

AADM-Y500 #16491 / AADM-A450 #271454
Repertoire Appraisal (performance studies) Fall 2008

9-1-2008

Monday & Wednesday 4– 5:15 pm in SPEA PV150J
and four Tuesdays Sept 23, Oct 14, Nov 11, & Dec 2 6-9pm in SPEA-A 450

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INTRODUCTION: Performance studies

This is a survey-course, looking at works in the performing arts world-wide, all of which have had—and continue to have—a major influence on world culture. Most of the performances will, because of time-restrictions, be shown only in excerpts, but several shorter works will be seen in full, and on four evenings we shall show full-length performances. There is an emphasis on works and genres from outside the generally-accepted Western repertoire.

The aim is for you to encounter some wonderful examples of the performing arts; each class is devoted to recorded examples, with contextual commentary. We shall discuss the works we have been looking at and you'll be asked to do some extra reading to enhance your understanding of the works and their cultural and presentational context. Additional materials will be made available to you electronically.

This is an exploration of the arts and the contexts within which they arise, take the form they do, and what you need to know in presenting them. Its intention is to delight as well as to inform: the schedule may be somewhat adjusted to fit your collective previous knowledge and to allow the inclusion of new material of special interest if it becomes available.

COURSE WORK ASSIGNMENTS

You will be need to write four substantial critical essays and a long final paper drawing on what you have seen and heard during the course. Separate notes will suggest some angles to approach these papers.

Four critical essays (1250 words; 1500 for graduates)

1. *East-West Theater*: An analysis of Japanese traditional theatrical practice in contrast with traditional western Shakespeare performance; Benjamin Britten's use of a Noh play for his chamber-opera *Curlew River*; and Kurosawa's film-interpretation of *King Lear*; all with reference to other plays and forms experienced in weeks 3 and 4.
2. *America's contribution to the art of dance in the 20th century*: with special reference to Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, and William Forsythe
3. *Interpreting Western classical music*: as exemplified in the conducting styles examined in week 8, and in the two productions of Mozart's opera *Così fan tutte* (Nicholas Hytner 2006; Peter Sellars 1989) seen in week 9.
4. *South and South-eastern Asian theater and the West*: conclusions drawn from Indian and Indonesian works seen in week 11, and the production of *Mahabharata* by Peter Brook that same week.

The essays should analyze in depth specific works or groups of works we shall have looked at. Think of these essays as akin to long review-articles in a high-level literary journal such as the *New York Review of Books* or the *Times Literary Supplement* (UK), where the background to a book or performance, and its relation to other works of its type, are as much discussed as the work, the author, and any participants. These essays should show your understanding of the works or groups of works in question, their genres, the nature of the performances seen, and the reading you have additionally done.

Final paper: Interpretations

The final paper (minimum 2000 words; 2500 for graduates) should draw together strands woven through the numerous works, genres, and cultural backgrounds, the course embraces. It should demonstrate that you have been able to extract from them your own lessons for arts-management and programming. It should give emphasis to the requirements for presenting works from outside the normal American arts scene: the arts are a prime means of addressing misconceptions about less familiar cultures, and arts administrators are enablers in the process; this course is a step in that (among other things). Above all the final paper should address the underlying pattern of the course, in which everything seen has been in some sense an interpretation (from stage to screen most frequently, from one culture to another almost as often): what happens, what does it mean, when someone “interprets” a work in the performing arts?

Print-style

Please use double-spacing with wide left-hand margins (really wide, please: that’s where I can write comments)

Set-book

There is just one set-book for the course, itself a classic of arts writing, worth reading right through for some wise, some eccentric, views on the arts, their methods, and their *raison d’être*:

Schechner, Richard *Performance Studies*, 2nd ed. 2006 0-415-37246-1

There will be some additional reading, materials for which will be made available later, usually electronically.

Class participation

Discussion among peers invariably helps clarify options; so you will get (and give) most value in this course by taking a spirited role in our discussions.

Attendance

Since the aim is for you to encounter the performances chosen, attendance is of high importance. Attendance at every session is a requirement: if you have incontestable reason to be away, please let me know in advance, though you will lose by it. Each un-excused absence will carry a penalty of two percentage grade-points.

GRADING

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|----------------------|-----|------------------|
| Four essays | 60% | (15% each essay) |
| Final critical essay | 20% | |
| Class participation | 10% | |
| Attendance | 10% | |

Final grading will be on this scale:

| Letter-grade | Percentage | Letter-grade. | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| A+ | 95-100 | C+ | 76-77 |
| A | 92-94 | C | 74-75 |
| A- | 89-91 | C- | 72-73 |
| B+ | 85-88 | D | 70-71 |
| B | 81-84 | Fail | below 70 |
| B- | 78-80 | | |

Notes on grading

The four essays should be not less than 1200 words long (1500 for graduates). The final end-of-course paper should be at least six pages (eight for graduate students).

Papers will be judged on the degree to which you address their specific topics; on how well you show your understanding of the works in question, their contexts and qualities; on the clarity of your thoughts; and on your ability to express those thoughts in good clear literate English.

You are expected to read assigned materials and complete assigned work on time. Late or unfinished papers will not normally be accepted.

Asking questions

If—especially early in the course—you do not understand, or you disagree with, what is being said, please say so at once. This is not a waste of time. The course covers a lot of ground, so assumes a high level of familiarity with the arts and its vocabulary: your intervention shows where such assumptions have been misplaced.

Individual meetings

Since so much of each class will be devoted to viewing video-recordings, don't hesitate to make individual appointments with me to discuss any aspect of the works or the course for which there is too little time in class. I would like, anyway, to meet individually with each of you during the semester, so please make an appointment for us to talk when it suits you after October 1st.

Plagiarism

Neither in writing nor in discussion should you use other people's material unless you acknowledge it: plagiarism means a fail-marking. I do not require detailed references (edition, page numbers, etc) except where you are quoting directly, in which case whichever you prefer of the standard formulae for quotations and credits should be consistently applied.

I will be happy to discuss questions you may have on any aspect of the syllabus now or later. Please make appointments in advance, either directly with me [huntc@indiana.edu] or with Diana Worman [SPEA 230, dworman@indiana.edu, 855 0732]. I'll make myself as far as possible available whenever needed.

Americans with Disabilities Act statement: Accommodations will be made for students registered with the Disability Services for Students office in Franklin Hall (812-855 7578).

COURSE SCHEDULE - see following page

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| 1 | September 3 W | Introduction to the course, and to international performing arts stages |
| 2 | September 8 M September 10 W | Classical Greek Drama on stage and in film: Sophocles: <i>Oedipus Rex</i> Studio-production with John Gielgud & Claire Bloom; Pasolini's 1967 film. |
| 3 | September 15 M September 17 W | Japanese traditional arts: Kabuki, Noh, Gagaku, Bunraku, Kyogen and Benjamin Britten's <i>Curlew River</i> (based on the Noh play <i>Sumida-gawa</i>) |
| 4 | September 22 M September 23 Tu September 24 W | Shakespeare: <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> (Pacino 2004; Mitchell 1980) Shakespeare: <i>King Lear</i> (Laurence Olivier) and Kurosawa's film <i>Ran</i> (based on <i>Lear</i>) |
| 5 | September 28 Su September 29 M October 1 W | Essay 1: delivery deadline 6pm Documentary Films (from and about Nazi Germany): Leni Riefenstahl and Alfred Hitchcock <i>i.a.</i> |
| 6 | October 6 M October 8 W | Shaw: <i>Pygmalion</i> and Lerner & Loewe: <i>My Fair Lady</i> (based on <i>Pygmalion</i>) and Chekhov <i>Vanya on 42nd Street</i> (film by Louis Malle) |
| 7 | October 13 M October 14 Tu October 15 W | 20 th Century Dance: Martha Graham, 20 th Century Dance: Merce Cunningham: <i>A Life in Dance</i> 20 th Century Dance: William Forsythe |
| 8 | October 19 Su October 20 M October 22 W | Essay 2: delivery deadline 6pm Conducting: Reiner, Szell, Stravinsky, Beecham, Klemperer, Furtwängler, Boulez, <i>i.a.</i> and Carlos Kleiber conducting Beethoven Seventh Symphony (Concertgebouw 1983) |
| 9 | October 27 M October 29 W | Opera: Mozart/daPonte: <i>Così fan tutte</i> productions by Nicholas Hytner 2006 and Peter Sellars 1989 |
| 10 | November 2 Su November 3 M November 5 W | Essay 3: delivery deadline 6pm 20 th Century American originals: Billie Holliday, <i>Show Boat</i> , <i>Top Hat</i> and Buster Keaton's <i>The General</i> |
| 11 | November 10 M November 11 Tu November 12 W | Indian traditional arts: Kathakali, and other traditional arts Peter Brook's film based on his stage-production of <i>Mahabharata</i> South-East Asian Wayang Kulit and Wayang Golek (Indonesia) |
| 12 | November 16 Su November 17 M November 19 W | Essay 4: delivery deadline 6pm Beckett on stage and film: <i>Krapp's Last Tape</i> and <i>Waiting for Godot</i> |
| 13 | November 24 M November 26 W | African traditional arts [no class - Thanksgiving break Nov 25-30] |
| 14 | December 1 M December 2 Tu December 3 W | Rebellion, revolution, and experiment: Living Theater, Wooster Group, <i>et al.</i> Peter Weiss: <i>Marat/Sade</i> in the RSC production by Peter Brook as filmed by him: <i>The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as performed by the inmates of the asylum of Charenton under the direction of the Marquis de Sade</i> and Karen Finley's <i>We keep our victims ready</i> |
| 15 | December 8 M December 10 W | summing up [Final project (exam) preparation: no class] |
| 16 | December 15 M December 17 W | [Final project (exam) preparation: no class] Final exam (Final essay delivery deadline 6pm) to be confirmed |