

Stockholm University

Department of Culture and Aesthetics

Theatre Studies

Cultural Theory and Transnational Performance 2 (Fall 2019, MA-level, 7.5 ECTS)

Instructor and examiner: Dr Dirk Gindt, dirk.gindt@teater.su.se

Emails will normally be answered within 48 hours, except on weekends and holidays. Office hours by appointment.

Course description

The course provides students with knowledge about contemporary theatre practices in a globalized world. They will apply methods and theories they have acquired in course I to analyze specific theatre examples and will learn about concrete working conditions and performance practices. The syllabus comprises cultural analysis, dramaturgical theory and concepts, studies on postcolonial and intercultural theatre. After having completed the course the students will have acquired the skills:

- to analyze and evaluate transnational theatre and performance practices
- to reflect and adapt their own research and dramaturgical position,
- to develop and to argue for their own alternative approach

Course requirements

- active and qualitative participation at the seminars, including student presentations;
- a written essay (5-6 pages + references and works cited) that critically engages with key arguments and perspectives presented in the course literature and applies at least three of the main theoretical and methodological concepts onto an independently chosen case study (a transcultural or intercultural performance, ensemble, theatre artist etc.). Students are welcome to pick a case study from their own respective cultural background or cultural field of interest.

Attendance and class room environment

Attendance is mandatory. Each student may miss one seminar, but an additional absence needs to be compensated with a 3-page written essay that critically discusses the literature assigned for that session. This assignment needs to be handed in no later than the day the final paper is due. If a student has missed three or more classes, a final grade cannot be assigned. Browsing the Internet at leisure or texting during class time as well as excessive lateness or leaving early repeatedly will affect your participation grade. In case of religious observations, students are kindly asked to advise their professor a week before the absence in order to make arrangements for potential make up assignments.

In order to guarantee a safe learning environment that stimulates critical thinking and encourages cultural diversity, students are expected to respect different and divergent opinions and political, cultural and/or religious points of view and to express disagreement in a calm and civil way that does not blame or shame other members of the class. Remember to actively listen to an argument, critically examine it and articulate your own position as succinctly and as convincingly as possible. Students are encouraged to relate and apply the various theoretical concepts to their own cultural fields of interest and/or artistic practice as well as prepare examples from their own national, cultural or linguistic background.

Grading criteria

Assessment is based on a criterion-referenced scale, ranging from A (Excellent) to F (Fail). A, B, C, D and E are approved grades. Fx and F are failed grades. In order to obtain final approval, the course requires a minimum grade of E for the written as well as the oral assignments and that all course requirements are met. If a student has received a passing grade (A-E) they are not allowed to repeat the examination in order to receive a higher grade.

Grades A and B are only awarded if all of the assignments, including potential make up assignments, have been completed by the assigned deadline.

A (Excellent): The participant, in written (70%) and oral work (30%)

- identifies, defines and analyses different contemporary theatre practices in a globalised context by applying concepts of cultural theory, postcolonial and intercultural theory in theatre and performance studies from a *comprehensive and critically reflective perspective*;
- *independently* formulates a *relevant* and *original* research question departing from a *broad selection* of theoretical concepts and an object of study;
- shows the capacity to structure and communicate knowledge in theatre and performance studies in a comprehensible form. The analysis and argument are perfectly coherent, flawless and of high precision.

B (Very Good): The participant, in written (70%) and oral work (30%)

- identifies, defines and analyses different contemporary theatre practices in a globalised context by applying concepts of cultural theory, postcolonial and intercultural theory in theatre and performance studies from a *comprehensive and partly critically reflective perspective*;
- *independently* formulates a *relevant* research question departing from a *relatively broad selection* of theoretical concepts and an object of study;
- shows the capacity to structure and communicate knowledge in theatre and performance studies in a comprehensible form. The analysis and argument are coherent and of high quality and of high precision.

C (Good): The participant, in written (70%) and oral work (30%)

- identifies, defines and analyses different contemporary theatre practices in a globalised context by applying concepts of cultural theory, postcolonial and intercultural theory in theatre and performance studies from several, often well developed, but mainly independent perspectives;
- with *a certain degree of independence* formulates a *relevant* research question departing from a *satisfactory selection* of theoretical and an object of study;
- shows the capacity to structure and communicate knowledge in theatre and performance studies in a comprehensible form. The analysis and argument are of high quality and of high precision.

D (Satisfactory): The participant, in written (70%) and oral work (30%)

- identifies, defines and analyses different contemporary theatre practices in a globalised context by applying concepts of cultural theory, postcolonial and intercultural theory in theatre and performance studies in a way that, albeit in-depth and elaborate, is decidedly *one-dimensional*;
- with *a certain degree of independence* formulates an *appropriate* research question departing from a *satisfactory selection* of theoretical concepts and an object of study;
- shows the capacity to structure and communicate knowledge in theatre and performance studies in a comprehensible form. The analysis and argument are satisfactory.

E (Adequate): The participant, in written (70%) and oral work (30%)

- identifies, defines and analyses different contemporary theatre practices in a globalised context by applying concepts of cultural theory, postcolonial and intercultural theory in theatre and performance studies from in a way that is decidedly *one-dimensional*;
- formulates an *appropriate* research question departing from a *satisfactory selection* of theoretical concepts and an object of study;
- shows the capacity to structure and communicate knowledge in theatre and performance studies in a comprehensible form. The analysis and argument are adequate.

Fx (Insufficient): The participant's knowledge, skills and abilities display minor flaws, overall or in significant parts, but is given the opportunity to, within one week after instructions from the examiner, submit a supplement to receive a maximum grade E

F (Fail): The participant's knowledge, skills and abilities display minor flaws, overall or in significant parts.

Students with grade F are entitled to take two further examinations to achieve at least grade E. A participant who receives grade Fx or F twice by the same examiner, has the right to request to have its test evaluated by another examiner. The request hereof should be made to the Director of Studies (*studierektor*). Students may request the test to be offered up to three semesters after it was last offered.

Required readings

Some texts are made available as reference copies outside of room 258. Several articles can be accessed on the Athena course site (<https://athena.itslearning.com>). The majority of the readings are essays or book chapters which students can access and retrieve electronically via the Stockholm University Library.

E-journals

- Go to the website of the university library (www. <http://su.se/english/library/>)
- Click on 'Articles';
- In the search engine, enter the title of the essay that you are looking for;
- The displayed list of results offers you a number of options or databases to choose from (e.g. JSTOR, Project Muse Standard Collection, EBSCO, Literature Resource Centre, Cambridge Journals Online etc.);
- The next page will ask you to sign in with your username and password. Once you have signed in, you will be able to access the article as well as back issues of the journal in question.

E-books

- Go to the website of the university library (www. <http://su.se/english/library/>);
- Click on 'E-books';
- In the search engine, enter (parts of) the title of the book and/or author that you are looking for;
- The displayed list of results tells you which databases offer the book as an electronic resource. Click on the relevant link;
- The next page will ask you to sign in with your username and password. Once you have signed in, you will be able to access the e-book and retrieve selected pages or chapters as .pdf files.

Literature & schedule

Session 1: Cultural translation and ‘the third space’

(Monday, 7 October, 14:00-17:00; room 101)

Bhabha, Homi and Rutherford, Jonathan, “The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha”, in Johnathan Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990, pp. 207-221 (on Athena)

Bhabha, Homi, *The Location of Culture*, New York and London: Routledge 2004 [1994], (excerpts: “How Newness Enters the World”, pp. 303-337) (ref. copy available)

Please observe: Registered students are expected to have prepared the readings for the first seminar.

Session 2: Case study: Cultural translations of Tennessee Williams in post-war Europe

(Wednesday, 9 October, 14:00-17:00; room 101)

Gindt, Dirk, *Tennessee Williams in Sweden and France, 1945-1965: Cultural Translations, Sexual Anxieties and Racial Fantasies*. London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2019 (Chapter 2: “Encounters with the Other: *A Streetcar Named Desire*”, pp. 39-88) (e-book).

*Students unfamiliar with Tennessee Williams are expected to study the play *A Streetcar Named Desire*.*

Session 3: Theatre of the Oppressed

(Monday, 14 October, 14:00-17:00; room 101)

Boal, Augusto, *The Theatre of the Oppressed*, London: Pluto Press, 2013 (1979) (e-book; original or any translation that the student prefers is fine)

Session 4: Orientalism

(Wednesday, 16 October, 14:00-17:00; room 101)

Nochlin, Linda, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society*, New York: Harper and Row, 1989 (excerpts: “The Imaginary Orient”, pp. 33-60) (ref. copy available)

Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage 2003 (1978) (excerpts: “Introduction”, pp. 1-30) (ref. copy available)

Session 5: Intercultural practice or cultural appropriation?

(Monday, 21 October, 14:00-17:00; room 101)

Bharucha, Rustom, *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture*, London & New York: Routledge, 1993 (excerpts: “Introduction” & “Collision of Cultures”, pp. 1-10 & 13-41) (ref. copy available)

Students groups will do research and present on the artists discussed in Bharucha’s text: Antonin Artaud, Peter Brook, Gordon Craig, Jerzy Grotowski and Richard Schechner

Session 6: Positionality & Reflexivity

(Wednesday, 23 October, 14:00-17:00; room 101)

Ahmed, Sara, “A Phenomenology of Whiteness”, *Feminist Theory* vol. 8, no. 2 (2007): 149-168 (e-journal)

Dyer, Richard, *White: Essays on Race and Culture*, New York & London: Routledge, 1997 (excerpts: “The Matter of Whiteness”, pp. 1-40) (e-book)

hooks, bell, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, New York: Routledge, 2015 (excerpts: “Choosing the Margin”, pp. 145-153) (on Athena)

Session 7: Student presentations: Diversity and cultural translation inside and outside of the class room

(Friday, 25 October, 13:00-16:00; library)

Students independently choose a play, performance, ensemble or theatre artist from their own culture or cultural field of interest and present it to the class, discussing and applying several of the theoretical concepts they have learnt during the courses Cultural Theory and Transnational Performance 1 & 2. Students may base their final paper on this presentation.

Friday, 1 November: deadline for final essay, to be submitted in paper or via email no later than 5PM. Please observe that only the following file formats will be accepted: .doc; .docx; .pdf.

Suggested reference styles (Oxford or Chicago):

http://guides.library.uwa.edu.au/ld.php?content_id=14872881

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Late submissions: Late submissions will be accepted on Monday, 13 January 2020 at 10 AM. Please consult the grading criteria for repercussions.