

ARTH/THE320 - PERFORMING (IN) ATHENS: EXPLORING THE CITY THROUGH THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE Fall 2024

INSTRUCTOR: DR. ATHENA STOURNA

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Office hours: After Class

Course Description

A couple of paragraphs describing the content of the course. Course Approach, Methodology,

Athens is considered one of the most vibrant theatre scenes in Europe. We will focus on current practices in theatre and performance mainly in Greece, but also in Europe and the United States. We will undertake a critical, historical and creative overview of theatre and performance making in periods of crisis, in Europe and the United States, and examine how contemporary Greek artists address issues such as: theatre and society, the human body/the body politic, and the stage and the city.

We will also perform a slight backtrack into the ancient past and the beginnings of theatre in its birthplace. The course will include visits to different theatres and other performance spaces: the Theatre of Herodes Atticus, a 19th century proscenium theatre, underground performance spaces, together with backstage tours and talks with artists. This course is for students in the Arts and Humanities and anyone interested in theatre and performance.

Learning Goals

This course will primarily teach students to:

- Explore, compare and contrast different cultures and artistic movements through the analysis of historical and contemporary practices in theatre and performance;
- Reflect on the multidisciplinary applications of theatre and performance within an international and transhistorical context;
- Analyze theatre and performance practice in a given environment;
- Evaluate key concepts and movements in Theatre and Performance History and Theory.

Course Requirements and Assessment

CYA Attendance Policy

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential, so attendance at all scheduled meetings is required. All absences are recorded and have consequences that may affect your grade.

- **Class Contribution 10%** – Class Contribution includes physical and mental presence in the classroom, arriving on time, preparation, and participation in class discussions. Reading assignments are to be completed before each class session. Class contribution is one of the most important factors for determining your grade for the semester. I expect all of you to come prepared, engage in our discussions, ask questions, and voice your opinions in class. In addition, theatre outings and attendance of other cultural/artistic events are part of this course and you are required to participate.
- **Short presentations 10%** – Oral presentations of topics given in advance; duration: 5 minutes.
- **Reaction paper/Performance criticism 20%** – 2 reaction papers from two different theatre outings, 800 words each.
- **Midterm exam 10%** – Short group theatre performances
- **A research and artistic assignment 30%** – Research paper, 1,500 words and video performance. Topics and instructions will be given in advance.
- **Final Exam 20%** – The final exam will be a critical analysis essay based on the subjects we discussed in class.

Policy on Assignments and Make-up Work

Details about assignments and exams will be given in advance. I will accept no late assignments or make-up exams unless discussed with me in advance. If you are unable to come to class, please let me know beforehand.

CYA Policies and Regulations

Academic Accommodations

Students are required to submit an official letter from the office at their school that handles academic accommodations (generally the Office of Disability Services), or to have that office send a letter. Students who have submitted such a letter to CYA should also talk to their professors individually to discuss how these accommodations will work in each specific course.

Site Visits and Accessibility

This course contains specific physical and spatial elements that are crucial to student learning and which cannot be modified. Students should be aware of these before enrolling in the course.

- This course requires that students walk at least four times to and from the theater, if necessary; the walking is mostly on streets and sidewalks.
- This course requires students to give a verbal group presentation in front of the class as part of their assessment.
- This course requires students to present their video performances in front of the class.

ePolicy on Original Work

Plagiarism is literary theft. As such, it is a serious offense which will not be tolerated either at your home institution or at CYA. Plagiarism on an examination or in a paper will result in an F for the course. You must cite the author of any and all ideas that you use that are neither common knowledge nor your own idea. If you are in doubt, it is safest to cite the source. Your work should be original and reflect your own ideas and thoughts. If you are unsure about what counts as original work, please consult your professor. (Check the Student Handbook).

Use of Laptops

The use of laptops/tablets/mobile phones is not permitted during class. Students are required to take notes by hand. Laptops may only be used for note-taking only by students whose academic accommodations require so.

Upgrade to 400-level course

Courses can be upgraded to a 400-level. This constitutes usually 25% additional work on the part of the student. The option to upgrade opens the second week of classes. If you are interested in this option, please talk to your professor.

Fall 2024 Tentative Schedule

Day #	Day/Date/Place	Topic / Readings / Assignments Due
	Sep 5-7	Field Study Delphi and Ancient Olympia
1	Sep 9	Introduction <i>Description</i> Syllabus and course content presentation
2	Sep 11	What is Performance? The Fundamentals <i>Description</i> The emergence of Performance theory and key concepts for understanding performance art. Precursors of performance art in Ancient Greece and the blurring of art and life: Diogenes the cynic's performances. <i>Required reading</i> Marvin Carlson (2013). <i>Performance: A Critical Introduction</i> , 2 nd ed. London, UK; New York, USA: Routledge ("Introduction: What is Performance?", pp. 1-8, "Performance in its Historical Context", pp. 83-101)

Day #	Day/Date/Place	Topic / Readings / Assignments Due
		<p>Richard Schechner (2008). <i>Performance theory</i>, 3rd ed. London, UK: Routledge ("Approaches", pp. 1-25)</p> <p><i>Optional bibliography</i></p> <p>Jill Dolan (1993). "Geographies of learning: theatre studies, performance, and the 'performative' ". <i>Theatre Journal</i> 45, no. December: 417-41.</p> <p>Mike Huxley and Noel Witts (eds.) (1996). <i>Twentieth Century Performance Reader</i>. New York, USA: Routledge.</p> <p>Thomas McEvelley (1983). "Diogenes of Sinope (c. 410-320B.C.): Selected Performance Pieces", <i>Artforum</i>, 21 (March 1983): 58-59.</p> <p>Richard Schechner (2013). <i>Performance Studies: An Introduction</i>, 3rd ed. London, UK; New York, USA: Routledge</p> <p>Phillip Zarrilli (1986). "Toward a definition of Performance Studies: part I". <i>Theatre Journal</i> 38, no. 3: 372-76.</p>
3	Sep 16	<p>Workshop: Exploring the dynamics of space</p> <p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Outdoor exercises.</p>
	Sep 18-21	Field Study Crete
4	Sep 23	<p>Theatrical Architecture from Greece to Rome-introduction</p> <p><i>Description</i></p> <p>On the occasion of our theatre outing to the Ancient Roman Odeon of Herodes Atticus, we will study the evolution of theatrical architecture from Greece to Rome and explore the dynamics of performance space.</p> <p><i>Required reading</i></p> <p>Oscar G. Brockett, Margaret Mitchell, and Linda Hardberger. (2010). "Scenic design in ancient Greek and Roman theatres", in <i>Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States</i>. San Antonio, Tex: Tobin Theatre Arts Fund. pp. 4-24</p>
5	Sep 25	Ancient Greek play reading in English translation (preparation for our theatre outing) [TBC]
6	Sep 30	No morning class. Theatre outing – Odeon of Herodes Atticus (Evening, 9 PM) [TBC]
7	Oct 2	<p>The meaning of space: Site-specificity in theatre and performance</p> <p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Site-specific theatre/performance.</p> <p>Case study: theatre and performance in the museum.</p> <p><i>Required reading</i></p> <p>Anna Birch and Joanne Tompkins (eds.) (2012). <i>Performing Site-Specific Theatre: Politics, Place, Practice</i>. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan ("The 'Place' and Practice of Site-Specific Theatre and Performance", pp. 1-20)</p> <p><i>Optional bibliography</i></p> <p>Ben Kershaw (2000). <i>Site Specifics: Performance, Place and Documentation</i>. London, UK: Routledge.</p> <p>Mike Pearson (2010). <i>Site Specific Performance</i>. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan</p> <p>Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks (2001). <i>Theatre / Archaeology</i>. London, UK: Routledge</p>
8	Oct 7	<p>Performance and Archaeology in Greece: A spatio-temporal journey</p> <p><i>Description</i></p> <p>The use of archaeological sites for the creation of site-specific performances in Greece.</p> <p><i>Required reading</i></p> <p>Yannis Hamilakis and Efthymis Theou (2013). "Enacting multiple times, reclaiming archaeology", in <i>Reclaiming Archaeology: Beyond the Tropes of Modernity</i>, González-Ruibal, A. (ed.), New York, USA: Routledge: 181-194</p>
9	Oct 9	<p>Pre-performance art: the historical Avant-garde</p> <p><i>Description</i></p> <p>The emergence of the avant-garde movements in Europe in the 20th century and the first seeds for the emergence of performance art. <i>King Ubu</i> by Alfred Jarry and the quest for shocking the audience. Jarry and his influence on Futurism, Dada and other movements. The legacy of the historical avant-garde. Study of Jarry's <i>King Ubu</i>.</p>

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		<p><i>Required reading</i> Christopher Innes (1996). <i>Avant Garde Theatre 1892-1992</i>. London, UK: Routledge ("Symbolism and Alfred Jarry", pp.19-28)</p> <p><i>Optional bibliography</i> Robert Hughes (1991). <i>The Shock of the New</i>. London, UK: Thames and Hudson (Chapter 1. "The Mechanical Paradise")</p>
10	Oct 14	Reading of the Play <i>King Ubu</i> by Alfred Jarry
11	Oct 16	Object Theatre Workshop: creating characters for <i>King Ubu</i> by Alfred Jarry out of ordinary materials
12	Oct 21	Midterm Week – GROUP PERFORMANCES FROM KING UBU – PART 1
13	Oct 23	Midterm Week – GROUP PERFORMANCES FROM KING UBU – PART 2
	Oct 25-Nov 3	Fall Break
14	Nov 4	<p>Performing Processions: encounters between past and present</p> <p><i>Description</i> A short history on processions in Greek culture: Ancient Greek religious festivals and mysteries, Christian Orthodox religious processions, history of military and student parades in European and Greek Modern History.</p> <p><i>Required Reading</i> David Wiles (2003). <i>A Short History of Western Performance Space</i>. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press ("Processional space", pp. 62-71).</p> <p><i>Optional bibliography</i> Carl Kerényi (1991) <i>Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter</i>. Tr. Ralph Manheim. Princeton, USA: Princeton University Press.</p>
15	Nov 6	<p>The Body in Performance</p> <p><i>Description</i> The material, visceral and tactile body in performance. Unfolding and staging the body: social markings, physical parts and the body as site.</p> <p><i>Required reading</i> Helen Spackmann (2014). "Minding the Matter of Representation: Staging the Body (Politic)", in Patrick Campbell (ed.) <i>The Body in Performance</i>. London, UK and New York, USA: Routledge Falmer: pp. 5-22.</p> <p><i>Optional bibliography</i> André Lepecki (ed.) (2004). <i>Of the Presence of the Body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory</i>. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. André Lepecki (2000). "The body in difference". <i>Fama 1</i>, no. 1: 6-13.</p>
16	Nov 11	THEATRE OUTING 2 [TBC]
	Nov 12-15	Field Study Peloponnese
17	Nov 18	<p>The Senses in Performance</p> <p><i>Description</i> The use of the five senses in performance.</p> <p><i>Required Reading</i> Sally Banes and André Lepecki (2007). <i>The Senses in Performance</i>. New York, USA: Routledge. ("Introduction", pp. 1-7)</p>
18	Nov 20	<p>Performance and Ritual</p> <p>Ritual as the basic element of performance. Performative rituals in Ancient Greece: festivals, feasts, religious mysteries, and symposia.</p> <p><i>Required reading</i> Richard Schechner (2013). <i>Performance Studies: An Introduction</i>, 3rd ed. London, UK/New York, USA: Routledge ("Ritual", pp.52-88).</p> <p><i>Optional bibliography</i> Oliver Pils (2011). "The Performative Aspect of Greek Ritual: The Case of the Athenian Oschophoria", in: M. Haysom – J. Wallensten (eds.), <i>Current Approaches to Religion in Ancient Greece. Papers presented at a Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 17–19 April 2008</i>, <i>ActaAth 8°</i>, 21: 151–167.</p>

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		Richard Schechner (1985). <i>Between Theatre and Anthropology</i> . Philadelphia, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press ("Points of Contact Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought", pp. 3-34).
19	Nov 25	Performance and Ritual – The Greek <i>Symposion</i> as a Performative Event <i>Required reading</i> Oswyn Murray (ed.) 1990. <i>Symptotica: A Symposium on the Symposium</i> , Oxford [England]: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press. ("Symptotic History", pp. 3-13)
20	Nov 27	Banquet Performances and the Table as Stage <i>Description</i> The performative elements of banquets. <i>Required reading</i> Athena Stourna (2018). "Banquet Performances Now and Then: Commensal Experiments and Eating as Mise en Scène", <i>Platform: Journal for Theatre and Performing Arts</i> , no 11.2, "Feasting": 10-31
21	Dec 2	THEATRE OUTING 3 [TBC]
22	Dec 4	The Kitchen as an alternative performance space <i>Required reading</i> Athena Stourna (2023). "The Domestic Kitchen as Performance Space: The Female Artist vs The Housewife", <i>Critical Stages/Scènes critiques</i> , Issue 30 (online journal): The Domestic Kitchen as Performance Space: The Female Artist vs the Housewife – Critical Stages/Scènes critiques (critical-stages.org)
23	Dec 9	Artist Talk [TBC]
24	Dec 11	Final video performance presentation in-class and discussion
FEW	Dec 16	Final Exam Week
FEW	Dec 18	Final Exam Week

Schedule at a glance

Day #	Date	Session	Venue
	Sep 5-7	Field Study	Delphi and Ancient Olympia
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	Oct 25-Nov 3	Fall Break	
14	Nov 4	Performing Processions: encounters between past and present	
15	Nov 6	The Body in Performance	
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	Nov 12-15	Field Study	Peloponnese
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Course Bibliography (Required and Supplementary Readings)

Textbook

-Marvin Carlson (2013). *Performance: a Critical Introduction*, 2nd ed. London, UK; New York, USA: Routledge

Required Readings

-Sally Banes and André Lepecki (2007). *The Senses in Performance*. New York, USA: Routledge. (“Introduction”, pp. 1-7)

-Anna Birch and Joanne Tompkins (eds.) (2012). *Performing Site-Specific Theatre: Politics, Place, Practice*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan (“The ‘Place’ and Practice of Site-Specific Theatre and Performance”, pp. 1-20)

-Oscar G. Brockett, Margaret Mitchell, and Linda Hardberger. (2010). “Scenic design in ancient Greek and Roman theatres”, in *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States*. San Antonio, Tex: Tobin Theatre Arts Fund. pp. 4-24

-Yannis Hamilakis and Efthymis Theou (2013). “Enacting multiple times, reclaiming archaeology”, in *Reclaiming Archaeology: Beyond the Tropes of Modernity*, González-Ruibal, A. (ed.), New York, USA: Routledge: 181-194

-Christopher Innes (1996). *Avant Garde Theatre 1892-1992*. London, UK: Routledge (“Symbolism and Alfred Jarry”, pp.19-28)

-Oswyn Murray (ed.) 1990. *Sympotica: A Symposium on the Symposium*, Oxford [England]: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press. ("Sympotic History", pp. 3-13)

-Richard Schechner (2008). *Performance theory*, 3rd ed. London, UK: Routledge ("Approaches", pp. 1-25 & "Ritual", pp.52-88).

-Helen Spackmann (2014). "Minding the Matter of Representation: Staging the Body (Politic)", in Patrick Campbell (ed.) *The Body in Performance*. London, UK and New York, USA: Routledge Falmer: pp. 5-22.

-Athena Stourna (2023). "The Domestic Kitchen as Performance Space: The Female Artist vs The Housewife", *Critical Stages/Scènes critiques*, Issue 30 (online journal): [The Domestic Kitchen as Performance Space: The Female Artist vs the Housewife – Critical Stages/Scènes critiques \(critical-stages.org\)](https://critical-stages.org/)

-Athena Stourna (2018). "Banquet Performances Now and Then: Commensal Experiments and Eating as Mise en Scène", *Platform: Journal for Theatre and Performing Arts*, no 11.2, "Feasting": 10-31

-David Wiles (2003). *A Short History of Western Performance Space*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press ("Processional space", pp. 62-71).

Supplementary Readings

-Jill Dolan (1993). "Geographies of learning: theatre studies, performance, and the 'performative' ". *Theatre Journal* 45, no. December: 417-41.

-Robert Hughes (1991). *The Shock of the New*. London, UK: Thames and Hudson (Chapter 1. "The Mechanical Paradise")

-Mike Huxley and Noel Witts (eds.) (1996). *Twentieth Century Performance Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.

-Carl Kerényi (1991) *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter*. Tr. Ralph Manheim. Princeton, USA: Princeton University Press.

-Ben Kershaw (2000). *Site Specifics: Performance, Place and Documentation*. London, UK: Routledge.

-André Lepecki (ed.) (2004). *Of the Presence of the Body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

-André Lepecki (2000). "The body in difference". *Fama* 1, no. 1: 6-13.

-Thomas McEvelley (1983). "Diogenes of Sinope (c. 410-320B.C.): Selected Performance Pieces", *Artforum*, 21 (March 1983): 58-59.

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-Richard Schechner (1985). *Between Theatre and Anthropology*. Philadelphia, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press ("Points of Contact Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought", pp. 3-34).

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