

DR 138: Theatre and Society II: Renaissance to Modern Theatre

Professor: Dassia Posner
Spring 2008, T/Th 12- 1:15

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

Theatre is inevitably intertwined with the societies that create it. It is shaped by political regimes, current events, and cultural preferences, and, in turn, sends society in new directions by challenging established norms. The goals of this class are:

- ❖ To examine the history of the theatre, using plays, historical context, and primary sources to study theatrical styles and approaches from the Renaissance to the Modern period. As this is a period highly concerned with definitions and rules, we, too, will ponder the very definition of theatre, both by tracing the evolution of dramatic genres and by incorporating theatre that often falls outside the traditional Eurocentric canon: improvised theatre, Japanese and Indonesian forms, popular entertainment, and puppetry.
- ❖ To investigate the many ways in which theatre responded in traditional or controversial ways to the societies of which it was a part.
- ❖ To consider recurrent themes that are compelling to a modern audience— race, gender, religion, politics, and sexuality as presented in the theatre— both historically and from contemporary perspectives.
- ❖ To link history to current practice through in-class scene performances, professional productions, and video segments from recent productions of works we have read.
- ❖ To build research and criticism skills by analyzing written plays, reviewing live performances, and engaging in focused research projects.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- ❖ Brockett and Hildy, *History of the Theatre, Foundation Edition*, 2007. (Referred to in the syllabus as B&H.)
- ❖ Wise and Walker, *The Broadview Anthology of Drama, Volume 1*, 2003. (Referred to in the syllabus as W&W.)
- ❖ Course pack: available for purchase in the Drama and Dance office. (Referred to in the syllabus as CP.)
- ❖ Nikolai Gogol, *The Inspector General*, trans. by Senelick, Broadway Plays, 2007 (Not yet in the bookstore).
- ❖ Note: additional optional readings will be on reserve at Tisch. Some of these you will find especially valuable in preparing for your scene presentations and reports.
- ❖ Many of the plays you will read are accompanied by video or audio versions of these works, available on reserve at the Tisch Media Center and/or at the Music Library. Students are encouraged to watch/listen to as many of these as possible. This is especially important for making distinctions between written versions and artistic interpretations of a given work.

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- ❖ **Participation is required.** The best way to learn about theatre is to engage with it actively. By participation, I mean constructive involvement in class discussion, preparedness for class, volunteering for class exercises, respect for others' work, punctuality, etc. *Each of you should plan to come to every class with at least one question prompted by the readings.*
- ❖ **Attendance is required.** Each student is allowed 2 unexcused absences per semester for minor illnesses or appointments. Each additional unexcused absence will lower the final grade. Additional absences may only be excused by presenting a written explanation to the instructor. Communicate with me ahead of time; only emergencies and serious illness will be considered when excuses are submitted after the class you miss. *It is your responsibility to make arrangements for any missed work— even if an absence is excused.*

Class Projects:

- ❖ **Scene performance.** There are six days on the course calendar during which students will perform scenes from plays that are important to our discussion, but which we simply do not have time to read in entirety. Each of you will choose one of these plays and collaborate in groups of three (groups of two or four may be acceptable as well, but check with me in advance) to present a five-minute scene from this play. Your scene should be a memorized and polished performance, accompanied by a (one-page) oral introduction that places the scene in the context of the play, theatre history, and our class. Please choose a scene that illustrates the day's class themes. You may assign roles as you wish: all three students may perform and share the task of setting the scene, or two students may act and the third introduce. On the day of the performance, please provide me with your typed introduction, a copy of the scene, and a typed bibliography of at least 4 sources that you have consulted, only one of which may be internet-based. Scene choices are due January 24 (please rank top three in order of preference).
- ❖ **Oral presentation and research paper. (10-15 minutes/ 5-6 pages)**
 - ❖ There are roughly twenty report topics spread out over the course of the semester. Each of you will choose one of these topics (or another if you have an idea that you are really passionate about), and will prepare a well-researched and organized oral presentation for the class. Presentation choices are due January 24 (please rank top three in order of preference).
 - ❖ Things to consider: Do not simply list facts, but choose an argument and structure your report around it. Use of visuals and/or props is strongly encouraged. Please find out how to pronounce any foreign names ahead of time. Provide me and your classmates with a bibliography of works consulted (at least 7, only one of which may be internet-based).
 - ❖ A 5-6-page research paper on the same subject is due the week following the report. This will be a carefully researched and fully documented paper that draws from and builds upon your earlier work. See me for any questions on documentation or style.

Critiques and Exams:

- ❖ **Performance attendance and review (1200 words):**
 - ❖ You are required to attend two shows over the course of the semester, one on campus, and one off campus. For one of these two productions (your choice), you will write a 1200-word performance critique, guidelines for which will be posted on our Blackboard site. You will also investigate the background and history of the play rather than simply presenting your opinion of the production choices. You are welcome to write a review of

the second performance for extra credit, but are not required to as long as you attend it and present me with the program and ticket stub (please label them with your name). All reviews are due NO LATER than April 15, but I strongly encourage you to submit your review within a week of seeing the show, while it is still fresh in your mind.

- ❖ For the on-campus production, you may choose from Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (February 14-16 and 21-23 at 8:00 p.m.), Zhao Yaomin’s *Alarm Clock* (April 8-12 at 8:00 p.m.), Shakespeare’s *Much Ado about Nothing* (dates TBA), or Henry Purcell’s opera, *Dido and Aeneas* (Thursday, February 28- Sunday, March 2, Distler Performance Hall). We will also try to go as a class to hear the Tufts and Boston Village Gamelan Ensembles, Saturday, April 19, 2008, 8 pm (free), in Distler. Tickets are generally \$7 with Tufts I.D.; Arena box office: 617-627-3493; Granoff Music Center Box Office: 617-627-3679.
- ❖ For the off-campus professional production, you are encouraged to explore alternate theatrical forms or works that intersect in some way with our class material. You are especially encouraged to see Molière’s *Misanthrope* at the New Rep (Jan. 16- Feb. 10) [<http://www.newrep.org/0708misanthrope.php>]. Bread and Puppet Theatre at the BCA (Feb. 4-10), or Rossini’s opera version of *The Barber of Seville* at the BU Theatre (April 18-20) [<http://www.bu.edu/but/seasons/index.html>]. (A good source for info. on productions is <http://www.bostontheatrescene.com>. Rush tickets (\$10-\$12) are available at the ART (<http://www.amrep.org>) and at the Huntington (<http://www.huntingtontheatre.org>). Advance half-price tickets can be purchased to most area shows at <http://www.artsboston.org/>).
- ❖ *All written assignments must be typed and double spaced. Assignments will not be accepted by email and are due on or before the dates indicated. There will not be an option to re-write papers, but feel free to ask me questions about your written assignments before the due dates.*
- ❖ **Exams:** There will be one midterm and one final exam. Exams will cover material from readings and class lectures; I will hand out review sheets in advance. Exams cannot be made up if missed, and final exams will not be given early.

EVALUATION

Participation:

- Performance attendance and review -----15%
- Class participation -----20%

Projects:

- Scene presentation -----10%
- Oral report/ paper-----20%

Exams:

- Midterm Exam -----15%
- Final Exam -----20%

RESERVE LIST:

BOOKS ON RESERVE AT TISCH

Tate, *King Lear*. PR2750 .B19 1681a c.1
Davenant and Dryden, *The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island*. PR3412 .S2
Goldoni, *The Servant of Two Masters*. PR2750 .B19 1681a c.1
John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*. PR3473 .B4 1973 c.1
Goethe *Faust*. PT2026.F2 K3 c.1
Tieck, *Puss in Boots*. PT2537 .G8 1974 c.1
Ostrovsky, *The Storm*, in *Five Plays*. PG3337.O8 A23 c.1
Chekhov, *The Seagull*, in *Complete Plays*. PG3456 .A19 2006

FILMS ON RESERVE AT TISCH

Le Cid de Pierre Corneille. 2000. VC5552
L'ecole des femmes de Molière. 1989. VC1061 pt.1 c.1; VC1061 pt.2 c.1
Tartuffe, 2003. DV3138 (Richard Wilbur translation)
Julie Taymor: Setting a Scene [video clips from *The Tempest*] VC1790 V. 10 c.1
Turandot. Metropolitan Opera ; music by Giacomo Puccini; stage production by Franco Zeffirelli. 1989. VC4745 c.1
The Marriage of Figaro, VC786 pt.1 and pt.2
The Barber of Seville. [music] by Gioacchino Rossini. 1999. FDV172 c.1
Shinjū ten no Amijima= Double suicide. FDV675 c.1
The Art of Kabuki: FDV3757
Portrait of an Onnagata. VC2230
The Love for Three Oranges, opera by Sergei Prokofiev. 2000. FDV511 c.1
Jan Švankmejer, Alchemist of the Surreal. 1982-1993. VC1850
The Prosperity of Wibisana: a Performance of Javanese Wayang Kulit. 1995. VC3199 c.1
The Inspector General. by N.V. Gogol. A Mosfilm Studios production ; adapted for the screen and direction, Vladimir Petrov. 1996. VC3927 c.1
Uncle Tom's Cabin. Directed by Harry A. Pollard. 1927 (silent film on DVD). DV1471 c.1
American Musical Theater. 1986. (bit on minstrelsy). VC2563
Brand/ A Doll's House FDV5416 disc 1
The Sea Gull. Mosfilm production ; screenplay and direction, Yuli Karassik. FILM VC1261 c.1

CDs ON RESERVE IN THE MUSIC LIBRARY

Lully, Molière, *Les comedies-ballets*, MCD2369
Prokofiev, Sergei, *The love for three oranges*. MLP1491 c.1
Puccini, Giacomo, *Turandot*. MCD4640 c.1
Kabuki and other traditional music. MCD2240
John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, MCD8728
Mozart, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, MCD1930
Gioacchino Rossini, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. 1998. MCD8124 c.1
The Javanese Gamelan. MCD2299 c.1
The Early Minstrel Show, MCD4986

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

- Please bring each day's readings to class with you.

DATE:	DISCUSSION TOPIC:	ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Jan. 17 TH	INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS	
Jan. 22 T	THEATRE IN 17 TH -CENTURY ITALY <i>Commedia dell' arte</i> FILM: FAVA ON <i>COMMEDIA</i>	Context: B&H, 151-173 (Italian Theatre to 1700), [CP]. Documents: Richards: <i>commedia</i> roles, a <i>commedia</i> scenario, "The Jealous Old Man," and <i>lazzi in commedia</i> [CP].
Jan. 24 TH	FRENCH NEOCLASSICISM Pierre Corneille's <i>The Cid</i> (1637) and the French Academy	Play: <i>The Cid</i> , trans. by Wallace Fowlie [CP] Context: B&H, 175-182. Document: excerpts from <i>The Cid</i> controversy, (253-258) [CP]. [PLAY PERFORMANCE CHOICES & ORAL REPORT TOPICS DUE]
Jan. 29 T	MOLIÈRE AND THE SUN KING <i>The School for Wives</i> (1662) FILM: MNOUCHKINE'S <i>MOLIÈRE</i>	Play: <i>The School for Wives</i> [CP]. Context: B&H, 182-191. Documents: Excerpt, <i>School for Wives Criticized</i> (78-82); docs on controversy (271, 3) [CP].
Jan. 31 TH	THE <i>TARTUFFE</i> (1664, 1667, 1669) CONTROVERSY FILM: MNOUCHKINE'S <i>TARTUFFE</i> [REPORT(S): RACINE'S <i>PHAEDRE</i>]	Play: <i>Tartuffe</i> , trans. Richard Wilbur [W&W] Context: B&H, 191-195. Document: docs on <i>Tartuffe</i> , (275-277) [CP]. Optional reading: Racine's <i>Phaedre</i> .
Feb. 5 T	THE ENGLISH RESTORATION [SCENE: FROM WILLIAM WYCHERLEY, <i>THE COUNTRY WIFE</i> (1675)] FILM: 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE	Context: B&H, 219-224; Shapiro "Introduction of Actresses," (177-193). [CP] Documents: on the suppression of stage-plays (133-135) and from Collier's 1698 "Short View" (351-359). Optional reading: Wycherley, <i>The Country Wife</i> .
Feb. 7 TH	Aphra Behn, <i>The Rover</i> (1677) [REPORT: WOMEN RESTORATION PLAYWRIGHTS (MARY DELARIVIER MANLEY, MARY PIX, SUSANNAH CENTLIVRE,...)]	Play: <i>The Rover</i> [W&W] Context: Howe, "Sex and Violence" 37-49; 56-65 [CP].
Feb. 12 T	REVISING SHAKESPEARE RESTORATION TRAGEDY [SCENES FROM: TATE, <i>KING LEAR</i>; DAVENANT & DRYDEN, <i>THE TEMPEST</i> [REPORT: DRYDEN'S <i>ALL FOR LOVE</i> & SHAKESPEARE, <i>ANTONY & CLEOPATRA</i>]	Context: Dobson, "Adaptations and revivals" 40-51; Howe, "Elizabeth Barry/ Restoration Tragedy," 108-128. [CP] Document: Dryden's "Preface to <i>All for Love</i> ," (335-7) [CP]. Optional reading: Davenant/Dryden, <i>The Tempest, or, The Enchanted Island</i> (1670).
Feb. 14 TH	JAPANESE THEATRE: BUNRAKU Chikamatsu Monzaemon's <i>Love Suicides at Amijima</i> (1720) FILM: <i>DOUBLE SUICIDE</i>	Play: <i>Love Suicides at Amijima</i> [and appendixes] (170-215) [CP]. Context: Skim B&H, 213-16; Read "Pleasures of <i>Bunraku</i> ,"(13-17); Intro,(1-12,20-26,33-38) [CP]

Feb. 19 T	JAPANESE THEATRE: KABUKI Kabuki love-suicide adaptations FILM: PORTRAIT OF AN ONNAGATA	Context: B&H, 208-213; Leiter, "From Gay to Gei" in <i>A Kabuki Reader</i> 211-229 [CP].
Feb. 21 TH	NO CLASS- <i>Tufts Monday</i>	
Feb. 26 T	DOMESTIC TRAGEDY & BALLAD OPERA George Lillo: <i>The London Merchant</i> (1731) [SCENE: GAY, <i>THE BEGGAR'S OPERA</i>] [REPORT: THE DEVELOPMENT OF OPERA IN ENGLAND]	Play: <i>The London Merchant</i> [PDF on Blackboard] Context: B&H, 224-235. Document: "Dedication to <i>The London Merchant</i> ," (398-399); Excerpts from Lessing's <i>Hamburg Dramaturgy</i> (429-431) [CP]. Optional: Gay, <i>The Beggar's Opera</i> (1728)]
Feb. 28 TH	18 TH CENTURY FRENCH AND ENGLISH ACTING	Context: B&H, 235-239; 250-254; Roach, "Garrick, the Ghost, and the Machine." (431-440) [PDF on Blackboard]. Document: Excerpts from Diderot, <i>The Paradox of the Actor</i> . [PDF on Blackboard].
March 4 T	18 TH CENTURY ITALIAN THEATRE [SCENE: FROM GOLDONI, <i>THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS</i> (1743)]	Context: B&H 244-248. Document: Excerpts from Goldoni's <i>The Comic Theatre</i> , (68-73) [CP]. Optional reading: Goldoni, <i>The Servant of Two Masters</i> (1743).
March 6 TH	GOZZI VS. GOLDONI Carlo Gozzi/ <i>Turandot</i> (1762) MIDTERM REVIEW [REPORT: 20 TH -C <i>COMMEDIA</i> REVIVALS]	Play: <i>Turandot</i> [W&W] Document: Excerpts from Gozzi's "Ingenious Dissertation" (102-104) [CP].
March 11 T	MIDTERM	
March 13 TH	ENGLISH LAUGHING COMEDY: Oliver Goldsmith: <i>She Stoops to Conquer</i> (1773) [ENGLISH PANTOMIME]	Play: <i>She Stoops to Conquer</i> [PDF on Blackboard] Document: Goldsmith, "Sentimental and Laughing Comedy," (424-426) [CP].
March 18 T	NO CLASS- <i>Spring Break</i>	
March 20 TH	NO CLASS- <i>Spring Break</i>	
March 25 T	STORM AND STRESS: Schiller: <i>The Robbers</i> (1782)	Play: <i>The Robbers</i> [W&W] Context: B&H, 259-261; 263-264; Document; Schiller, "Preface to <i>The Robbers</i> ," (437-440) [CP].
March 27 TH	ON THE EVE OF REVOLUTION Beaumarchais, <i>The Marriage of Figaro</i> (1784) [REPORT: MOZART'S <i>LE NOZZE DI FIGARO</i> ; VOLTAIRE & THE THEATRE; FRENCH BOULEVARD THEATRE]	Play: <i>The Marriage of Figaro</i> [W&W] Context: B&H, 248-250; 254-257. Documents: on the 1791 emancipation of the French Theatre, (264-267) [CP].
April 1	WEIMAR CLASSICISM/	Context: B&H, 268-271, 276-292.

T	GERMAN AND FRENCH ROMANTICISM [SCENE: FROM TIECK, <i>PUSS IN BOOTS</i>] [REPORT: GOETHE <i>FAUST</i> , E. T. A. HOFFMANN AND THE THEATRE]	Documents: Hegel, “Symbolic, Classic, and Romantic,” (526-527) [CP]. Optional reading: Tieck, <i>Puss in Boots</i> (1797).
April 3 TH	POPULAR ENTERTAINMENTS <i>Punch and Judy</i> FILMS: <i>THE PROFESSORS OF PUNCH AND JAN ŠVANKMEJER, ALCHEMIST OF THE SURREAL</i> . [REPORT: ASTLEY’S AMPHITHEATRE]	Plays/ Documents: “The Dominion of Fancy, or, Punch’s Opera,” [Mayhew]; [CP] Context: The History of the English Puppet Theatre [Speaight], 176-199. Please skim: <i>The Tragical Comedy or Comical Tragedy of Punch and Judy</i> . [Collier/Cruikshank]
April 8 T	INDONESIAN THEATRE Javanese <i>wayang kulit</i> FILM: <i>THE PROSPERITY OF WIBISANA</i>	Context: “Introduction,” and “The Puppets” from Brandon, <i>On Thrones of Gold</i> 1-10; 38-51 [CP].
April 10 TH	RUSSIAN THEATRE COMES OF AGE Gogol’s <i>Inspector General</i> (1835) [REPORT: MEYERHOLD’S 1926 PRODUCTION]	Play: <i>The Inspector General</i> , trans. by Senelick. Context: B&H, 292-293; “ <i>Inspector General</i> ” from <i>History of Russian Theatre</i> , (99-101) [CP]. Optional reading: Ostrovsky, <i>The Storm</i> .
April 15 T	19 TH -CENTURY U. S. THEATRE [REPORT: ANY 19 TH -C. ACTRESS/MANAGER (E. G. CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN, LAURA KEENE, MRS. JOHN DREW); 19 TH C. STAGE MACHINERY; P. T. BARNUM’S AMERICAN MUSEUM]	Context: B&H, 306 [last two lines]-323. Document: <i>Scientific American</i> article on <i>Ben Hur</i> ’s onstage chariot races. [PDF on Blackboard]
April 17 TH	MELODRAMA, RACE, AND “THE WORLD’S GREATEST HIT” <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> (1852) FILM: <i>DIMPLES</i> [REPORT: MINSTRELSY; THE HOTTENTOT VENUS]	• Last day to hand in performance review(s) Play: George L. Aikin: <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> [CP]. Context: “The Hit of the Century” (315-322) [CP]. Document: “Uncle Tom at Barnum’s” [CP].
April 22 T	REALISM, NATURALISM & SYMBOLISM: Henrik Ibsen: <i>A Doll’s House</i> (1879) [REPORT: ADOLPHE APPIA/ ANY MAJOR EARLY DIRECTOR; GASLIGHT VS. ELECTRIC LIGHT]	Play and Documents: Ibsen, <i>A Doll’s House</i> (416-453) [CP] Context: B&H, 356-363; 379-385. Documents: On Naturalism and Symbolism, from Schumacher (70-72, 92-93) [CP].
April 24 TH	THE ART THEATRE Early Chekhov: <i>The Bear</i> and <i>The Proposal</i> [REPORT(S): ANY TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY ARTISTIC CABARET; THE BALLETS RUSSES]	Plays: Chekhov, <i>The Bear</i> and <i>The Proposal</i> , trans. by Senelick. [CP] Context: B&H, 369-370; “Introduction” to <i>The Complete Plays of Anton Chekhov</i> [CP]. Documents: on the MAT production of <i>The Seagull</i> (214-217) [CP]. Optional reading: Chekhov, <i>The Seagull</i> .
Apr. 29- May 1	READING PERIOD	
Friday, May 2	FINAL EXAM 12-2 pm	