



THTR 529a – Textual Studies for Performance

63188D/Units: 4

Fall 2018 — WED, FRI — 12:00-1:50

Location: KAP 167

Instructor: Boni B. Alvarez

Office: MCC 214

Office Hours: WED, FRI - by appointment

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(I will reply as soon as I can, but please allow 36 hours for a response.)

Course Description

We will read a selection of plays from the classical canon, examining various structures, subjects, and styles. In tandem, we will read contemporary adaptations of the classic plays. These close readings of dramatic texts will serve as a fundamental tool for rehearsal and performance.

Learning Objectives

The course will mirror a professional rehearsal room. Students will approach texts as performers' first days of rehearsals, breaking down the plays via critical table work. This course cultivates the students' abilities for dramatic analysis and literacy.

Key points of investigation: the world of the play; the author's intentions – in the overall writing of the play, language, with their characters, and with each individual scene; what the play is attempting to accomplish and overall impact.

By studying play adaptations in tandem with the source materials, we will investigate how contemporary playwrights are adapting/appropriating/manipulating/revising the canon.

Required Readings – Texts marked with an asterisk (*) have been ordered through the USC Bookstore. All other texts will be distributed electronically or as hard copies.

- Alfaro, Luis. *Mojada*
- Brecht, Bertolt. *Mother Courage*
- Buchner, Georg. *Woyzeck*
- Chekhov, Anton. *The Seagull*
- Euripides. *Medea*
- Fuchs, Elinor, "Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play"
- *Nottage, Lynn. *Ruined*. Theater Communications Group, 2009
- *Park, Jiehae. *Peerless*. Samuel French, 2017
- *Posner, Aaron. *Stupid Fucking Bird*. Dramatists Play Service, 2016
- Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Table Work – 30%

Students must actively participate in the readings and analysis of plays. Assigned ancillary materials should be read as required. Many ideas, questions, and opinions will arise; students should be respectful and professional in the ensuing dialogue.

Group Exercises (3) – 15%

Students will be divided into smaller groups to complete exercises. These exercises allow for more intimate examinations of the plays.

Dramatic Analysis Forms (3) – 30%

DA Forms serve as a dramaturgical tool in preparation for rehearsal and performance. The forms pose questions on the play's arc, themes, setting, and characters to bring the actor closer to the world of the play.

Adaptation Assignment – 15%

A creative and presentational GROUP assignment - groups will present a pitch for an adaptation of Buchner's *Woyzeck*. A more detailed prompt will be distributed.

Final Paper – 10%

A written essay utilizing Fuchs' 'Visit to a Small Planet' as a launching pad for a play analysis from the lens of a specific character. A more specific prompt will be distributed.

Grading Breakdown

ASSIGNMENT	% of grade
Table Work	30
Group Exercises (3)	15
Dramatic Analysis (3)	30
Adaptation	15
Final Paper	10
TOTAL	100

Grading Scale for SDA: **A** indicates work of excellent quality; **B** of good quality; **C** of average quality; **D** of below average quality; and **F** indicates inadequate work.

A+: 100-98	A: 97-94	A-: 93-90
B+: 89-87	B: 86-84	B-: 83-80
C+: 79-77	C: 76-74	C-: 73-70 (failing grade for graduate credit)
D+: 69-67	D: 66-64	D-: 63-60

Assignment Submission Policy

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Additional Policies

Attendance is compulsory. Unexcused absences will affect your grade adversely – if you are not in class, you are not contributing to the table work. If you are absent on a day with a group exercise, you will receive a 0 for the exercise. There will be no make-up assignments.

Technology - Please be respectful of the class and your colleagues - CELL PHONE USE IS PROHIBITED. NO EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY ON LAPTOPS/TABLETS, ETC.

<u>WK</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>WEEKLY SCHEDULE</u>	
1	WED 8/22	Introductions; Fuchs' 'Visit to a Small Planet'	
	<u>FRI 8/24</u>	<u>Euripides' <i>Medea</i></u>	
2	WED 8/29	Euripides' <i>Medea</i>	
	<u>FRI 8/31</u>	<u>Euripides' <i>Medea</i></u>	GROUP EXERCISE
3	WED 9/5	Alfaro's <i>Mojada</i>	
	<u>FRI 9/7</u>	<u>Alfaro's <i>Mojada</i></u>	
4	WED 9/12	Alfaro's <i>Mojada</i>	GROUP EXERCISE
	<u>FRI 9/14</u>	<u>Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i></u>	
5	WED 9/19	Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i>	
	<u>FRI 9/21</u>	<u>Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i></u>	
6	WED 9/26	Park's <i>Peerless</i>	
	<u>FRI 9/28</u>	<u>Park's <i>Peerless</i></u>	DRAMATIC ANALYSIS FORM DUE
7	WED 10/3	Park's <i>Peerless</i>	
	<u>FRI 10/5</u>	<u>Buchner's <i>Woyzeck</i></u>	
8	WED 10/10	Buchner's <i>Woyzeck</i>	
	<u>FRI 10/12</u>	<u>Chekhov's <i>The Seagull</i></u>	
9	WED 10/17	Chekhov's <i>The Seagull</i>	
	<u>FRI 10/19</u>	<u>Chekhov's <i>The Seagull</i></u>	DRAMATIC ANALYSIS FORM DUE
10	WED 10/24	Posner's <i>Stupid Fucking Bird</i>	
	<u>FRI 10/26</u>	<u>Posner's <i>Stupid Fucking Bird</i></u>	GROUP EXERCISE
11	WED 10/31	Brecht's <i>Mother Courage</i>	
	<u>FRI 11/2</u>	<u>Brecht's <i>Mother Courage</i></u>	
12	WED 11/7	Brecht's <i>Mother Courage</i>	
	<u>FRI 11/9</u>	<u>Nottage's <i>Ruined</i></u>	
13	WED 11/14	Nottage's <i>Ruined</i>	DRAMATIC ANALYSIS FORM DUE
	<u>FRI 11/16</u>	<u>Nottage's <i>Ruined</i></u>	
14	WED 11/21	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
	<u>FRI 11/23</u>	<u>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</u>	
15	WED 11/28	Group Presentations - Adaptations	
	<u>FRI 11/30</u>	<u>Wrap-up</u>	
FINAL	FRI 12/7	11am-1pm	FINAL PAPER DUE

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/part-b>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, and harassment are prohibited by the university. You are encouraged to report all incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Office* <http://equity.usc.edu> and/or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://dps.usc.edu>. This is important for the health and safety of the whole USC community. Faculty and staff must report any information regarding an incident to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide outreach and information to the affected party. The sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> fully describes reporting options. Relationship and Sexual Violence Services <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp> provides 24/7 confidential support.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://ali.usc.edu>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://dsp.usc.edu> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.