

THEATRE 343

Texts and Contexts II: Commonwealth to 21st Century

MWF 100-215

Evald 315

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Office Hours:

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama, Fifth Edition

History of the Theatre, Ninth Edition

Theatre of the Avant-Garde, 1890-1950

Our Town

W.B. Worthen

Brockett and Hildy

Cardullo and Knopf

Thornton Wilder

Suggested Texts:

A Sourcebook in Theatrical History, Nagler

Theories of the Theatre, Carlson

History of Art: The Western Tradition, Janson and Janson

The Process of Dramaturgy: A Handbook, Irelan, Fletcher and Dubiner

READING LIST OF PLAYS:

The Octoroon

The Cherry Orchard

Our Town

A Doll House

Major Barbara

Variety of avant-garde pieces

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course is an exploration of cultural traditions, artistic ideals, dramatic literature and the socio-political matrix from which they emerged. By the end of the term I hope that learners will:

- 1) Come to a lasting understanding of terminology, classifications, methods, and trends foundational to a historicized narrative of theatre and live performance;
- 2) Be able to manage research processes through analysis, evaluation, inventive problem-solving, and public presentation of findings as part of a team;
- 3) Gain a broader understanding of and appreciation for dramatic literature as a historical artifact from a certain intellectual/cultural time and place;
- 4) Emerge as informed spectator/readers who value expressing ideas about live theatrical performance, dramatic texts and the context from which they come both orally and in writing;
- 5) View the examination of history through the lens of theatre and live performance as a valuable exercise in developing skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in related fields;
- 6) Emerge as a self-directed learner with a learning plan for their future as liberally-educated citizens of the global community in which they reside.

ETHICS:

Promptness, attendance and “attentiveness” are valued in this class. Please behave accordingly and do not disrupt the class with excessive talk or the use of cell phones and other devices. A willingness to “give theatre history a chance” is obviously most appreciated. It is assumed that learners will work cooperatively with one another, and all work that is not “original” will be properly credited. The

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Augustana College Honor Code can be found at the following site <http://www.augustana.edu/library/Services/AcademicIntegrity.html>.

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- turning in a rewritten copy of a paper that someone else has written;
- turning in a paper that was posted on the Internet;
- quoting as few as two or three words without indicating that you are quoting them when those words represent an author’s unique or original insight;
- copying text from the Internet;
- using words, numbers or ideas which are not your own without indicating where you got them; or, using the same pattern of organization for sentences, paragraphs, pages or chapters as someone else without citing that person.

**from “AGES Statement on Academic Integrity for Liberal Studies Courses”*

FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT:

- **Preparation and Collaboration:** ...is vital to our success this term. Please be in class, be on time to each learning session, and come prepared with questions or concerns to pose.
- **Point Breakdown:**
 - Four (4) Critical Connection Writing Engagements@5 points each=**20 points**
 - One(1) Sights and Sounds Presentation@35 points each=**35 points**
 - Attend *Our Town* and a complete performance response=**75 points**
 - Two (2) Assessments@ 40 points each=**80 points**
 - One (1) Manifesto or Mission Statement@20 points=**20 points**
 - One (1) Learning Plan@20 points=**20 points**

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 250

FEEDBACK and ASSESSMENT SCALE:

250	A+
249-237	A
236-227	A-
226-219	B+
218-212	B
211-200	B-
199-187	C+
186-180	C-
179-172	C
171-149	D
148-0	F

A+, A, A-	indicate excellent work that supersedes given requirements and expectations
B+, B, B-	indicate good work that meets the given requirements and expectations
C+, C, C-	indicate fair work that needs improvement to meet given requirements and expectations

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D indicates **poor** work

F indicates failure without privilege of re-examination

****You cannot earn an “A” in the course if you have not completed all assignments regardless of your final point value****

Critical Connection Writing Engagements

This is a concise, informed and ORIGINAL essay of 300-500 words due at the beginning of class on the discussion day as indicated on the course calendar. The purpose of this engagement is for you to find staging conventions talked about in Brockett and Hildy (as well as in our discussions) within the play text at hand. For example, if Realism is staged in localized space, then when reading *The Cherry Orchard* I note how the stage direction indicates this, using direct quotations from both the history text and the play text to identify and support my argument.

Sights and Sounds Facilitations

This collaborative act is meant to give us a good idea of the sights and sounds surrounding the avant-garde tradition we are covering during any given session. **DO NOT** address theatre in any way. **The facilitations will require reading and preparation beyond that listed on the course calendar.** You will be expected to provide at least fifty-five minutes worth of engagement for the session. You are limited to eight (8) PPT slides (of which one must be your Works Cited [MLA]). You must bring in at least three visual art images, three (short) pieces of period music to play for us and three pieces of vital information about the theorist(s)/movement at hand. A one page (only) summary handout for each member of the class is required in order for all cohort members to receive credit. It can be double-sided if need be. Remember, it is not the quantity of information you collect but the quality.

Performance Response Engagement

This exercise requires that you attend *Our Town* and write a response to the given prompt (forthcoming). All essays must be typed in either Times New Roman 12 pt. font or Courier 10 pt. font, using 1” margins. You are encouraged to double side your printed work. The opening and closing information must be in accordance with the *Theatre Journal* performance response guidelines. Look at the three most recent editions of the journal for examples. You can find them archived within the *Project Muse* online database. This essay emulates the process that theatre and performance scholars engage in before the *Theatre Journal* review editor steps in with stylistic influence. ***I will not accept responses after the class period it is due. If you cannot make it on that day, then you must arrange for the essay to arrive regardless. You are responsible for purchasing your ticket in a timely manner.***

Manifesto or Mission Statement

Assume you are creating your own “ISM”, starting a performance company, trying to affect change with live performance, or something similar, and create a full-fledged manifesto similar to those we have read this term or draft a mission statement proposal with your objective, an outline of methods and your agenda (see below). I must be able to glean the philosophical bent of your new “ISM” etcetera from the material you generate and turn in to me. This should be a minimum of 1500 words (plus or minus 10%). However, you can blend a variety of media when drafting a manifesto depending on the theoretical/philosophical foundation of your movement.

Manifesto: Artistic policy statement that must not only express “best practices” but also state how these would manifest themselves in live performance. You must be clear and concise in your thoughts, which is harder than it may first appear.

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Mission Statement: One sentence expressing company's purpose with additional sentences supporting this thesis statement. Follow this with an agenda, organizational chart, time-line, and other supporting documents that address "How will you accomplish the mission?"

Must haves:

- 1) Clear Objectives
- 2) Clear and concise description
- 3) Originality (not too reliant on an ISM we studied or that is currently in use)
- 4) Internal logic (Does the material argue for a specific POV? Is there any contradiction? Does the author countermand any opposing POVs?)
- 5) Realization of ideals expressed (Does the author specifically address HOW these assertions COULD be put into practice?)
- 6) Is the document publication ready in a professional or academic journal?

Pop Quiz Proviso

It is presumed that you are attending to all of the readings in preparation for each learning session. If I sense this not to be the case on a consistent basis, then I reserve the right to introduce an unannounced reading quiz.

COURSE CALENDAR **EXPLORATION 1: In the beginning...**

M 7 March	Getting Started
W 9 March	Looking Back, Moving Forward: A Review READ: Worthen 373-86
F 11 March	The Restoration: From Tennis Court to Playhouse READ: B&H Chapter 9
M 14 March	The Restoration (continued)
W 16 March	Enlightenment England
F 18 March	Enlightenment England (continued)
M 21 March	The Romantic Impulse READ: B&H Chapter 12
W 23 March	Information Literacy Session One: Author and Text Research Meet in Library
F 25 March	The Well Made Play structure and 19 th C Melodrama READ: Worthen "Aside: Melodrama" and <i>The Octoroon</i> Critical Connection Writing Due
M 28 March	Developments Prompting Realism READ: B&H Chapter 16
W 30 March	Information Literacy Session Two: Visual and Aural Research

Meet in Library

F 1 April Developments Prompting Realism continued

M 4 April Ibsen's Brand of Realism
READ: *A Doll House*
Critical Connection Writing Due

W 6 April Chekov's Brand of Realism
READ: *The Cherry Orchard*
Critical Connection Writing Due

F 8 April Shaw's Brand of Realism

M 11 April Shaw's Brand of Realism continued
READ: *Major Barbara*
Critical Connection Writing Due

W 13 April Assessment One Review session

F 15 April Assessment One

M 18 April Realism vs. non-Realism: The ISMs
READ: *Our Town*

W 20 April Sights and Sounds of Symbolism
READ: B&H 409-414

F April 22-Monday April 25 off

T 26 April Franco-Russian Symbolism
READ: C&K 41-61

W 27 April Sights and Sounds of German Expressionism
READ: B&H 416-9 and 432-8

F 29 April German Expressionism
READ: C&K 207-60

[Go see *Our Town*]

M 2 May Sights and Sounds of Italian Futurism
READ: B&H 444-6

W 4 May Italian Futurism
READ: C&K 187-206

F 6 May Manifesto Workday

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M 9 May Sights and Sounds of Dada and French Surrealism

READ: B&H 438-44

W 11 May Dada and French Surrealism

READ: 265-89; 327-34; 364-72

F 13 May Assessment Two Review

Manifesto or Mission Statement Due

Assessment Two: 18 May 1200-200 PM
You must attend this session to pass the entire course.
Learning Plan due before Assessment Two