

Performance Studies

New York University • Tisch School of the Arts • 721 Broadway, 6th Floor • New York, NY 10003 • 212-998-1620
performance.studies@nyu.edu • www.nyu.edu/tisch/performance

COURSE BULLETIN: *SPRING 2005*

ALL SCHEDULE INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CONTACT DEPT. FOR UP TO DATE INFO.

ALL PERFORMANCE STUDIES STUDENTS MUST RECEIVE FACULTY ADVISOR
APPROVAL OF SCHEDULE BEFORE REGISTERING

Please note some classes require special application.

Dance Ethnography

Barbara Browning

H42.2920-001 (Torchtone #74540)

Mondays 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

An examination of the challenges and possibilities of cross-cultural dance analysis. The seminar will begin with a brief overview of the history of the field, and the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of methods and approaches. We will then alternate close readings of recent dance ethnographies with the workshopping of students' own writing. Student projects may be based on previously performed fieldwork, or on research conducted specifically for the class.

Dissertation Proposal

André Lepecki

H42.2301 (Torchtone #70554)

Mondays 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

This course is required of PhD students who have passed their Area Exams. This course is only open to those students.

Emphasis on problems of research, writing, and editing as they apply to the doctoral dissertation. Each student prepares a dissertation proposal as a class project.

Sound & Image in the Avant Garde

Allen Weiss

H42.2505-001 (Torchtone #74536) cross listed with Cinema Studies)

Mondays 12:30pm –4:30pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 651

This interdisciplinary course will investigate the relations between experimental film, radio, music, and sound art in modernism and postmodernism. The inventions of photography, cinema and sound recording radically altered the 19th century consciousness of perception, temporality, selfhood, and death. The newfound role of the voice—depersonalized, disembodied, eternalized—appeared in poetic and literary phantasms of that epoch, and offered models of future (and futuristic) art forms. This course will study the aesthetic and ideological effects of this epochal shift, especially as it concerns the subsequent practice of avant-garde art and aesthetics. It will specifically focus on the recontextualization of the history of avant-garde film in the broader context of the sound arts and their discursive practices, from Dada and Surrealism through Lettrism, Situationism, Fluxus and the American Independent Cinema. Special attention will be paid to the transformations of the 1950s and the 1960s, the moment when the arts moved toward a more performative mode, entailing the dematerialization and decommodification of the aesthetic domain.

Indigineity: Performance and Circulation

Diana Taylor

H42.2406-001 (Torchtone #70555) cross listed with Anthropology

Mondays 3:30 – 6:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

This team-taught course brings anthropological and performance studies approaches into conversation to investigate the many ways in which performance both creates and transmits a sense of indigenous cultural identity and memory. We explore a broad range of State and individual practices—from pre-Conquest displays of power (Aztec architecture and sacrifice) to individual healers and ritual specialists (shamanism), to pilgrimages and processions (i.e., vision quests) that define communities. We look at rituals, corporeal practices (i.e., gestures, greetings, bodily presentation), spoken utterances (i.e., ethnopoetics, jokes) and religious ceremonies across various parts of the world as acts of transfer, passing knowledge from one generation or community to another. The course includes films and documentary videos.

This course is taught under the auspices of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. Although the course is taught as a conventional graduate seminar, it is being taught simultaneously at NYU, the National University of Mexico (CRIM), and Arizona State University, with specialized seminars offered at the University of Rio de Janeiro (UNI-RIO), Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru, and the University of Manitoba. Each course follows a similarly structured syllabus, and shares an essential reading list, encouraging a comparative focus. The courses and seminars will be coordinated through a shared website, which houses course readings, translation software, and other material related to the course. In addition, students from all participating institutions are expected to engage in an ongoing discussion, collaborating with students and faculty from the other institutions.

Final projects will take the form of a webpage which includes a paper, bibliography, and audio-visual material. No previous knowledge of digital technologies is necessary for this course.

During Spring Break (March 2005), the Hemispheric Institute will host an “encuentro” (or festival/meeting of 400 participating members) in Belo Horizonte (Brazil) on the topic “Performing Heritage.” Students from this Hemispheric Course will be invited to present a panel to analyze their collaborative online and offline projects.

History of Dance II

Patricia Beaman

H42.2250-001 (Torchtone #70553)

Mondays and Fridays 1:30pm – 3:15pm, 4 points

111 Second Ave., Classroom 5M

For more information on this course, please contact the Tisch Dance Department at 212-998-1980

Black Performance in Context

Tavia Nyong'o

H42.2228-001 (Torchtone #74594)

Mondays 6:30 – 9:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

What are the contexts of black performance in the United States? How does black performance in the United States speak to Atlantic and diasporic perspectives? How does blackness travel? How is it gendered in both national and diasporic articulations? Is it useful to think, not simply of racial formations, but of racialized structures of feeling? This course will survey recent approaches to this question from an interdisciplinary range of authors working in and around the subject of performance. In addition to placing black performance in comparative and transnational contexts, we will seek to develop accounts that ground performance practice in the history of black struggle in the United States: against slavery, Jim Crow, ghettoization, AIDS, and mass incarceration. Throughout, we will seek to develop interpretations of black music, acting, and dance grounded in their relations to developing U.S. culture industries in the twentieth century.

Dramaturgy

André Lepecki

H42.2704-001 (Torchtone #74547)

Tuesdays 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

Limited enrollment. This course requires an application to the instructor. Please prepare a one-page statement outlining your academic and artistic background and reason(s) why you want to take this course. Please email this statement to jason.beckerman@nyu.edu. Please send your statement no later than Friday, November 12.

This course will explore the practical and theoretical challenges facing the dramaturg today. In the past decade, dramaturgy has left its theatrical confines to become increasingly more present in different art-forms, particularly among the European avant-garde. Today, one talks of ³dance dramaturgy,² ³visual dramaturgy,² even of a ³macro-dramaturgy,² aimed at promoting broad social change. Although it is still questionable whether this explosion signifies real gain for the dramaturg -- or even for the art-forms he or she works with -- the return of the dramaturg to the avant-garde scene has brought important consequences for the making and theorizing of performance. The blurring of disciplinary and aesthetic boundaries being one of its most intriguing changes. In this course, we will read from a broad range of contemporary dramaturgs, as well as from choreographers, filmmakers, visual artists and theater directors in order to assess how the dramaturg fits less a specific role and is more and more becoming a process facilitator, and how the dramaturg faces very specific tasks, practical compositional problems and ethical dilemmas. We will view film, theater, dance, performance art, and installation art to identify elements of composition, thematic fields, and media-

specific problems in dramaturgy. Throughout the semester, students will also be assigned to work as dramaturgs in theatre, dance and performance art productions in NYC. This practical aspect of the course will guide our work around specific problems in composition, editing, rehearsing, choreographing and writing each of the productions will bring.

Bibliography & Research: Advanced Readings in Performance Studies

José Muñoz

H42.2201-001 (Torchtone # 74546)

Tuesdays 3:30 - 6:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

Access codes required for registration. This course is required of all first year PhD students. This course is open only to those students.

Reading will be balanced between foundational texts in the field of Performance Studies as well as new interventions that propel the discourse forward. Readings will examine the Performance Studies project's intersections with different lines of thought that will include anthropology, Philosophy, feminism, critical race theory, legal theory, Marxism and queer critique. Students will be expected to assemble an annotated bibliography on some aspect of the field as well as writing a final research paper.

Music, Politics & Identity: Feminist and Queer Historiography in Music

Suzanne Cusick

H42.2955-001 (Torchtone # 75272) cross listed with GSAS Music

Tuesdays 3:30 - 5:30pm, 4 points

Waverly Building, Room 268

This course is intended (1) to introduce current ways of thinking and writing about issues of gender and sexuality, as they relate to musicking; (2) to facilitate each student's development of an informed, self-aware position in relation to recent scholarship on gender, sexuality and music; and (3) to encourage students to use feminist and queer scholarship about music, and their own negotiated relationships with that scholarship, as a model for other kinds of politically engaged scholarship (e.g., scholarship engaged centrally with "race" and ethnicity concerns, with post-colonialism, globalization and its discontents, etc). Readings, discussion, and the preparation of an article-length seminar paper that "tells a story about musicking" in a way that illuminates the relationship(s) linking musicking to gender and/or sexuality.

Projects in Performance Studies

Karen Shimakawa

H42.2000-001 (Torchtone #70545)

Wednesdays 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

This course is required of all MA students. This course requires an access code for registration. Please see Jason Beckerman for an access code.

Students must also register for one of the following discussion sections (schedule to be determined by the instructor):

Section 2 - (Torchtone #70546)

Section 3 - (Torchtone #70547)

Section 4 - (Torchtone #70548)

Section 5 – (Torchtone #70549)

This is the final course in Performance Studies' Masters programs. The course helps student develop and present a final culminating project.

Verbal Art as Performance: Poetics and Poesis

Deborah Kapchan

H42.0302-001 (Torchtone #74538)

Wednesdays 12:30pm – 3:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

The 1960s were a time of great creative and intellectual foment - there were new expressions of the body and senses, as well as new configurations of ideology. Post-structuralism (Foucault, Derrida), symbolic anthropology (Turner), generative linguistics (Chomsky) and PERFORMANCE STUDIES (Schechner et al) emerged with new ways of interpreting the world. This course follows one strand of these developments - namely the school of ethnopoetics. The "ethnopoets" were interested in documenting and analyzing the oral poetry and myths of the indigenous populations of the earth. They were also deeply concerned with the music of other poetic traditions (including their own) and developed elaborate forms of transliteration that allows the work to "sound" on the page. Following this school from its inception until the present, we will explore the rediscovery of Russian Formalism, theories of orality and literacy, verbal art, speech play, metaphor, genre theory, translation theory and poetics.

Antonin Artaud and the Psychopathology of Expression

Allen Weiss

H42.2217-001 (Torchtone # 74535)

Wednesdays 3:30pm – 6:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

Limited Enrollment. This course requires an application to the instructor. Please prepare a one-page statement which includes the following information: 1. Your reason(s) for applying to the class, 2. Your expectations for the class, 3. Your theoretical background, 4. Your home department, and 5. Whether you are an MA or PhD student (undergrads not eligible for this course).

Please email this statement to jason.beckerman@nyu.edu no later than Friday, November 12.

With the recent publication of thousands of pages of Artaud's private journal—written during his incarceration at the psychiatric hospital of Rodez and afterwards in Paris during the final and perhaps most creative years of his life—as well as with several exhibitions of his drawings, a vast reassessment of his life work is underway, calling into question many previous readings of his most influential work, *The Theater and Its Double*. This seminar will consider all aspects of Artaud's production—theory, theater, poetry, cinema, radio, performance, drawings, letters—following the conviction that the early, more famous work must be reinterpreted, as he himself suggests, in light of his ultimate, often hermetic and incendiary, artistic efforts. Furthermore, as Artaud's work spanned precisely the decades of the modernist discovery of the art of the insane—from Hans Prinzhorn's 1922 publication of *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* through Jean Dubuffet's postwar formulation of the notion of "art brut"—Artaud's work will be contextualized within the modern history of the psychopathology of expression.

Performance and Social Theory: Performing Sovereignty

Tavia Nyong'o

H42.2386-001 (Torchtone #74595)

Wednesdays 6:30pm – 9:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

How do we write a history of the politicizations of the body in our present, which we see both in the forcible presentations of naked life at Abu Ghraib, and also in the equally decisive vanishings of Guantanamo Bay? How do we intervene in a landscape marked by the re-branding of "freedom," "democracy" and "sovereignty" as tools for neoliberalism and empire? How do we account for a human rights discourse that is elicited precisely in those cases — Bosnia, Rwanda, Darfur— where its efficacy seems most guaranteed to be null? Are our protesting performances destined to be empty cries? Or can social theory itself be reconstructed around the categories of performance and performativity? In this course we will track a figure that appears in various guises—most often as "agency" or "sovereignty"—and follow its course through political and performance theory. We will read classic theorists of sovereignty such as Hannah Arendt and the Marquis de Sade, as well as more recent thinkers such as Giorgio Agamben, Judith Butler, Michael Hardt, and Antonio Negri, and we will use them to develop strategies for reading contemporary performance practices seeking reconfigure sovereignty. This course will also develop that strand of queer theory that has sought to rethink categories of personal sovereignty, particularly in response to the AIDS pandemic, and we will ask how such minoritarian discourses may function as a critique of the solemnities of humanism. We will ask whether or not minoritarian space—the space of marginalization—is also the space of the exception that generates the rule.

Theories of Directing: Ways of Staging

Liz Leconte

H42.1060-001 (Torchtone #75299)

Thursdays 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

Enrollment is limited and on a first come, first served basis.

This course will explore different ways of constructing performances, with special emphasis on structuring space, time, and the use of technology, in relation to a variety of texts.

Elizabeth Le Compte is best known for her work with the New York-based experimental theater company, **The Wooster Group**, of which she is a founding member and director. For thirty years, the Group has, under Le Compte's direction,

played a pivotal role in bringing evocative and technologically sophisticated uses of sound, lights, and video to the stage. Since 1975 Le Compte has constructed (choreographed, designed, and directed) seventeen multimedia theater pieces with the Group, including the trilogy *Three Places in Rhode Island* (consisting of *Sakonnet Point* (1975), *Rumstick Road* (1977), and *Nayatt School* (1978)); the epilogue to the trilogy, *Point Judith* (1979); a second trilogy (*The Road to Immortality*, consisting of *Route 1 & 9* (1981), *L.S.D. (...Just the High Points...)* (1984), and *Frank Dell's The Temptation of St. Antony* (1987)); *Brace Up!* (1991/2003), based on Paul Schmidt's translation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*; *Fish Story* (1993); *The Emperor Jones* (1992) and *The Hairy Ape* (1995) by Eugene O'Neill, *House/Lights* (1999), based on Gertrude Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*; *To You, The Birdie!* (*Phèdre*) (2001), translated by Paul Schmidt from the play by Jean Racine; and the Group's newest work, *Poor Theater*. She has also choreographed two short dance pieces -- *Hula* (1982) and *For the Good Times* (1982). Her film and video work includes *The Emperor Jones* (2000), *Wrong Guys* (1997), *White Homeland Commando* (1993), *Rhyme 'Em to Death* (1994), *Flaubert Dreams of Travel, But the Illness of His Mother Prevents It* and *Rehearsal Tape: Wrong G., Summer 1987*, the latter two made with film/video director Ken Kobland. Her numerous honors and awards include the 2005 Skowhegan Medal for Performance, a NEA Distinguished Artists Fellowship for Lifetime Achievement in American Theater and the MacArthur Fellowship.

The Wooster Group, under her direction, has received numerous national and international awards, including several OBIE Awards (including Best Production in 2002 for *To You, The Birdie!* (*Phèdre*) and 1999 for *House/Lights*), multiple Bessie Awards, the Grand Prix for best production at the Festival de Theatre des Ameriques in 1987, the Edwin Booth Award for Significant Contributions to the New York City Theater in 1993, and the Montreal English Critics Circle Award in 1999.

Articles on Le Compte's work have appeared in *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *Artforum*, *Parkett*, *American Theatre Magazine*, *Ballet News*, *The Drama Review*, *Performing Arts Journal*, *Theatre Crafts*, *The Village Voice*, and numerous European and Asian journals. David Savran's book *Breaking the Rules: The Wooster Group* documents the creation of Le Compte's work through the making of *L.S.D.* Essays and writings on her work are included in *Performing Drama/Dramatizing Performance: Alternative Theatre and the Dramatic Text* by Michael Vanden Heuvel, *Directors in Rehearsal* by Susan Letzler Cole, *Arresting Images* by Steven C. Dublin, and *Actors and Onlookers* by Natalie Crohn Schmitt. In 1993 an article by Le Compte on her video work appeared in *Felix: A Journal of Media Arts and Communication*.

Le Compte has lectured and taught at Pratt Institute, New York University, Columbia University, Connecticut College, American University, Northeastern University, M.I.T., Smith College, the Chicago Art Institute, and the Yale School of Drama. From 1970-1975, Le Compte was a member of the experimental theater company, *The Performance Group*. She was born in Summit, NJ in 1944, and received a BS in Fine Arts from Skidmore College in 1967.

Topics in Music and Performance: Musical Ethnography

Mercedes Dujunco

H42.2960-001 (Torchtone # 75271) cross listed with GSAS Music

Thursdays 10:00am – 12:00pm

Waverly Building, Room 268

This course provides pragmatic instruction in grant proposal writing, field and laboratory research and analytical methods in ethnomusicology. Classes will consist of a mixture of lecture and group discussion. This course is also designed to help graduate students in ethnomusicology and related fields to sort through critical decisions involving career goals, area interests, and research models by providing a sense of the field, its options, and the real-life practice of ethnomusicology.

Topics include research design, grant writing, fieldwork, participant observation, fieldnotes, interviews and oral histories, survey instruments, textual analysis, audio-visual methods, musical transcription, musical analysis, archiving, performance as methodology and epistemology, and the ethics and politics of cultural representation. Students will conceive, design, and carry out a limited research project over the course of the semester and will prepare a mock fieldwork grant proposal for presentation to a panel of scholar-jurors.

Foucault Seminar

Ann Pellegrini

H42.2745-001 (Torchtone #74539)

Thursdays 12:30pm - 3:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

Limited Enrollment. This course requires an application to the instructor. Please prepare a statement which includes the following information: 1. What you have already read by Foucault in any coursework, 2. How you see this course fitting into your own intellectual project(s), 3. How your particular research interests or performance background would add to the class discussions and the course as a whole.

Please email this statement to jason.beckerman@nyu.edu no later than Friday, November 12.

An intensive advanced seminar grounded in close critical engagement with Foucault. The main focus is on texts by Foucault, but we will also be engaging, necessarily partially, selected secondary works on Foucault. A question throughout: how has Foucault been taken up and circulated (sometimes against the grain of his texts) in political projects and intellectual debates? Another way to put this: How has Foucault himself been "redeployed"? What do we mean when we say "Foucault," and who are "we" to say it?) Special attention to the following: Foucault, bio-power, and the politics of sex and race; Foucault on religion; genealogy as critical practice.

The Politics of Culture

Randy Martin

H42.2312-001 (Torchtone #75231) cross listed with Art & Public Policy

Thursdays 2:00pm – 4:45pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room TBA

What are the institutional, discursive, and ideological contexts that shape the objects, images, sounds or texts we call "art"? What are the links between cultural spaces—the museum, the movie-theater, the gallery, the music/dance hall, the bookstore, the fashion runway, the public street, television, cyber space—and the larger realm of politics? And how do these relationships impact, implicitly or explicitly, the ways we create, curate, or study the arts? How do consumers play an active role in the reception of cultural products? What is the relation between formally promulgated cultural policy and the tacit knowledge that artists call upon to get their work into the world? What dimensions of the broader cultural terrain are made legible through artistic practice? What are the means through which art intervenes in the political arena? "Art" will be studied as a site of contested representations and visions, embedded in power formations—themselves shaped by specific historical moments and geographical locations. Given contemporary global technologies, cultural practices will also be studied within the transnational "travel" of ideas and people. Such germane issues as the legal and constitutional dimensions of censorship, the social formation of taste, the consumption of stars, the bio-politics of the body, transnational copyrights law—will all pass through an intersectional analysis of gender, race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, and nation, incorporating the insights of such areas of inquiry as multiculturalism, feminism, post-colonialism, and queer studies.

Special Project: Marxism and Performance

José Muñoz

H42.2214-001 (Torchtone #74545)

Thursdays 3:30pm – 6:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, Room 636

This course offers students an introduction to Marxist methodologies. The first half of the seminar will be devoted to close readings of Marx. The second half of the course will be a survey that focuses on key figures and texts in marxist critical theory including: the Frankfurt School (especially Adorno, Bloch, Benjamin), Gramsci, Althusser, Williams, Spivak, Hall and Jameson.

Performance Composition: Performing the Spectacular – Political Theater in the 21st Century

Jennifer Miller

H42.2730-001 (Torchtone #70560)

Fridays 12:30pm – 3:15pm

721 Broadway, Room 636

Access codes required for registration. Enrollment is limited and on a first come, first served basis. Please see Jason Beckerman, Administrative Director of Performance Studies, to register.

PLEASE NOTE: For Performance Studies students: This course counts as a practical course.

Students will experiment with the techniques of accessible, popular theater, imagining and making work for large outdoor spaces, as well small intimate spaces.

Reeling from the November elections, in this class we will experiment with making work that can address the political concerns of the moment. With an eye towards work that is both sophisticated and popular we will look at the Brecht, Bread and Puppet, Paul Zaloom, Vaginal Cream Davis, Ringling Brothers Circus, Great Small Works and the Glamericans, among others.

We will engage techniques developed by New York out door theater company, Circus Amok as we explore puppetry, pageantry, song, dance physical theater, monologue and clown.

***Circus Amok** founder and artistic director **Jennifer Miller** has been pursuing an original approach to alternative circus forms, theater, and dance, and has worked as a circus performer for over twenty years. Her work with Circus Amok has been awarded a “Bessie” (a New York Dance and Performance Award) in 1995 and an OBIE in 2000. Her work as a “bearded lady” in performance environments ranging from more mainstream art venues to Coney Island’s Sideshows by the Seashore has been extensively covered by the press. She has toured her solo work Morphadyke here and abroad. Miller has been invited to speak on numerous academic panels and conferences on issues of gender and representation and has also appeared on such national TV talk shows as Jerry Springer, Joan Rivers and RuPaul. She has been the recipient of numerous grants for both her solo work and Circus Amok including those from Creative Time, Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance Art, Manhattan Community Arts Fund, Meet the Composer, Nancy Quinn Fund, New York Foundation for the Arts, Jerome Foundation, Gunk Foundation, Open Meadows Foundation, Puffin Foundation, and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Miller has also served as a Movement Research Artist-in-Residence.*