. 7-19)

24 W – Modern Japan: *Kabuki*

Readings: Gunji, “Kabuki and Its Social Background” (Reader p. 20-30)

Monzaemon, *Shunkan on Devil Island* (Reader p. 31-42)

26 F – Modern China: *Kunqu*

Readings: Li Yu, “Casual Expressions of Idle Feelings” (*T/T/T* p. 179-188)

Hegemon King Says Farewell to His Queen (Reader p. 43-57)

Week 3: Modernity in Europe

Jan 29 M – The Enlightenment

Readings: “Eighteenth-Century Theatre” (Norton p. 50-54)
Lessing, “Hamburg Dramaturgy” (T/T/T p. 236-247)
Rousseau, “An Epistle to M. d’Alembert” (T/T/T p. 202-218)

31 W – Modern England: The Tragedy of the Middle Class

Reading: Lillo, *The London Merchant* (Norton I p. 1530-1583)

Feb 2 F – Modern Germany: Romanticism

Readings: “Romanticism and Melodrama” (Norton p. 54-60)
Goethe, *Faust, Part One* (Norton I p. 1663-1778)

Week 4: Modernity in Europe cont’d

Feb 5 M – Into the 19th Century

Readings: “Modern Theater” (Norton p. 60-63)
Nietzsche, “The Birth of Tragedy” (T/T/T p. 336-350)
Zola, “Naturalism in the Theatre” (T/T/T p. 351-352 and 358-367)

7 W – Modern Norway: Realism

Readings: Maeterlinck, “The Tragical in Daily Life” (T/T/T p. 381-389)
Ibsen, *A Doll’s House* (Norton II p. 194-247)

9 F – Modern Russia: Symbolism

Reading: Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard* (Norton II p. 387-432)

Week 5: Modernity in the Americas

Feb 12 M – Vaudeville, Melodrama, and Minstrelsy **Modernist Playwriting Exercise Due**

Readings: “Melodrama” and “Theater in the United States, 1800-1900”
(Norton pp. 57 and 58-60)

Lewis, selections from *From Traveling Show to Vaudeville: Theatrical Spectacle in America 1830-1910* (Reader p. 58-70)

14 W – Modern U.S.: Melodrama

Reading: Brown, *The Escape; or, A Leap for Freedom* (Norton II p. 110-151)

16 F – Modern Brazil: Pastiche

Reading: Martins Pena, *The Jealous Officer; or, The Fearsome Slave Catcher* (Reader p. 71-81)

Week 6: Modernity in the Americas cont’d

Feb 19 M – Modern Argentina: Westerns

Reading: Herrera, *Santos Vega* (Reader p. 82-116)

21 W – Modern Puerto Rico: Feminist Theatre

Reading: Capetillo, *After Death* (Reader p. 117-122)

Bonus point reading (**optional**): Glaspell, *Trifles* (Norton II p. 515-528)

23 F – Modern Trinidad: Adaptation and “Riffing”

Reading: Synge, *Riders to the Sea* (Norton II p. 433-447)

Walcott, *The Sea at Dauphin* (Norton II p. 1073-1091)

Week 7: Modernity in Africa

Feb 26 M – Postcolonial Theatre

Readings: “Postcolonial Theater” (Norton p. 78-80)

Soyinka, “Drama and the African World-View” (*T/T/T* p. 474-482)

Osofisan, “The Revolution as Muse” (Reader p. 123-136)

28 W – Modern Nigeria: Yoruba Tragedy

Reading: Soyinka, *Death and the King’s Horseman* (Norton II p. 1144-1195)

Mar 2 F – Modern Ghana: Folkloric Synthesis

Reading: Aidoo, *Anowa* (Reader p. 137-152)

Week 8: Midterm Week

Mar 5 M – **Midterm presentations**

7 W – **Midterm presentations**

9 F – **Written midterm**

Week 9: Spring Break

Mar 12 M **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**

14 W **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**

16 F **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS**

Week 10: Spotlight on Interpretation

Mar 19 M – Directing

Readings: Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, “Pictorial Motion” (Reader p. 153-158)

Appia, “Light and Space” (Reader p. 159-163)

21 W – Acting

Readings: Craig, “The Actor and the Übermarionette” (*T/T/T* p. 390-398)

Meyerhold, “The Fairground Booth” (*T/T/T* p. 408-418)

23 F – Spectating

Readings: Marinetti, “The Variety Theatre” (*T/T/T* p. 421-426)

Artaud, “The Theater and Its Double” (*T/T/T* p. 433-443)

Week 11: Spotlight on Pushing Boundaries

Mar 26 M – Rule-breaking

Reading: Jarry, *Ubu the King* (Norton II p. 351-386)

28 W – Social Critique

Reading: Shaw, *Pygmalion* (Norton II p. 448-514)

30 F – Metatheatre

Reading: Pirandello, *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (Norton II p. 529-572)

Week 12: Spotlight on Interculturalism

Apr 2 M – The Epic Theater **Geographical Compare/Contrast Essay Due**

Readings: “Political Theater: Brecht” (Norton p. 65-66)

Brecht, “Modern Theatre” and “Alienation Effects” (*T/T/T* p. 444-461)

4 W – Meetings of East and West

Reading: Brecht, *The Good Woman of Setzuan* (Norton II p. 680-737)

6 F – Meetings of East and West, part II

Reading: Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (Norton II p. 1456-1507)

Week 13: Spotlight on Psychological Realism

Apr 9 M – Drawing Room Realism

Reading: Lorca, *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Norton II p. 642-679)

11 W – American Family Drama

Reading: Wilson, *Fences* (Norton II p. 1402-1455)

13 F – Getting Freudian

Reading: Albee, *The Goat; Or, Who is Sylvia?* (Norton II p. 1644-1685)

Week 14: Spotlight on Rejections of Realism

Apr 16 M – Absurdism

Reading: Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (Norton II p. 1010-1072)

18 W – Avant-Garde

Reading: Stein, *Four Saints in Three Acts* (Reader p. 164-192)

20 F – Deconstruction

Reading: Parks, *The America Play* (Norton II p. 1610-1643)

Week 15: Spotlight on Audience Participation

Apr 23 M – Theatre of the Oppressed **Influential Playwright Research Paper Due**

Readings: Boal, “Theater of the Oppressed” (*T/T/T* 462-473)

25 W – Audience Choice

Reading: Osafisan, *Once Upon Four Robbers* (Reader p. 193-207)

27 F – Immersive Theatre

Reading: Zeitlin, “Dionysus in 69” (Reader p. 208-222)

Week 16: Course Wrap-Up and Review

Apr 30 M – catch-up day

May 2 W – course wrap-up and review

4 F – **READING PERIOD – NO CLASS**

FINAL EXAM (Monday, May 7, 8:00AM, Thomas Hall 271)