

European Theater in Theory and Practice:
London, Stratford, and Dublin

“Truth in theatre is always on the move.” –Peter Brook

Instructors:

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Hotel Information:

London:
Copthorne Tara Hotel London Kensington
Scarsdale Pl.
Kensington, London
Tel: +44 20 7937 7211
Daily breakfast is served in the breakfast room from 7:00 a.m.

Stratford:
Legacy Falcon
Chapel Street
Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6HA
Tel: +44 844 411 9005
Daily Breakfast is served in the breakfast room from 7:00 a.m.

Dublin:
The Belevvedere Hotel
Great Denmark Street
Rotunda, Dublin 1
Tel: +353 1 873 7700

Welcome to European Theater in Theory and Practice! In this course you will immerse yourself into the international theater scene in London, Stratford, and Dublin. You will have the rare opportunity to view performances from a wide variety of genres and styles and be introduced (or re-introduced) to classic playwrights and up-and-coming artists. You will see several different kinds of theaters in several different kinds of neighborhoods. Finally, through tours, workshops, and talkbacks you will gain a more intimate knowledge of the rehearsal and production process.

Success in this class is dependent upon your ability and willingness to participate fully in all class discussions as well as work outside of class (both individually and in teams), and to contribute independent insights and observations to the learning community of the class. **Participation is imperative.** Everything you do in this course is assessed, from your arrival on time at seminars and theaters with your texts and tickets in hand to your active participation in group work. **EVERYTHING COUNTS**. Your final grade will reflect your ability to read and integrate texts and your participation during lectures and co-curricular activities as reflected in the frequency and quality of your contributions to the class, both verbally and in writing.

Come to each class and performance with an enthusiastic attitude and an open mind. Make the most of this extraordinary cultural experience!

COURSE MATERIALS

*******SAMPLE LIST-READINGS WILL DEPEND ON PERFORMANCES*******

Brook, Peter. *The Empty Space*
Hare, David. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*.
Kapil, Aditi. *The Chronicles of Kalki* (on Blackboard).
Middleton, Thomas. *The Changeling*.
Raine, Nina. *Tiger Country*.
Shakespeare, William. *Love's Labour's Lost*.
Shaw, George Bernard. *Widower's Houses*.
Sondheim, Stephen. *Assassins*.

Additional readings and materials are on Blackboard.

Most of these texts will be available shortly in the bookstore; please purchase them before you leave and *****BRING THEM WITH YOU TO EUROPE!***** If you have to buy texts in the UK, you can plan on spending A LOT MORE MONEY. We recommend that you try to purchase the editions we have ordered so you can refer to page numbers etc. You should try to read as much as you can before (or during) the plane ride. Think seriously about reading ahead when you have time on planes, busses, and the tube.

Essays on Blackboard: You might also consider downloading all the Blackboard readings and saving them to a file on your computer so that you can read when you do not have internet access.

Course Objectives

This course is designed:

- 1) To offer students a general understanding of how theater is created from page to stage;
- 2) To introduce students to theater criticism and give the opportunity for students to engage with criticism as they reflect on the performances we see;
- 3) To familiarize students with the fundamental conventions of theater history, genre, theory, and stagecraft.

In addition, courses taught abroad introduce students to the culture of a foreign country. Students will learn to negotiate international travel, currencies, and customs as well as to act as responsible and respectful global citizens.

After completing this course the student will be able to:

- Identify differences between many dramatic forms and genres;
- Understand the conventions of various styles of theater;
- Appreciate and understand the function of the various artists who bring a production to fruition;
- Use theatrical criticism strategically and effectively so that it will enhance the evaluation of performances;
- Write effective reviews of theatrical performances;
- Employ proper and accurate vocabulary for the discipline of theater.

Course Requirements

*Performance journal

*Two critical and professional-worthy reviews of productions of your choice

*Acting presentation

*Final exam

*Participation (discussion leader activities, contributions to classroom discussion, and prompt arrival to class and performances)

Performance Journal

You are required to keep a journal for the course, recording your thoughts and reactions to the readings and viewings. Directly after each play (or sometimes during intermission) you should note your observations since these will fade very quickly after the event. I will frequently ask you to read from your journals in the morning seminars, so plan to write immediately after you see a

play. Your observations will be crucial when you write your critical reviews and your final exam.

Critical Reviews

You will produce TWO critical reviews of plays of your choice, based on your journal notes, class discussion, and whatever research you conduct. More information for these critical reviews will be discussed in class and is available on Blackboard. **Due dates for critical reviews: January ____ and January ____ by midnight.**

Acting Presentation

On January ____ you and a partner will perform an assigned scene from one of the plays we will see during our time in England. Your performance will allow you to demonstrate all you have learned about character creation, stage movement, objective, teamwork, and, of course, about the art of acting. Your performance should not just be a copy of what we see in the professional performance. I expect imaginative constructions of characters, original blocking, and inventive interpretations of the play. More information for the performance will be discussed in class and available on Blackboard.

Discussion Leader

As discussion leader you will have two roles: introducing the class to the world of the show before we see the performance and leading the response session after we have seen the performance. Your work as discussion leader will be a key component of your participation grade in this class.

Introductory lecture:

You and a classmate will be assigned a particular play. In a ten to twelve minute presentation you will prepare the class to see the production. Your presentation should introduce us to the playwright, the context of the work, significant elements in the play, and the play's production history. You should present relevant and important dramaturgical details. You will be graded not only on the information you provide but also on how you teach the material. In selecting your discussion points think carefully about what will help your fellow students see and enjoy the production. Any handouts/materials you distribute should be cited appropriately.

Response session:

During our response session you will elicit discussion and contributions from the class. You should have prepared discussion questions ready and know how to steer our conversation to cover the essential elements from the production we saw. The discussion should last ten minutes.

We realize that research will be difficult while you are away from your library and computers, but nevertheless we expect you to use all your facilities and resources (and prepare ahead before you leave the US) to lead the discussion about the texts.

Final Exam

The final examination will test your knowledge of the plays, performances, and readings from our syllabus and your ability to think critically and creatively about all this material. The exam will be open book, and you are encouraged to use your performance journal as well. Final exam due: **January ____ by midnight.**

Course Guidelines/Guidelines for Success

1. Please be aware that January term courses are quite short but **VERY** intensive, so **NO CUTS** will be tolerated. We expect you to do a lot of reading, viewing, and writing over the three weeks. Seminars will take place as noted in the syllabus; generally speaking, breakfast hour in the hotels ENDS at 10, so if you sleep in, expect to go hungry. We expect you to be on time for class, awake, alert, and ready to contribute actively to the discussion.
2. We require that you be at the theatre one half hour before the curtain both to collect your ticket and to observe the paratheatrical effects, the audience types, the neighborhoods, the architecture of the theatres and the spaces, and once you enter, the lights, sets, and environment. We will not wait outside for latecomers, and many theatres will not admit you anyway.
3. If you miss a class, tour, performance, or post-show discussion, your final grade will be affected. If you miss a performance, you may fail the class unless you are able to secure a ticket to that performance on an open night (and at your own expense).

4. You are responsible for your own transportation to and from the theatre. We strongly suggest that you choose a buddy or two to travel with at night. Please be safe and smart while traveling.

5. Policy on drugs: no illegal drugs under any circumstances (Babson rules apply; in the event of violations, you may be sent home at your own expense, without course credit and without reimbursements of course expenses).

6. Policy on alcohol: the legal drinking age in Britain is 18. If you drink alcoholic beverages, please do so in moderation (we will consider inebriation a sanctionable form of misbehavior in the course).

7. When you're not in class or on a scheduled activity, or in the theatre, your time is your own; we recommend that you take advantage of the museums (which are all FREE in London!), famous sites (which are often not free) and galleries that London and Stratford have to offer.

Grading Breakdown

50% -- Class participation

15%--Acting presentation

20% -- Writing (Two professional-quality reviews of productions of your choice)

15%--Final Exam

Course Outline

*******SAMPLE OUTLINE-SCHEDULE WILL DEPEND ON 2018
PERFORMANCES*******

Pre-course reading: Brook, Peter. *The Empty Space* (Please read the chapters "The Deadly Theater" and "The Rough Theater"

All materials in "Pre-Class Readings" folder on Blackboard

January 5

Welcome to London!

Please call Professor Wynstra or Adam's cell phone when you arrive at the hotel.

Welcome dinner: **7:00 p.m.**, Ristorante Taormina (this restaurant is on the same street as our hotel: 19 Craven Terrace)

January 6

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Introduction to the class
Introduction to the English panto and *Mother Goose*

READING DUE: All materials in “January 4th Readings” folder on Blackboard

Acting class: 10:30-12:00

5:30 p.m.-Attend *Mother Goose* at [Hackney Empire](#), 291 Mare Street, London E8 1EJ. Bus: 254.

January 7

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Discussion of *Mother Goose*
Theater spaces and conventions

READING DUE: All materials in “January 5th Readings” folder

Acting class: 10:30-12:00

7:30 p.m.-Attend *Golem* at [Young Vic](#), 66 The Cut, Waterloo, London, SE1 8LZ.
Tube: Jubilee Line to Waterloo.

January 8

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Discussion of *Golem*
Group #1-Introduction to *Assassins*

READING DUE: All materials in “January 6th Readings” folder
Assassins, Stephen Sondheim

Acting class: 10:30-12:00

8:00 p.m.-Attend *Assassins* at [Menier Chocolate Factory](#), 53 Southwark Street SE1 1RU
Tube: Jubilee Line to London Bridge

January 9

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Group #1-Discussion of *Assassins*
Group #2-Introduction to *Tiger Country*

READING DUE: *Tiger Country*, Nina Raine

Acting class: 10:30-12:00
2:30 p.m.-Attend *Tiger Country* at [Hampstead Theatre](#), Eton Avenue, Swiss Cottage, London, NW3 3EU.
Tube: Jubilee Line to Swiss Cottage

January 10

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Group #2-Discussion of *Tiger Country*
Professor Wynstra-Introduction to *Great Britain*
Discussion of theater review assignment

Acting class: 10:30-12:00

7:30 p.m.-Attend *Great Britain* at [Theatre Royal Haymarket](#), 18 Suffolk Street London SW1Y 4HT
Tube: Bakerloo Line to Charring Cross

January 11

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Professor Wynstra-Discussion of *Great Britain*
Group #3-Introduction to *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*

READING DUE: *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, David Hare

Acting class: 10:30-12:00
Performance of neutral dialogues
Distribution of final scenes

4:45 p.m.-Backstage tour at the [National Theater](#),
South Bank, London, SE1 9PX
Tube: Jubilee Line to Waterloo

7:30 p.m.-Attend *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* at the
[National Theater](#).

January 12

Seminar: 9:00-10:30
Group #3-Discussion of *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*
Group #4-Introduction to *Widowers' Houses*
Introduction to Shakespeare with Adam

READING DUE: *Widowers' Houses*, George Bernard
Shaw

Acting class: 10:30-12:00

7:30 p.m.-Attend *Widowers' Houses* at the [Orange
Tree Theatre](#), 1 Clarence St, Richmond TW9 2SA.
Tube: District Line to Richmond

January 13

CHECK-OUT OF COPTHORNE TARA HOTEL
Seminar: 9:00-10:00

Introduction to *Love Labour's Lost*

READING DUE: *Love Labour's Lost*, William
Shakespeare

12:00 p.m.-Board bus for Stratford

Afternoon: Check-in to Legacy Falcon Hotel
7:15 p.m.-Attend *Love Labour's Lost* at the [Royal
Shakespeare Company](#), Waterside, Stratford-upon-
Avon

January 14	<p>Seminar: 9:00-10:30 Discussion of <i>Love Labour's Lost</i> Introduction to <i>Oppenheimer</i></p> <p>11:00 a.m.-Walking tour of Stratford</p> <p>7:30-Attend <i>Oppenheimer</i> at the Royal Shakespeare Company, Waterside, Stratford-upon-Avon</p>
January 15	<p>Travel Day!</p> <p>9:00 a.m.- Bus departs for Heathrow Airport</p> <p>1:00 p.m.- Flight departs for Dublin</p> <p>Afternoon/Evening-Check into hotel</p> <p>Literary Pub Crawl</p>
January 16	<p>Seminar: 9:00 a.m.-10:30 Group #5 Introduction to <i>The Inspector General</i></p> <p>Afternoon is yours to explore Dublin!</p> <p>7:30-Attend <i>The Inspector General</i> at the Abbey Theater, 26 Lower Abbey Street</p>
January 17	<p>Seminar: 9:00-10:30 Discussion of <i>The Inspector General</i> Performance of final scenes Course wrap-up</p> <p>Afternoon is yours to explore Dublin!</p> <p>7:30-Attend <i>The Weir</i> at the Gaiety Theater, South King Street</p>
January 18	<p>Travel Day! Goodbye, Ireland!</p>

Final Exam and Critical Review #2 due: January 22nd by midnight.