

Theatre History I

Instructor: Eric Ruffin
Class Meeting: T/TH 3:30PM-4:55PM
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theatre History I traces the origins of theatre from its ritualistic storytelling origins through the 15th Century (Middle Ages). This course will survey world theatre forms, styles, techniques, and traditions, with scholarly research and application in the classroom. Research and lab work will be conducted by the students. Students will also be required to read and analyze plays from different eras and cultures to examine the role of performance in various civilizations.

This examination will place the theatre contributions from these periods in historical context. Art and artists do not exist in a vacuum. How socio/political and cultural movements inform theatre will be the ongoing discussion. Critical analysis of assigned material will be required by all in daily discussions. Lectures and readings will address the aesthetics of theatre; its art and craft, including its artists and practitioners while acknowledging its relationship to the society that produces it.

This course supports the following national and dcps standards for arts education:

Content Standard 8: Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and present.

Content Standard 6: Comparing and integrating art forms by analyzing traditional theatre, dance, music, and visual arts, and new forms.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of important ideas, people, places and methods
2. Identify various theatrical styles and the cultures that produced them
3. Articulate similarities and differences between different periods and cultures
4. Delineate a rough timeline for the development of western and world theatre
5. Engage in oral and written discussion of plays
6. Identify concepts and practices that continue in modern theatre
7. Synthesize and apply theatrical conventions and practices to the production of a theatrical performance

III. Grading

You are required to attend class regularly, take part in discussions read assigned material write reviews and participate in group projects. Five quizzes, a midterm and a final will also be given.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Be present and on time for class
2. Be well prepared for class activities and discussions (inability to participate in discussion constitutes an absence)
3. Conduct research
4. Attend and review two (2) live theatre performances
5. Group projects that culminate in a final report and/or presentation
6. Five (5) Quizzes and Two (2) Exams

V. METHODS OF EVALUATION

Exams	-- 30%
Presentations	-- 30%
Critiques/Play reviews	-- 15%
Quizzes	--15%
Participation	-- 10%

VI. GRADING SCALE

1. A -- Excellent	100-90
2. B -- Good	89-80
3. C -- Fair	79-70
4. D -- Passing	69-60
5. F -- Fail	59 and below

This course is a survey of information essential to an understanding of theatre history. As with any survey course, the content must remain flexible if it is to address the specific needs of the students, therefore, the syllabus and course schedule are subject to change at any time. These changes are at the sole discretion of the instructor, and whenever possible will be made in writing. Further, every attempt is made to include department productions as works in the syllabus.

The instructor will choose chapters from a variety of sources. Students may be asked to photocopy or purchase some plays or collections.

(If the play you see is produced in the DC metro area, the theatre company must be listed on the website below))

- ★ for professional shows, reference www.helenhayes.org for a listing of area theatre companies and show openings and closings
- ★ also check "The Guide to the Lively Arts" in the **Washington Post**
- ★ check out www.cultural-alliance.org/tickets for half price ticket info in DC