

## **PERFORMING ARTS AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN LONDON**

IFSA London Global Flagship

**US Semester Credit Hours:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Course Code:** SO381-14 / TH381-14

**Course Length:** Semester

**Delivery Method:** Face to face

**Language of Instruction:** English

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

From theatre shows and West End musicals, to performance art and stand-up comedy in the East End, this course will introduce you to London's rich theatre legacy and how its contemporary performing arts scene seeks to elevate the diverse voices of a multicultural urban center. To what extent have the arts historically addressed social justice themes, and how can they continue to drive change in our communities? Through visits to theatre and performance events and through hearing from experts in activist and applied theatre, you will gain a deeper understanding of how the arts influence culture, as well as the role that the London performing arts scene plays on the world stage. Using artist-led approaches to place and community, this course integrates experiential interactions with the city.

The course explores performing arts and social change through four highlight areas of practice: 'performances of remembrance', 'performance and activism', 'performance and the local', and 'staging of social and political dialogues.' These areas cover a broad range of performance styles and approaches across theatre, art and the everyday. 'Performances of remembrance' considers how the performing arts can be used to activate collective memory and to ensure we do not forget events, upheavals and devastations of the past. 'Performance and activism' explores a range of historic and present forms of protest to examine how the performing arts is able to effectively mobilize people to respond to a cause. 'Performance and the local' draws from theories of applied theatre and socially engaged practice to examine projects made by artists in collaboration with local communities. 'Staging social and political dialogues' shifts the focus of the course from every day and community contexts to the representation of people and community in theatrical narrative. In this last highlight area, you will explore examples of theatre, performance and dance as well as popular entertainment forms – stand-up comedy and Burlesque – within the theoretical framework of socio-political performing arts.

### **COURSE DELIVERY**

This course will involve a broad range of learning activities including the following:

- Theatre and performance trips: you will have the opportunity to experience of a range of theatre and performance from staged theatre and stand-up comedy to site-based installation projects within community settings.

## COURSE SYLLABUS

- Explorations of the city: we will visit areas that have a direct link with material covered in the sessions and there will be opportunities for you to participate in some performative exercises if you wish.
- Visiting speakers: your course will bring you into contact with people currently working on socio-political theatre and performance with communities in the city of London.
- Vibrant class discussion: we look at the most current social and political concerns within the city of London and British society as a whole, reflecting on their historical roots.
- Interactive lectures: session content incorporates a wide range of video, audio and image sources to engage a wide range of learning styles.

## STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Recognize different functions of performance within society
- Identify a range of working practices across different forms of socio-political performance
- Articulate an awareness of the ethical concerns of socio-political performance
- Understand how positionality intersects with performance in everyday life
- Apply cultural awareness and empathy with regard to people and places
- Apply high-level communication skills: active listening, questioning and contributing to discussion
- Undertake reflective processing of experience
- Evaluate the social impact of theatre and performance from different perspectives
- Articulate an argument through the application of relevant sources and academic writing
- Become familiar with resources available for further research on the topic of the course
- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences

## COURSE OUTLINE

Session	Topic and material covered in session	Visit/speaker or practical activities	Key sources
1	<p><u>Introduction</u> Details about course structure and assessment. Discussion on experience of socially engaged theatre and performance</p> <p><u>Performances of remembrance</u> Example 1: Ros Merkin, <i>Suitcase</i> (2008)</p> <p>Theoretical areas:</p>		<p>About <i>Suitcase</i>: <a href="https://suitcase1938.org/story-of-suitcase/">https://suitcase1938.org/story-of-suitcase/</a></p> <p>Richard Schechner (2013) 'Chapter 5: Performativity' in <i>Performance Studies: An Introduction</i>. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Routledge.</p> <p>Richard Schechner on Performativity: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm3kvxRFS58">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm3kvxRFS58</a></p>

## COURSE SYLLABUS

	Socially engaged practice, performativity		
2	<p><u>Performances of remembrance</u></p> <p>Example 1: Janet Cardiff's <i>The Missing Voice</i> (Case Study B).</p> <p>Example 2: Graeme Miller's <i>Linked</i></p> <p>Theoretical areas: Critical urban theory</p>	<p>Visit to Whitechapel to Engage with Janet Cardiff's <i>The Missing Voice</i>. Followed by discussion and re-imagining of Miller's work.</p>	<p><i>The Missing Voice</i>: <a href="https://soundcloud.com/artangel-2/sets/the-missing-voice">https://soundcloud.com/artangel-2/sets/the-missing-voice</a></p> <p>Information about <i>Linked</i>: <a href="https://www.artsadmin.co.uk/project/linked/">https://www.artsadmin.co.uk/project/linked/</a></p> <p>Toby Butler and Graeme Miller (2005). 'Linked: A Landmark in Sound, an invisible artwork, a walk.' <i>Cultural Geographies</i> 12(1).</p> <p>Carl Lavery (2010) 'The Pepys of London E11: Graeme Miller and the Politics of Linked' in Nicholas Whybrow (ed) (2010). <i>Performance and the Contemporary City</i>. London: Palgrave Macmillan</p>
3	<u>Performances of remembrance</u>	Assignment 1: 10-minute presentations	
4	<p><u>Performance and activism</u></p> <p>Example 1: Suffragette performance-activism in London and beyond</p> <p>Example 2: Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp and contemporary uses of the space for performance, particularly Curious's Greenham Common</p> <p>Theoretical areas: Feminism(s)</p>		<p>Curious's lecture – Suffragettes Invented Performance Art: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TGRNKaLjc8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TGRNKaLjc8</a></p> <p>Curious performance - Greenham Common: <a href="https://www.curiousperformance.com/works/greenham-common/">https://www.curiousperformance.com/works/greenham-common/</a></p> <p>Sophie Mayer (2017) 'That's Why We Came Here: feminist cinema at Greenham Common' <i>Angelaki</i> 22 (3).</p>
5	<p><u>Performance and activism</u></p> <p>Example 3: Liberate Tate</p> <p>Example 4: Extinction Rebellion in London</p>	<p>Trip to Tate Modern to practically explore the turbine hall as a 'public' space. Small performance protest tasks</p>	<p>Benjamin Sutton (2016) 'Liberate Tate Activists Look Back on Six Years of Fighting BP Sponsorship', Hyperallergic: <a href="https://hyperallergic.com/288254/liberate-tate-activists-look-back-on-">https://hyperallergic.com/288254/liberate-tate-activists-look-back-on-</a></p>

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

	<p>Theoretical areas: social change, performance theory (Seven functions of performance)</p>	<p>based on theory and examples.</p>	<p><a href="#">six-years-of-fighting-bp-sponsorship/</a></p> <p>Anna Behrmann (2019) ‘The Artists of Extinction Rebellion : “Our Bold Imagery is Helping to Change the Conversation Around Climate Change’ inews:  <a href="https://inews.co.uk/culture/arts/extinction-rebellion-artist-protest-banner-art-red-rebel-flag-logo-366404">https://inews.co.uk/culture/arts/extinction-rebellion-artist-protest-banner-art-red-rebel-flag-logo-366404</a></p> <p>Jenny Hughes and Helen Nicholson (2016) ‘Applied Theatre: Ecologies of Practices’ in Jenny Hughes and Helen Nicholson (eds.) <i>Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Richard Schechner (2013) ‘Seven Functions of Performance’ in <i>Performance Studies: An Introduction</i>. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Routledge.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p><u>Performance and activism</u></p> <p>Historical spaces of activism in London – including Speaker’s Corner, Hyde Park</p> <p>Example 5: Black Lives Matter</p> <p>Theoretical areas: social justice</p>	<p>Activist-artist speaker followed by discussion</p>	<p>Alina Polianskaya (2020), ‘Diversity BGT dance: Why the powerful BLM performance sparked over 20,000 complaints – and why Ofcom isn’t investigating’ inews:  <a href="https://inews.co.uk/culture/diversity-bgt-dance-blm-performance-complaints-ofcom-investigation-black-lives-matter-itv-explained-641653">https://inews.co.uk/culture/diversity-bgt-dance-blm-performance-complaints-ofcom-investigation-black-lives-matter-itv-explained-641653</a></p> <p>Lynette Goddard (2018) ‘#BlackLivesMatter: Remembering Mark Duggan and David Olowale in contemporary British plays’ <i>Journal of Contemporary Drama in English</i> 6(1)</p> <p>Jen Giesecking, William Mangold, Cindi Katz, Setha Low and Susan Saegert with Don Mitchell (2003) ‘To</p>

## COURSE SYLLABUS

			Go Again to Hyde Park: Public Space Rights and Social Justice' <i>The People, Place and Space Reader</i> . London: Routledge.
7	Assignment 2. Mid-term paper	Mark McGowan – Artist taxi driver audio lecture on the artist (designed to be listened to on headphones as you navigate to Hyde Park corner). Followed by discussion.	On Mark McGowan: <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jan/28/mark-mcgowan-artist-taxi-driver-rear-view-manifesto">https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jan/28/mark-mcgowan-artist-taxi-driver-rear-view-manifesto</a>
8	<p><u>Performance and the local</u></p> <p>Example 1: Air Studio</p> <p>Example 2: Hunt &amp; Darton Café</p> <p>Example 3: Practitioner Tony Cealy</p> <p>Theoretical areas: ethics and working practices in applied theatre and socially engaged practice.</p> <p>Assignment four launch and discussion / access to resources etc.</p>	Artist talk followed by discussion	<p>Air Studio: <a href="https://airstudio.org/">https://airstudio.org/</a></p> <p>Hunt &amp; Darton Café, Barbican: <a href="https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2019/event/hunt-darton-cafe">https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2019/event/hunt-darton-cafe</a></p> <p>Tony Cealy: <a href="http://www.tonycealy.com/">http://www.tonycealy.com/</a></p> <p>Michael Balfour and Kelly Freebody (2018) 'Theories of Change: Cultural Value and Applied Theatre' in Kelly Freebody, Michael Balfour, Michael Finneran, and Michael Anderson (Eds.) <i>Applied Theatre: Understanding Change</i>. NYC: Springer</p>
9	<p><u>Performance and the local</u></p> <p>Example 4: Friedemann Derschmidt's Permanent Breakfast</p> <p>Example 5: Lottie Child's Street Training</p>	Activity: Street training practice at the South Bank followed by discussion	<p>Lottie Child's Street Training: <a href="https://process.arts.ac.uk/content/introduction-street-training-lottie-child-new/index.html">https://process.arts.ac.uk/content/introduction-street-training-lottie-child-new/index.html</a></p> <p>Ursula Hofbauer and Friedemann Derschmidt (2010) 'Horror Vacui' in Nicholas Whybrow (ed) (2010). <i>Performance and the Contemporary City</i>. London: Palgrave Macmillan</p>

## COURSE SYLLABUS

	Theoretical areas: participation and publics, critical urban theory		
10	<u>Performance and the local</u>	Assignment 3: Reflective writing exercise and sharing	
11	<p><u>Staging social and political dialogues</u></p> <p>This session will look at London theatre repertoires with a focus on how theatre programming responds to local and global politics. Examples will be taken from theatre programs at the time of delivery.</p> <p>Theoretical areas: dependent on content of programs</p>	Activity: Trip to a London theatre to explore its historical repertoire and current programming, and to see a show.	Relevant sources will be added at the time of delivery.
12	<p><u>Staging social and political dialogues</u></p> <p>Example 1: debbie tucker green, <i>ear for eye</i> (2018)</p> <p>Example 2: David Hare <i>Stuff Happens</i> (2004)</p> <p>Example 3: Fevered Sleep <i>Men and Girls Dance</i> (2015)</p> <p>Theoretical areas: Verbatim and representational ethics</p>		<p>Marissia Fragkou and Lynette Goddard (2013) 'Acting In/Action: Staging Human Rights in debbie tucker green's Royal Court Plays' Contemporary British Theatre</p> <p>Bernhard Klein (2013) "'Stuff Happens": David Hare And Verbatim Theatre' in Marie Hologa, Christian Lenz, Cyprian Piskurek and Stefan Schlensag (eds.) <i>Cases of Intervention: The Great Variety of British Cultural Studies</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars</p> <p>Amanda Stuart Fisher (2020) 'Performing tenderness: fluidity and reciprocity in the performance of caring in Fevered Sleep's <i>Men &amp; Girls Dance</i>' in Amanda Stuart Fisher and James Thompson (eds.) <i>Performing Care: New Perspectives on Socially engaged Performance</i>. Manchester: Manchester University Press</p>

## COURSE SYLLABUS

			Fevered Sleep website : <a href="https://www.feveredsleep.co.uk/project/men-and-girls-dance">https://www.feveredsleep.co.uk/project/men-and-girls-dance</a>
13	<u>Staging social and political dialogues</u>  Contemporary burlesque and stand-up comedy as sites for social commentary  Theoretical areas: Cultural politics; body politics; positionality.	Activity: Trip to either a Burlesque show or stand-up event in London	Clare Nally (2009) Grrrly hurly burly: neo-burlesque and the performance of gender Textual Practice 23.  Matthew Meier and Casey Schmitt (2017) 'Introduction: Speaking Out, Standing Up' in Matthew Meier and Casey Schmitt (eds.) <i>Standing Up, Speaking Out: Stand-up Comedy and the Rhetoric of Social Change</i> . London: Routledge.
14	Course summary and evaluation	Assignment 4. Final paper	

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Session 2 – Visit to Whitechapel to engage with Janet Cardiff's *The Missing Voice*.
- Session 5 – Visit to Tate Modern to practically explore its political history and potentiality for resistance and change – small performative acts to be performed.
- Session 9 – Visit to the South Bank riverside to practically explore artist Lottie Child's concept of 'Street Training'. There will be options for you to participate if you wish.
- Session 11 – Visit to a London Theatre to see a show – specific show will be confirmed at time of delivery.
- Session 13 – Visit to a Burlesque show or stand-up comedy gig in the city. Show will be confirmed at the time of delivery.

## RESOURCES

Suggested reading sources are listed on the class schedule. Some entire sources or sections of these will be explored during sessions, which will be provided to you during, before or after a session. There is no prior compulsory reading for this course. Once the course has begun, it will enhance your learning experience for you to engage as fully as you can with the sources listed. They are directly relevant to the material covered in each session.

## EVALUATION METHODS

The course instructor will provide specific requirements and grading rubrics for individual assignments for the course. Your final grade in the course will be comprised of the following course requirements:

- 20% - Assignment 1. 10-minute presentation

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

- 30% - Assignment 2. Mid-term paper – 1500 words
- 20% - Assignment 3. Reflective writing and discussion – 500 words + contribution to discussion
- 30% - Assignment 4. Final paper – 2500 words

### 1. 10-minute presentation - Session 3

Choose a London monument, event or period of activity that occurred in London, which you believe could be better known and understood within British society. Explain and discuss why this monument, event or period is important to be raised within public consciousness now. Why would performance or theatre be an ideal vehicle for this? What kind of performance event or series of events would be most effective at presenting this monument, event or period?

### 2. Mid-term paper – 1500 words – Session 7

With reference to examples from any of the movements we have explored, discuss how and why different types of performance are used within protest.

### 3. Reflective writing and discussion – 500 words – Session 10

Sharing of reflective writing pieces in response to the issues and ethics involved when creating community-based practice.

### 4. Final paper – 2500 words – Session 14

Focusing on one theatre show, performance or community-based project as a case study, discuss the social impact of the work. You should make reference to any reviews, articles or other reputable sources. You are encouraged – where possible and appropriate – to conduct primary research (in the form of interviews and questionnaires) to gain a more detailed perspective on your chosen case study. Resources will be shared and discussed in-depth regarding research ethics, methodology for framing questions, and appropriate scope given timing and audience.

## **Timely Submissions**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Academics and learning are at the core of your study abroad experience. Based upon research, studies show that students perform and learn better when they attend class regularly. Therefore, it is IFSA's expectation that students on our programs attend class regularly. Active and engaged attendance includes regularly scheduled classes, mandatory field visits, studios, recitations, workshops and laboratory sessions. Attendance will be recorded, and all absences are treated equally, regardless of reason.

The Resident Directors and professors of IFSA classes set the specific attendance policy for each location, including how absences impact final grades. Refer to your IFSA Student Handbook for full attendance policies.



## COURSE SYLLABUS

### IFSA Class Attendance Standards:

Percentage of Total Class Hours Missed	Class Sessions Missed	Minimum Penalty
Up to 10%	0 – 1	No academic penalty
10 – 20%	2 – 3	Reduction of final grade
More than 20%	More than 3	Automatic course failure

- You must notify instructors and the appropriate on site IFSA staff member prior to an absence from class or class-related activities.
- Attendance policies also apply to any required class co-curricular excursion and internship or field/lab study hours.
- If participation is part of the overall class evaluation, you will not earn participation points for classes you are absent.
- Penalties or grade reductions for assignments that are turned in late due to absence are at the discretion of the instructor.
- Late arrivals to class may be considered absenteeism.
- Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% or more of total course hours missed) may lead to:
  - A written warning;
  - Notification to the student's home school; and/or
  - Dismissal from the program
- Any requests for exceptions related to IFSA's minimal class attendance expectations should be discussed with the Resident Director for approval.

### GRADING SCALE

IFSA uses the following grading scale for all classes:

Excellent	A	93 – 100%
	A-	90 – 92%
Good	B+	87 – 89%
	B	83 – 86%
	B-	80 – 82%
Acceptable	C+	77 – 79%
	C	73 – 76%
	C-	70 – 72%
Unsatisfactory	D+	67 – 69%
	D	63 – 66%
	D-	60 – 62%
Failing	F	<60%

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA resident director as well as your home institution.