

THE 4935 & THE 5317 – CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN THEATRE SPRING 2015

INSTRUCTOR: DR. BETH OSBORNE

CONTACT INFORMATION: 324 Fine Arts Building (FAB)
(850) 645-6858
bosborne@fsu.edu
Course Blackboard Site (login with FSU username at campus.fsu.edu)

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-1:30; and by appointment
Schedule appointments via email or stop in!

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is an in-depth examination of various topics not covered in the regular course offerings. The course is for seniors and juniors who have completed at least fifty percent of their major requirements. (THE 4935) This course focuses on selected topics relating to dramatic literature and theatrical theory for intensive investigation resulting in some form of report. The course also includes lectures and discussions. (THE 5317)

(OFFICIAL)

COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Read, discuss, and analyze contemporary U.S. performance pieces through close readings of the text/performance and surrounding social, political, and cultural contexts.
- Locate and use primary and secondary source materials related to contemporary U.S. performance.
- Develop a repertoire of contemporary U.S. playwrights, practitioners, theatre companies, and performance artists and their work. Subjects will delve into the (likely-to-become) canonical works, but also operate outside of the canon.
- Identify and articulate major themes, conventions, and trends of contemporary U.S. theatre and performance, as well as ways in which that theatre influences the nation.
- Explore ways in which theory, dramaturgy, and practice build upon and strengthen one another through an original performance experience.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY: They say that theatre is dead. I respectfully disagree. Contemporary theatre in the United States is eclectic, energetic, and exhilarating. This course is dedicated to exploring the many—many!—different facets of performance that proliferate in this country, and to finding the hidden gems that may otherwise escape our notice. In this class, we will seek out ways that theatre and performance—and the minds and bodies that create it—are an integral part of the local, regional, and national landscapes. In so doing, we will develop a broad base of contemporary “American” theatre and performance, even as we begin the process of creating our own socially informed and contemporary work.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS: Books are available in the FSU Bookstore and Bill’s Bookstores. When possible, I have included readings on blackboard (as copyright permits) and made use of free online texts to help alleviate course costs. Note: I include only those books available for purchase below. For more information on specific items, see the course schedule.

Required:

- *America Play & Other Works* (Suzan-Lori Parks, ISBN 9781559360920)
- *Homebody/Kabul* (Tony Kushner, ISBN 9781559362399)
- *Gem of the Ocean* (August Wilson, ISBN 9781559362801)
- *The Brother/Sister Plays* (Tarrell McCraney, ISBN 9781559363495)
- *the bull-jean stories* (Sharon Bridgforth, ISBN 9780965665919)
- *August: Osage County* (Tracy Letts, ISBN 9780822223009)
- *The Mountaintop* (Katori Hall, ISBN 9781408147030)
- *The Long Christmas Ride Home* (Paula Vogel, ISBN 9780822220039)
- *In the Heart of America and Other Plays* (Naomi Wallace, ISBN 9781559361866)
- *Stage Kiss* (Sarah Ruhl, ISBN 9781559364706): pending release

Recommended:

- *The American Theatre Reader* (ISBN 9781559363464)

BLACKBOARD: I will use Blackboard for announcements, assignments, readings, etc. Students must check their official university email accounts daily, and this course blackboard site at least 2 times per week. I strongly encourage you to check this site the night before each class for important announcements and reminders.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, & EMAILS: To get in touch with me, locate me after class, call or stop in during office hours, or send an email. For all emails, include your name (first and last) in the message (even if you think it is redundant). Realize that I am not online 24 hours a day, and must be able to focus on course preparation and grading as well! Expect an email turnaround time of 1-2 business days.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT: Many of the required readings in this course are copyrighted. While you have had to purchase the majority of the plays, I will post some readings (or links to readings) on the course blackboard site. The posted readings are available to students registered for this course in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act, and may not be retained beyond this semester or distributed to anyone outside of this course.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM: We are here to learn. Cell phones, pagers, blackberries, etc. should be turned off for class and headphones must be removed. Computers may be used during class meetings for notes, but if they become a distraction or are used for activities not related to class, students will lose this privilege.

COURSE CONTENT: In this course, I challenge you to experience life from perspectives other than your own. Because of this, you may consider some course language, readings, viewings, or topics objectionable. If some of this material is so offensive to you that it negatively affects your ability to learn, please see me during the add/drop period so that we can discuss your options.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: Written work should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman or Cambria font, double spaced with 1 inch margins, free of typing and grammatical errors, and in correct Chicago Style. All outside materials must be fully and accurately cited. Failure to cite your sources correctly may result in disciplinary action per the FSU Honor Code. For citation guidelines, refer to *A Manual for Writers* by Kate Turabian (often used by those writing dissertations/theses!) or *The Chicago Manual of Style* (also available online at <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>). Late assignments will be penalized by 10% per day. Computer or printer failure will **not** be considered an acceptable excuse. I strongly suggest that you submit your papers through the course link on blackboard and then place a copy in the Backup Assignments Journal as a backup (follow the link I post on blackboard). Electronic versions of papers/projects should be formatted as MS Word (.doc or .docx) or Rich Text (.rtf) files. Please don't

submit pdf's as they are much more cumbersome to comment upon. Keep a copy of ALL written work for this class until final grades have been submitted at the end of the semester.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: This is a participation and discussion-based course and I expect each student to be a fully participating member of the class—on time, fully prepared, every day. We meet only twice a week and have limited time to explore a huge range of materials. Students will have two “free” unexcused absences; subsequent unexcused absences will lead to a reduction of one third of a letter grade for each absence. Arriving late disrupts the conversation, and will thus negatively affect your final grade as well. Excused absences (including documented illness, religious holy days, official University activities, crisis in the immediate family, call to active military or jury duty, and other documented crises) must be documented. Students who need to miss class due to observation of a religious holy day should notify me in writing in advance so that steps may be taken to ensure that assignments can be completed in a timely manner. Call or email me immediately if an emergency prevents your attending class.

READING: This course will only be successful if students arrive prepared and ready to dive into the work! ALWAYS bring your text(s) with you on the day we are discussing them. (One of the reasons I went with individual plays rather than an anthology was to make bringing the texts easier on your bags and backs!) We have enough to do in this class without me checking up on your preparation through regular quizzes or “reading” assignments. However, if it becomes apparent that students are not coming to class prepared, I reserve the right to add these types of checks into the course, and will adjust the final grading scheme so that quizzes/reading assignments average in to account for up to 10% of the final grade. Please come prepared!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

A brief overview of the major assignments in the course follows. All will be fleshed out in greater detail on the course blackboard site in the coming weeks. In choosing topics, I encourage all students to think about ideas and themes they are intrigued by (and that might become part of the performance project!); this is particularly important advice for PhD students, who will have a more extensive dramaturgical component to their final project. Whether it is collecting research around a specific historical moment, considering different methodological possibilities, or working on your actual topic, use these as opportunities to get ahead on your research or paper.

THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTATION: This assignment highlights major regional theatre companies (or those in NYC who are doing particularly interesting work) who are working in interesting/experimental ways on projects that are engaged with their communities. Choose a company from the list at the end of the course schedule (or talk to me about approving another topic). This will include a presentation and a 1-2 page paper for the class. Presentations will be February 3rd and 5th.

CONTEMPORARY THEATRE TREASURE HUNT: While we all know that a **ton** of exciting theatre exists in the United States, it's far too common to default to a discussion of major Broadway, Off-Broadway, and Regional Theatres as a stand-in for “Contemporary American Theatre.” The purpose of this assignment is to excavate hidden theatrical gems. Seek out a theatre artist, writer, or company that/who is doing interesting work somewhere in the United States AND is rarely discussed outside of his/her/its immediate area. Students will put together a brief presentation on their subject and circulate a 1-2 page paper for the class. Talk to Dr. Osborne if you have ideas for a potential subject. Presentations will be on February 24th and 26th.

DISCUSSION LEADER: Each graduate student will lead our class discussion individually one time during the semester. The majority of the plays (along with their associated articles/readings) will be open for this option, and we will choose topics the second week of class. On your discussion leading day, come

prepared to lead about 30 minutes of discussion. To do so, map out major ideas that you want the class to touch on in some way, including specific questions and any research that you need to do in order to prepare. You will submit your questions and a bibliography of the sources you used as the written part of this assignment, but the majority of your grade will be based on the discussion itself. Discussion Leaders must see me for a preliminary discussion at least 1 week prior to the in-class event.

CURRENT EVENTS: Each undergraduate student will choose two current events (political or social issues) relevant to the contemporary United States and create a very brief presentation of the most pertinent information. These presentations should relate to the play/topics we will be discussing in class, and should be no more than 5 minutes long. The idea is to help the class become more versed in the issues that are a part of our community—local, regional, and national—and to seek out ways that theatre both comments on and impacts the world around us. We will choose dates for these presentations during the second week of class, and students should talk with me about the topic they would like to focus on.

DRAMATURGY/PERFORMANCE PROJECTS: Students will work in groups to devise a 15-20 minute performance project that incorporates the ideas and themes we have been discussing in class. Ultimately, the project will be a work-in-progress that synthesizes theory and practice and strives to convey a scholarly or theoretical apparatus somehow; in other words, these pieces will be about something, and that something will come through in the ways in which you make choices about how (and why) to construct the piece as you do. While everyone in the group must perform in some way, you can interpret “performing” broadly. The final “performances” will take place on April 16th and 21st. All students will submit final papers that discuss the projects’ intentions and processes; graduate students will submit additional dramaturgical components and synthesis to support the project. See the course schedule for further deadlines.

GRADES: In general, grades for written work are administered according to the following criteria:

A = excellent in all areas. The assignment presents a strong thesis statement, is argued coherently, and offers clear evidence to support ideas. Documentation follows correct citation format.

B = good. The assignment presents a good thesis statement; the argument and evidence are okay, but could be stronger. Documentation mostly follows correct citation format.

C = meets minimum requirements of assignment. The assignment presents a passable thesis statement, and argument and evidence exists, but is either not convincing or not well articulated. Citations often weak.

D = falls short of minimum requirement, but effort in completing the assignment clearly made. Thesis, evidence, and argument either very weak or missing. Citations often ignored.

F = does not meet minimum requirement in any way.

GRADE SCALE: (FSU doesn’t allow A+’s.)

A = 93-100	A- = 90-92	B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82	C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76	C- = 70-72	D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62	F = < 59

GRADE BREAKDOWN (Graduate):

DAILY PARTICIPATION	10%
DISCUSSION LEADING	15%
TREASURE HUNT	15%
COMPANY PRESENTATION	15%
PERFORMANCE PROJECT	30%
FINAL PAPER/DRAMATURGY	15%

GRADE BREAKDOWN (Undergraduate):

DAILY PARTICIPATION	10%
CURRENT EVENTS (2 @ 10% EACH)	20%
TREASURE HUNT	15%
COMPANY PRESENTATION	15%
PERFORMANCE PROJECT	30%
FINAL PAPER/DRAMATURGY	10%

UNIVERSITY/SCHOOL OF THEATRE POLICIES:

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY: The University's policy on religious holidays provides that students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed because of individual participation in religious observances. Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances by the end of the second week of class, and must complete assignments by their deadline.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY: The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “. . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (FSU Academic Honor Policy, <http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm>.) We are all bound by the policies and procedures set forth in this document. Unless specifically stated otherwise, all work completed in this class must be done individually and should be entirely original. Any words or ideas derived from outside materials (including books, journals, websites, and any other published material) – no matter how much or how little material is used – must use proper citations. All work submitted in this course is subject to this policy.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact: Student Disability Resource Center, 874 Traditions Way, 108 Student Services Building, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167; (850) 644-9566 (voice); (850) 644-8504 (TDD); sdrc@admin.fsu.edu; <http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

INSTRUCTIONAL RECORDING TECHNOLOGY & DISTRIBUTION POLICY (SCHOOL OF THEATRE):

Recording technology is often used to further students' education in theatre courses. Faculty have relied upon these methods to further the students' educational experience and by extension to enhance their classroom effectiveness. This policy is not intended to interfere with that practice. The purpose of this policy is to protect both student and faculty privacy. The use of recording devices, including those brought by students in any School of Theatre classroom or performances space/location, is at the discretion of the classroom instructor. Items in this category include, but are not limited to, camcorders, cameras, cellular phones, and audio recorders. Any device that stores video, audio, or still images is subject to this policy. Beyond permission of the instructor to utilize recording technology for any course content or activities, written permission must be obtained from all individuals to be recorded by filling out SOT Record/Tech forms. The School of Theatre at Florida State University policy mandates that no recorded image (still, moving, or audio) may be distributed in any way without express written permission of all individuals presented on an image or sound to be distributed. This applies to all formats of distribution including, but not limited to, print, digital, and analog. All violations will be reported to the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Services in the School of Theatre, who will retain records of all violations. Students found to be in violation of the policy a second time will be subject to sanctions beyond those associated with the class, and will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and subject to further University sanctions. This policy does not supercede any Federal, State, Local, or Institutional policy regarding recording or distribution of materials. It applies solely to instructors and students in School of Theatre courses. Furthermore, it should not be implied that permission to record and/or distribute material from classes extends to the content presented.

*Do not hesitate to contact me via office hours, appointments, or e-mail. If you have concerns about a classroom activity or need to speak with me regarding a personal matter, religious observance, or documented disability, bring it to my attention sooner rather than later.

Contemporary US Theatre—Course Schedule
Dr. Osborne
Spring 2015

As always, this schedule is subject to change as needed during the semester.

Readings & Assignments are listed on their due dates. If there are no assignments due, nothing is listed.

Recommended Reading: We won't even come close to covering everything that is fabulous about Contemporary American Theatre in a single semester. I've added Recommended Readings (sometimes on the day of a specific topic and sometimes at the end) for those of you who want to learn more – now or at some point in the future. I've included plays, articles, books, and viewings – many of which would be great resources for research projects, future productions, or interest!

Key to reading locations:

Purchased = Independent text required for the course

Blackboard = full-text, link, or database information included on blackboard in the Course Library

[link] = use the link listed to connect to the reading or viewing online

*Unless otherwise specified below, you may read any version/edition of the plays listed.

Who Reads What?

Everyone is always welcome to read more than required, and I encourage you to do so when you have the time and interest. Here are the required levels of reading:

BA/BFA = Read all listed in the “Reading” (or “Reading/Viewing”) for each class

MFA = “Reading” + at least **one** “Reading (Graduate Students)” item each week. (I'll * those that I think would be particularly good choices.)

MA/PhD = “Reading” + “Reading (Graduate)”

Anyone = can read any of the “Recommended” selections

1/8: Introductions

1/13: Reading/Viewing: “It's Time US Theatre Reflected its Society,” Howard Sherman (blackboard); “What We Talk About When We Talk About Good,” Todd London (blackboard); “Regional Theatre,” roundtable discussion by American Theatre Wing (<http://www.cuny.tv/show/atworkinginthetheatre/PR1011141>); NOTE: there are several with the same name—use the link here to get to the right one).

Reading (Graduate Students): *“American Stages,” Jeffrey Mason (in *Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theatre*, blackboard).

Assignments: Graduate students—come prepared to choose discussion-leading topics. (If you're interested in leading *August: Osage County*, contact me asap!)

Recommended: Plays by US writers between the founding of the nation and the 1990s... *The Contrast*, Royall Tyler; *Fashion*, Anna Cora Mowatt; *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, George Aiken; *The Octoroon*, Dion Bouicault; *Trifles*, Susan Glaspell; *Adding Machine*, Elmer Rice; plays by Eugene O'Neill; *Waiting for Lefty*, Clifford Odets; *One-Third of a Nation*, Federal Theatre Project; plays by Thornton Wilder; plays by Tennessee Williams; plays by Arthur Miller; *A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry; *Dutchman*, Amiri Baraka; plays by Sam Shepard. I'm omitting writers who are also elsewhere on the syllabus (and only mentioning single plays for most of the above!). For more writers and performance artists to locate when you have a moment, see the list at the end of the course schedule.

1/15: Reading: *August: Osage County*, Tracey Letts (purchased).

Reading (Graduate Students): “The Haunted Stage: An Overview,” Marvin Carlson (blackboard).

Assignments: Undergraduates—come prepared to choose Current Event dates (and topics, if you know what you’d like to do!)

Recommended: *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*, Marvin Carlson; *Killer Joe*, Tracey Letts; *Bug*, Tracey Letts; *Superior Donuts*, Tracey Letts; *Man from Nebraska*, Tracey Letts; “Nostalgia, Irony, and the Re-Emergence of the Reified American Indian Other in *August: Osage County*,” Courtney Elkin Mohler.

1/20: Reading: *The America Play*, Suzan-Lori Parks (purchased); “Elements of Style” (selection), Suzan Lori-Parks (in *The America Play and Other Works*).

Reading (Graduate Students): “Echoes from the Black (W)hole: An Examination of *The America Play* by Suzan-Lori Parks,” Harry Elam and Alice Raynor (blackboard); “Reality ✓,” Harry Elam (blackboard).

Recommended: *TopDog/Underdog*, Suzan-Lori Parks; *The Death of the Last Black Man in the Entire World*, Suzan-Lori Parks; *365 Days/365 Plays*, Suzan-Lori Parks; *Suzan-Lori Parks*, Deborah Geis; “Overture: Rites that Render Repairing: Suzan-Lori Parks’ *The America Play*,” Soyica Colbert (blackboard); “A Mid-Life Critical Crisis: Chlastic Criticism and Encounters with the Theatrical Work of Suzan-Lori Parks,” Rena Fraden; “America/Amnesia,” Anthony Kubiak; “Restaging the Nation: The Work of Suzan-Lori Parks,” Steve Wilmer; “The Great Hole of History: Liturgical Silence in Beckett, Osofisan, and Parks,” Joseph Roach; “An American Echo: Suzan-Lori Parks’s *The America Play* and James Scruggs’s *Disposable Man*,” Bob Vorlicky.

1/22: Reading: *Gem of the Ocean*, August Wilson (purchased); “The Ground on Which I Stand” & the Wilson/Brustein Debate (Worthen 1303-1311 OR blackboard).

Reading (Graduate Students): “*Gem of the Ocean* and the Redemptive Power of History,” Harry Elam (blackboard); **“The Light in August: An Interview with August Wilson by Suzan-Lori Parks” (American Theatre Reader OR blackboard).*

Assignment: Deadline for choosing Theatre Company Presentation group & topic! See list of suggested companies at the end of the course schedule.

Recommended: “August Wilson and Lloyd Richards on *Fences*, 1987,” American Theatre Wing (<http://americantheatrewing.org/videos/august-wilson-lloyd-richards/>); *The Past as Present in the Drama of August Wilson*, Harry Elam; other plays in Wilson’s Century Cycle (Black Drama database); “‘...if you live long enough the boat will turn around’: The Birth and Death of Community in Three Plays by August Wilson,” Richard Noggle; “Framing African American Cultural Identity: The Bookend Plays in August Wilson’s 10-Play Cycle,” Sandra Shannon; “Legacies of Enslavement and Emancipation: American Slave Narratives and August Wilson’s Plays,” William Etter; *The Problem of the Color[blind]*, Brandi Wilkins Catanese

1/27: Reading: *The Mountaintop*, Katori Hall (purchased)

Reading (Graduate Students): “Writing with Paint,” Harvey Young (blackboard)

Recommended: *Hurt Village*, Katori Hall; *WHADDABLOODCLOT!!!*, Katori Hall; “Lynn Nottage & Katori Hall” (in IBT database OR blackboard); **Don’t You Want to Be Free*, Langston Hughes; *Every Tongue Confess*, Marcus Gardley; *Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood from Slavery to Civil Rights*, Robin Bernstein; *Embodying Black Experience: Stillness, Critical Memory, and the Black Body*, Harvey Young.

1/29: Special Guest: Dr. Kathy Nigh

Reading: Explore the Cornerstone Theatre Company website (<http://cornerstonetheater.org>) and El Teatro Campesino's website (<http://www.elteatrocampesino.com>). More readings/viewings TBA.

Reading (Graduate Students): TBA

2/3: **Theatre Company Presentations (Day 1)**

Reading/Viewing: "City of Angels: Banished, Convicted, and Free," Reverend Billy (blackboard); "Since I Suppose: Site Specific Theatre," American Theatre Wing (<http://americantheatrewing.org/videos/since-i-suppose-site-specific-theatre/>).

Reading (Graduate Students): "The Nature Theater of Oklahoma's Aesthetics of Fun," Rachel Anderson-Rabern (blackboard).

Recommended: "Introduction: A Theory of the Leisure Suit," Alisa Solomon (in *The Reverend Billy Project*).

2/5: **Theatre Company Presentations (Day 2)**

Reading/Viewing: "Immersive Theatre," American Theatre Wing (<http://americantheatrewing.org/videos/immersive-theatre-wit/>).

Reading (Graduate Students): "Revolution...History...Theater: The Politics of Wooster Group's Second Trilogy," David Savran (blackboard).

Recommended: Any of the Wooster Group videos of their performances (our library has *The Emperor Jones*, *House/lights*, and *Brace Up*); *The Wooster Group Workbook*, Andrew Quick and Maggie Gale; "Two Hamlets: Wooster Group and Synthetic Theater," Sarah Werner; *The Wooster Group and Its Traditions*, edited by Johan Callens.

2/10: **Guests: Mickee Faustkateers!**

Reading: "The Faust Manifesto" (<http://www.mickeefaust.com/manifesto>); there will be additional readings/viewings, depending on our guests' requests.

Reading (Graduate Students): "Queering the Crip or Crippling the Queer? Intersections of Queer and Crip Identities in Solo Autobiographical Performance," Carrie Sandahl (blackboard).

****NOTE:** Location for class TBA; we will combine with another class and enjoy Mickee Faust guests today!

Recommended: *Mean Little Deaf Queer: A Memoir*, Terry Galloway; *Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance*, edited by Carrie Sandahl and Philip Auslander; *Mickee Faust's Gimp Parade* (DVD); *Disability Culture and Community Performance*, Petra Kuppers; "Is This Theater Queer? The Mickee Faust Club and the Performance of Community," Donna M. Nudd, Kristina Schriver, and Terry Galloway (blackboard).

Upcoming Faust Events: 3/20, 3/21, 3/26, 3/27, and 3/28—Mickee Faust Spring Cabaret; see the Mickee Faust website for further details.

2/12: Reading: *the bull-jean stories*, sharon bridgforth (purchased)

Reading (Graduate Students): “Playing Innocent: Childhood, Race, Performance,” Robin Bernstein (blackboard; some knowledge of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*—the Stowe novel or the Aiken play—would help immensely in processing this reading...)

Assignment: Make sure you’re spoken to me about your Treasure Hunt topic! Groups & topics must be approved by 2/17!

Recommended: *con flama*, sharon bridgforth; *love conjure/blues*, sharon bridgforth; *blood pudding*, sharon bridgforth; “Artist and Activist sharon bridgforth” (<http://www.afterellen.com/people/33142-artist-and-activist-sharon-bridgforth>); *Black Feminism in Contemporary Drama*, Lisa Anderson; *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa; *Experiments in a Jazz Aesthetic*, Edited by Omi Osun Joni Jones, Lisa Moore, and sharon bridgforth; “sharon bridgforth – sistahs on the shelf” (http://sistahsontheshelf.com/?page_id=2280).

2/17: Reading: *Homebody/Kabul*, Tony Kushner (purchased)—we will focus on the **monologue** today.

Reading (Graduate Students): “A Modest Proposal,” Tony Kushner (blackboard); “A Prophet in His Time: Premonition and Reality in Tony Kushner’s *Homebody/Kabul*,” James Reston (blackboard).

Assignment: Last chance for Treasure Hunt approvals!

Recommended: *Angels in America, Part I: Millennium Approaches*, Tony Kushner; *Angles in America, Part II: Perestroika*, Tony Kushner; *Tony Kushner: New Essays on the Art and Politics of the Plays*, James Fisher; *Caroline, or Change*, Tony Kushner; “Queering the Nation,” David Savran (in *Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theatre*); “Babel, Babbble and Multilingualism in Tony Kushner’s *Homebody/Kabul*,” Erith Jaffe-Berg; “How to Dramatize the Unimaginable: Anne Nelson’s *The Guys* and Tony Kushner’s *Homebody/Kabul* as America’s First Theatrical Responses to September 11, 2001,” Trevor Bishop; “Performing Translation in Contemporary Anglo-American Drama,” Jenny Spencer; “‘Seek for Something New’: Mothers, Change, and Creativity in Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*, *Homebody/Kabul*, and *Caroline, or Change*,” Catherine Stevenson; “On the Road to Palestine,” Kia Corthron, Tony Kusher, Robert O’Hara, Lisa Schlesinger, Betty Shamish, and Naomi Wallace; “The Failure of History: Kushner’s *Homebody/Kabul* and the Apocalyptic Context,” Scott Phillips (blackboard).

2/19: Reading: *Homebody/Kabul*, Tony Kushner (purchased)—we will focus on the **post-monologue play** today.

Reading (Graduate Students): “9/11, Afghanistan, and Iraq: The Response of the New York Theatre,” Marvin Carlson (blackboard).

Recommended: see 2/17!

2/24: **Contemporary Theatre Treasure Hunt Presentations (Day 1)**

2/26: **Contemporary Theatre Treasure Hunt Presentations (Day 2)**

****2/27, 2/28, 3/1: Required: See Dr. George McConnell’s show. More details will be posted on blackboard.****

3/3: Guest: Dr. George McConnell

Reading: TBA (will be posted on blackboard when available)

3/5: Reading: *In the Red and Brown Water*, Tarell Alvin McCraney (in *The Brother/Sister Plays*, purchased).

Reading (Graduate Students): “Black Movements: Tarell Alvin McCraney’s *In the Red and Brown Water*,” Soyica Diggs Colbert (blackboard).

Recommended: *The Brothers Size*, Tarell Alvin McCraney; *Marcus, or the Secret of Sweet*, Tarell Alvin McCraney; *The Breach*, Tarell Alvin McCraney, Catherine Filloux, and Joe Sutton; *The African American Theatrical Body: Reception, Performance, and the Stage*, Soyica Diggs Colbert.

* * * * * March 9-13 – Happy Spring Break! * * * * *

3/17: **Assignment: Performance Project Pitches. We will spend this class time hearing pitches and going through performance project possibilities.**

3/19: Dr. Osborne attending the Mid-America Theatre Conference. No class.

Assignment: Use this class time to get started on your performance project!

3/24: *The Long Christmas Ride Home*, Paula Vogel (purchased); “Driving Ms. Vogel: An Interview with David Savran” (in *American Theatre Reader* OR blackboard).

Reading (Graduate Students): “Foreword—By Way of Other Directions,” Rebecca Schneider (blackboard); “A Dramaturgy of Defamiliarization,” Joanna Mansbridge (from *Paula Vogel*; on blackboard).

Assignment: Groups and topics DUE for Performance Project

Recommended: *The Minneola Twins*, Paula Vogel; *A Civil War Christmas*, Paula Vogel; *Baltimore Waltz*, Paula Vogel; look through the “Paula Vogel Navigator” on the NYTimes website—it lists dozens of articles, interviews, etc. with/about Paula Vogel; “Molly Smith: Intuition and Intellect,” Paula Vogel; “Repercussions and Reminders in the Plays of Paula Vogel: An Essay in Five Moments,” Ann Pellegrini; “Driving Ms. Vogel,” David Savran; *Paula Vogel*, Joanna Mansbridge.

3/26: Reading: *Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven*, Young Jean Lee (blackboard); * “What’s Wrong With These Plays,” Jeffrey M. Jones (blackboard).

Reading (Graduate Students): “Finding History from the Living Archives: Inscribing Interviews and Interventions,” Suk-Young Kim (blackboard).

Recommended: *Church*, Young Jean Lee; *Pullman, WA*, Young Jean Lee; *The Appeal*, Young Jean Lee; “Young Jean Lee: The Technical Restrictions of Personhood,” James Frieze; “Young Jean Lee’s Ugly Feelings about Race and Gender: Stuplime Animation in *Songs of the Dragons Flying to Heaven*,” Karen Shimakawa; “Script Sabotage: An Interview with the Playwright,” Jeffrey M. Jones.

3/31: Reading: *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek*, Naomi Wallace (in *In the Heart of America and Other Plays*).

Reading (Graduate Students): “Naomi Wallace,” Pia Wiegink (in *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary American Drama*, blackboard).

Recommended: *One Flea Spare*, Naomi Wallace; *In the Heart of America*, Naomi Wallace; “We Are Not Only Ourselves: Naomi Wallace,” in conversation with Tony Kushner, (in *Women in American Theatre*, by Helen Krich Chinoy & Linda Walsh Jenkins—Google Books online); “Absence in Naomi Wallace’s *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek*,” Gwendolyn Hale; “Re-Membering Our Selves: Acting, Critical Pedagogy, and the Plays of Naomi Wallace,” Amy Steiger; “American Playwrights on Language and the War In Iraq: A

Virtual Roundtable,” David Adjmi; “Getting Out, Flying and Returning from the Dead: Girl Ghosts in Live Performance,” Erica Stevens Abbitt.

4/2: Reading: *The Scottsboro Boys*, David Thompson, John Kandor, and Fred Ebb (blackboard); listen to as much of *The Scottsboro Boys* as you can; “Minority Views,” Simi Horwitz (blackboard).

Reading (Graduate Students): **“The Last Minstrel Show?”*, Marshall Jones, III (IIPA database OR blackboard); “Black Minstrelsy and Double Inversion,” Annemarie Bean (in *African American Performance and Theatre History* OR blackboard).

Recommended: PBS’s *Broadway: The American Musical* series, Michael Kantor (6 shows); “Civil Rights Era on Broadway,” Laurence Maslon (<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/essays/civil-rights-era-on-broadway/>); “Exploring Musical Theatre,” American Theatre Wing (<http://americantheatre.org/videos/exploring-musical-theatre/>); *A History of the American Musical Theatre: No Business Like It*, Nathan Hurwitz; *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre*, John Bush Jones; *Changed for Good: A Feminist History of the Broadway Musical*, Stacy Wolf; *The Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, eds. Raymond Knapp, Stacy Wolf, and Mitchell Morris; MUSICALS!

4/7: **In-Class Work Day:** Each group gets 25 minutes with me during class for focused feedback and the remainder of class for work time. Bring what you need to make this time productive!

Assignment: Submit draft of your script/performance.

4/9: *Stage, Kiss*, Sarah Ruhl (purchased; if it’s not published in time, I’ll switch this day out with another activity.)

Reading (Graduate Students): “More Invisible Terrains,” Wendy Weckworth (blackboard).

Recommended: *Eurydice*, Sarah Ruhl; *The Clean House*, Sarah Ruhl; *The Vibrator Play*, Sarah Ruhl; *Passion Play*, Sarah Ruhl; *Dead Man’s Cell Phone*, Sarah Ruhl; “Popular Forms for a Radical Theatre,” Sarah Ruhl (editor); “Re-Runs and Repetition,” Sarah Ruhl; *Sarah Ruhl: A Critical Study of the Plays*, James Al-Shamma; *Women’s Voices on American Stages in the Early Twentieth Century: Sarah Ruhl and her Contemporaries*, Leslie Atkins Durham.

4/14: **In-Class Work Day:** Each group will get the room for at least 25 minutes for dress rehearsals.

4/16: **Performances—Day 1**

4/21: **Performances—Day 2**

4/23: Wrap Up

4/30: Thursday @ 9:30am, final papers due! (I’d love to receive these earlier!)

Other Recommended Reading:

Twentieth Century American Dramatists, ed. Garrett Eisler; *Twentieth-Century Performance Reader*, eds. Michael Huxley and Noel Witts (primarily European, but contains lots of important stuff); *The Cambridge History of American Theatre* (3 volumes of fantastic work; Vol. 3 covers 1945-1990s); *Modern American Drama*, CWE Bigsby; *Women in American Theatre*, Helen Krich Chinoy & Linda Walsh Jenkins (a lot of this is in Google books; use the most recent editions); *Millennial Stages: Essays and Reviews 2001-2005*, Robert Brustein; *Modern American Drama, 1945-2000*, Christopher Bigsby; *Dead Man Walking* school theatre project, created by Tim Robbins (<http://www.dmwplay.org> - this is an extensive website with a ton of information to explore); *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary American Drama*, eds. Martin Middeke, Peter Paul Schnierer, Christopher Innes, Matthew C. Roudané; *African American Performance and Theatre History*, eds. Harry J. Elam and David Krasner; *Cultural Struggles: Performance, Ethnography, Praxis*, Dwight Conquergood, ed. E. Patrick Johnson

**The American Theatre Wing has hundreds of interviews and discussions dealing with contemporary US theatre in videos online, and many of them go far beyond the standard NYC fare. Check them out in the “Video” gallery at www.americantheatrewing.org.

Selected Theatre Companies:

The Austin Project (tAP, Austing, TX)
Bedlam Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)
Big Dance Theatre (NYC)
Chicago Fusion Theatre (Chicago, IL)
Elevator Repair Service (NYC)
Every House Has a Door (formerly Goat Island, Chicago, IL)
Factory Theatre (Chicago, IL)
Four Humors Theatre (Minneapolis, MN)
FUSION Theatre Company (Albuquerque, NM)
Guerilla Girls (supposedly everywhere...)
Lucia Neare’s Theatrical Wonders (Seattle, WA)
The Magic Parlour (Chicago, IL)
Mo’olelo Performing Arts Company (San Diego, CA)

The Moving Company (formerly Jeune Lune, Minneapolis, MN)
Native Voices at the Autry (Los Angeles, CA)
Penumbra Theatre Company (St. Paul, MN)
Red Mask Players (Danville, IL)
Red Moon (Chicago, IL)
Rude Mechanicals (Austin, TX)
Rubber Repertory (Austin, TX)
Skewed Visions (Minneapolis, MN)
Synchronicity Theatre (Atlanta, GA)
Timeline Theatre (Chicago, IL)
Vampire Cowboys Theatre Company (NYC)
Watts Village Theatre Company (Los Angeles, CA)
Witness Relocation (NYC)
Wooster Group (NYC)
And many, many more!

Additional Playwrights:

David Adjmi
Edward Albee
Annie Baker
Kia Corthron
Christopher Durang
Maria Irene Fornés
Philip Kan Gotanda
John Guare
Beth Henley
Amy Herzog
Henry David Hwang
David Ives
Rajiv Joseph
Moises Kaufman
Adrienne Kennedy
David Mamet
Donald Margulies

Cherrie Moraga
Terrence McNally
Arthur Miller
Marsha Norman
Bruce Norris
Lynn Nottage
Qui Nguyen
Teresa Rebeck
Ntozake Shange
John Patrick Shanley
Wallace Shawn
Sam Shepard
Anna Deavere Smith
Luis Valdez
Wendy Wasserstein
William S. Yellow Robe
And many more!

Performances of Interest in the Area (Optional Unless Otherwise Noted)

1/16-2/1: Theatre Tallahassee: *Proof*, David Auburn (<http://theatretallahassee.org/shows/proof/>)
2/4: Opening Nights Performance: *Forbidden Broadway: Alive & Kicking* (8pm at Fred Turner Auditorium at TCC)
2/13-3/1: FSU production of *Ragtime*, Terrence McNally, Stephen Flaherty, and Lynn Ahrens (Fallon Theatre)
2/27, 2/28, 3/1: Required: See Dr. George McConnell’s show. More details will be posted on blackboard.**
3/20, 3/21, 3/26, 3/27, and 3/28: Mickee Faust Spring Cabaret; see the Mickee Faust website for further details.
3/13-3/29: Theatre Tallahassee: *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, Christopher Durang (<http://theatretallahassee.org/shows/vanya-and-sonia-and-masha-and-spike/>)
3/26: Opening Nights performance: *Raisin’ Cane: A Harlem Renaissance Odyssey*, Jasmine Guy and the Avery Sharpe Trio (8pm in the Fallon Theatre)
3/27-4/4: FSU production of *Almost, Maine*, John Cariani (Lab Theatre)
4/16-4/26: FSU’s New Horizons: Original Works Festival (Lab Theatre)