

**Carleton University  
Fall 2019  
Department of English**

**ENGL 3609: *Drama Studies: Contemporary Criticism***  
***Prerequisites: 3rd year standing, or permission of the Department***

**Time/Day: Thursday 11:35 a.m. - 1:35 p.m.**  
**Location: 413 SA**  
***Please confirm location on Carleton Central***

**Instructor: Prof. Janne Cleveland**  
**Email: *Janne.Cleveland@carleton.ca***  
**Office: DT 1913**  
**Phone: 613-520-2600 ext 2320**  
**Office Hours: TBD**

### **Course Outline:**

Writing theatre criticism is more than just summarizing the text being staged; it requires a deep analysis of the mechanisms and staging strategies that go into a production, as well as an understanding of the script. This course focuses on developing the skills to analyze the fundamental elements of staged productions. In class, we will explore the rudiments of a theatre production, such as acting and directing; relationships between a given dramatic text and its mise-en-scène; theatre and stage space; fictional time and performance time; set and costume design; use of stage objects and hand props; sound and lighting design; significance of music; use of mask and make up. Students will attend a series of live performances throughout the term, assigned by the Instructor, and learn how to analyze and write critically about their experiences of theatrical performance. Throughout the course, we will consider such questions as:

- what is the correlation between the theatre elements presented in a theatrical performance?
- what is the significance of set, light, and costume design?
- how is the stage space utilized?
- how does the design of the theatre space contribute to the meaning of a production?
- what are the choices a director makes in creating their mise-en-scène? are these choices effective or not, and why or why not?

### **Mandatory Performances**

In order to effectively learn how to observe and write critically about performance, we will attend a number of live performances throughout the term. All students must attend the following performances. **Discounted/student tickets** are available for most performances (with the

exception of the Cineplex Met Live operas). Instructions on how to access discounted/student rate tickets will be provided at the beginning of the term.

**There are a limited number of awards to offset the cost of tickets for this course. Students are encouraged to apply for this NEW Drama Studies fund for tickets at the following link: (<https://carleton.ca/english/drama-studies-fund-application/> )**

**Unnatural & Accidental Women (September 11 - 21, NAC)**

**Where the Blood Mixes (September 16 - 18, NAC)**

**The Merry Wives of Windsor (September 28, Cineplex)**

**Embrigadés (October 4, La Nouvelle Scène, with English surtitles)**

**Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story (October 16 - 27, NAC)**

**Bang Bang (October 22 - November 10, GCTC)**

**Swan Lake (October 30, NAC)**

**Bangarra Dance Theatre (November 15, 16, NAC)**

**Akhnatn (November 23, MetLive Opera, Cineplex)**

### **Course Objectives:**

1. To introduce students to the fundamental elements of theatrical presentation in order to write about them effectively
2. To help students develop their skills of critical analysis
3. To help students develop a vocabulary of performance analysis
4. To teach students the elemental devices of theatre criticism
5. To train students to develop their skills of observation when attending live performance

### **Required Reading:**

Course pack available at Haven Books (Seneca & Sunnyside)

### **Highly recommended:**

Composition handbook (e.g. *The Broadview Guide to Writing*)

### **Course Evaluation:**

#### **Critical review papers (3 X 15% = 45%)**

Students will write **3** short critical reviews of **2 - 3 pages** (double-spaced). In each case, students will give primary focus to one theatrical element in a particular production in relation to the material studied during the course (i.e., lighting, use of stage space, costumes, etc.) Class readings will help you focus your observations and comments, along with prompt questions corresponding to these topics.

#### **Due Dates:**

First review due by **September 26** (midnight) on cuLearn

Second review due by **October 15** (midnight) on cuLearn

Third review due by **November 7** (midnight) on cuLearn

### **cuPortfolio Reflections (15%)**

Students will be given access to cuPortfolio for this course, and will be given a tutorial in class on how to copy the template provided. Students will create reflections on 2 of the 3 critical review papers, as well as an overall course reflection, each of which is worth 5% of the total grade. The performance review reflections are due after you have had these assignments and their feedback returned to you. The final course reflection is due in the week of our last class.

### **Final paper/take-home exam (a critical performance review of 7 - 8 double-spaced pages 30%)**

This assignment will operate as a take-home exam.

**Note:** The final due date of this assignment will be during the formally scheduled exam period, and will be announced during the term.

This final assignment will represent the cumulative knowledge acquired throughout the course that includes critical commentary on all applicable elements of the production in question. These will include such aspects as set/lighting/sound, use of stage space, acting, directing, costumes, multi-media, and the relevance of the performance space in relation to the production. All students will write their final paper on *The Magic Flute*, which will be shown only on

**December 1** at area Cineplex theatres. You will need to purchase these tickets in advance because this production is likely to sell out.

### **Attendance/Participation 10%**

Students are expected to attend all mandatory productions, and come to class having read the assigned materials in order to fully participate in discussion. Discussion will be divided into a focus on the readings as well as the productions.

**IMPORTANT:** All assignments are submitted electronically, either on cuLearn or cuPortfolio.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean."

### **Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

#### **Pregnancy obligation**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](http://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

#### **Religious obligation**

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](http://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. [carleton.ca/pmc](http://carleton.ca/pmc)

### Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

### **Plagiarism**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own*”. This can include:

- Reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement in any academic assignment
- Failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks

Plagiarism is a serious offence. When an instructor suspects plagiarism the Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties can include a final grade of “F”, which will appear on the student’s transcript.

The Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed at <http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>.

## **Class schedule\***

- September 5** Introduction: Reading the syllabus; what to expect from the course
- September 12** **cuPortfolio tutorial - bring your laptop/device**  
What is Performance? Some thoughts
- September 19** Brockett & Ball. "Performance, Audience, and Critic." *The Essential Theatre* (8th ed.)  
guest lecture: Patrick Langston, professional theatre reviewer  
**(Will discuss *Where the Blood Mixes*)**
- September 26** Pavis, Patrice. "Space, Time, Action." "Staging the Text." *Analyzing Performance: Theatre, Dance, and Film*.  
**(Will discuss *Unnatural & Accidental Women*)**  
**\* First performance review due September 26**  
guest speaker Lindsay Lachance, Artistic Associate of NAC Indigenous Theatre
- October 3** Fingerhut, Arden. "The Scenic Designer." *Theatre: Choice in Action*. Greenwald. "The Designers." *Evaluating a Performance*  
Fingerhut cont'd
- October 10** Bracewell, John. "Art and Design." *Sound Design in the Theatre*.  
Fingerhut, Arden. "The Lighting Designer."  
cont'd

<b>October 18</b>	Aston & Savona. "Reading the Image." <i>Theatre as a Sign System</i>
<b>October 24</b>	<b>Reading week - no classes</b>
<b>October 30</b>	Fingerhut. "The Director". <i>Theatre: Choice in Action</i> ; Greenwald. "The Director". <i>Evaluating a Performance</i> <b>(Will discuss <i>Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story</i>)</b>
<b>November 7</b>	Cameron & Gillespie. "Actors." <i>The Enjoyment of Theatre</i>
<b>November 14</b>	Fingerhut. "The Costume Designer." <i>Theatre: choice in action</i> ; Motley. from <i>Theatre Props</i> cont'd
<b>November 21</b>	Brockett & Ball. "The Playscript." <i>The Essential Theatre</i> cont'd
<b>November 28</b>	Pavis. "Other Material Elements of Performance." <i>Analyzing Performance: Theatre, Dance, and Film</i> ; Greenwald. "Writing the Review". <i>Evaluating a Performance</i> .
<b>December 5</b>	Fingerhut. "The Audience and Performance." <i>Theatre: Choice in Action</i> <b>Wrap up!</b>

**\* Schedule may be subject to change; check frequently on cuLearn for any changes**