*******Intimate Performance*

**Space, Sense, & Self**

* Theatre 244-2: Development of Contemporary Theatre
* M/W, 3:00 – 4:20 PM, Wallis Theatre, TIC
* Instructor: Lauren Beck
* Email: [L-Beck@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:L-Beck@u.northwestern.edu)
* Office Hours: By appointment

**I. Course Description**

This course will use exercises and performance projects to explore 20th and 21st century theories related to intimacy in theatre, performance, and new media. Each week, we will explore an aspect of intimacy in performance through examinations of: autobiographical performance, theatre spaces, site-specificity, the body, the senses, technology, audience participation, audience safety, and more. We will read the work of important artists, scholars, and theorists as well as read about (and watch, listen, or attend, when possible) theatre and performance works. We will then investigate the ideas from the texts as well as our questions and theories through active performance exercises and projects. Students should have some acting experience or a willingness to examine intimacy through performance. Students will be evaluated through their participation in performance exercises, discussion of reading and performances, leading the class in activities, and performing a final interpretation of a segment of *A Dream Play*.

**II. Objectives**

By the end of the quarter students will be able to…

1. Identify relevant artists and theorists from the last century and explain how they can broaden our understanding of intimacy in performance.
2. Analyze performances and articles and apply relevant theories and concepts in practice to explore issues and questions.
3. Develop a research question related to intimacy and create a performance project that attempts to answer that question.

**III. Required Items:**

* *A Dream Play* by August Strindberg and Caryl Churchill (Available for purchase at Beck’s Books)
* Course pack (Available at Quartet Copy)
* Tickets to the following four performances:\*
  + *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind,* Neo-Futurists. Tickets can be purchased ahead of time at <http://neofuturists.org/>. You may attend one of the following performances:

### [Friday, 4/11/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iSnMAI)

### [Saturday, 4/12/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iMyMAI)

### [Sunday, 4/13/14 - 7:00pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iAPMAY)

### [Friday, 4/18/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iPyMAI)

### [Saturday, 4/19/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iN8MAI)

### [Sunday, 4/20/14 - 7:00pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iAUMAY)

### [Friday, 4/25/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iSsMAI)

### [Saturday, 4/26/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iNDMAY)

### [Sunday, 4/27/14 - 7:00pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iAeMAI)

### [Friday, 5/2/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iSxMAI)

### [Saturday, 5/3/14 - 11:30pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iNIMAY)

### [Sunday, 5/4/14 - 7:00pm](https://neofuturists.secure.force.com/ticket#sections_a0FU00000076iAoMAI)

* + Chicago Home Theatre Festival. Shows begin May 1. Make sure you attend before May 12. <http://www.chicagohtf.org/>
  + *Since I Suppose,* one step at a time like this. Dates TBA. <https://www.facebook.com/onestepatatimelikethis?v=wall>
  + *Site-Based Festival,* Northwestern University. There are three shows that will be performed between May 30 and June 8.

*\*I understand that productions with which you are involved may conflict with some of the required performances. If this is the case, tell me ahead of time and find another performance to attend that deals with intimacy. I must approve this exchange in advance.*

* All other materials are available for download or streaming on our Blackboard site.

**IV. Course Requirements**

**Participation: 30%**

In addition to showing up on time, effective participation means that you consistently:

* Bring all materials to each class including plays, course pack, and your homework.
* Attend all required performances and provide tickets and programs to the instructor.
* Demonstrate that you have done the readings through written and oral activities.
* Contribute relevant comments and questions to class discussions during all sessions.
* Demonstrate that you are actively listening to others by maintaining eye contact and responding constructively.
* Work effectively in small groups/pairs.
* Actively participate in all in-class performances and activities.
* Complete in-class assignments in a timely manner.
* Take initiative to set up and attend meetings with the instructor when needed (one group meeting is required for the final project.)

**On electronic devices:** students are welcome to use laptops or tablets in class *for class-related note taking*. However, in a seminar/workshop environment, eye contact and active participation is important. Checking email, updating statuses, sending instant/text messages, and other screened activities that fall outside of class business means that you are mentally absent from class. You only receive daily participation points for active engagement in the class. When necessary, I will occasionally ask students to lower their screens, during discussions and student presentations, for example.

**Email Etiquette:** You have access to your classmates’ email addresses through Blackboard. You can use these to conscientiously contact each other. Please don’t spam your classmates! If you have something relevant to share – a performance notice, an interesting reading, or a neat idea – please add it to the blog or email me.

**Homework and Quizzes: 15%**

There is homework due every Monday, weeks 2-9. You must have it in class with you to use as a guide for discussion. I will collect it at the end of class. Answer the following questions for each assigned reading and performance:

1. What are the author’s main points? (for readings)
2. What do I find interesting in this text or performance?
3. What is challenging about this text or performance to me?
4. What are some quotes or moments I want to discuss further?
5. How can we better understand the texts and performances by putting them into dialogue?
6. What discussion questions can I ask in class?

The homework can be handwritten or typed. It does not have to be in paragraph form, nor does it need full sentences. It does not have to be pretty. You don’t need to spellcheck. The purpose of the homework is to help you “rehearse” for Monday’s discussions. Your homework will receive full credit, marked only with check, check plus, or check minus, based on how much I see you engaging with new ideas. If you are absent, please email me a copy (a cellphone photo is fine if your work is handwritten.)

There may be quizzes. I haven’t decided yet. If there are quizzes, they will be surprise quizzes. If everyone completes their homework assignments and participates in class, I will not give quizzes.

**Take over the class: 20%**

In small groups of 2-3 students, you take over the class for the day. You must do the following things:

1. Provide each student (and the instructor) with a handout that highlights key concepts and provides resources such the names of books, articles, manifestos, authors, artists, or performances that support the week’s theme. You can also provide links to useful websites.
2. Lead the class in an activity or series of activities that help us better understand the theories and concepts we have learned through practice.
3. Give a short performance based on *A Dream Play.* Your performance must engage with the week’s ideas.
4. Lead a discussion after the day’s activities.

Be creative with the activities. They should be designed to try out different theories that we have read about and discussed in class. Feel free to take us outside, use technology, require us to wear costumes, or any other thing that does not violate school policy or laws of decency! One person from your group must email me a copy of your handout and a plan for the day by 6:00 AM the day of class (earlier if possible!)

**Final Project: 35%**

The final project is a chance for you to apply selected theories we have learned in performance. The project consists of two parts:

* **Group Performance:** Your group (2-4 people) will sign up in advance for TWO of the themes we covered in class (e.g. The Body, Immersion, Site-Specificity, etc.) You will create a performance based on *A Dream Play* that you will present in class during Week 10 or Finals Week. This performance must use some of the theories we have learned about in order to explore a form of intimacy. Your groups must be chosen by Week 5. A proposal for your project (one per group) must be turned in by Week 7.
* **Individual Paper:** You will turn in a 1000 word artist’s statement. You will explain your intent: What did you hope to accomplish? What impact did you hope to have on the audience? What strategies did you use to fulfill your purpose? What theorists and theories did you employ? This paper is more formal than homework: it should be spellchecked, cited, organized, and intelligible. You should feel free to play with the writing style (i.e. you don’t have to write a formal essay) and formatting (i.e. go nuts with the margins, spacing, font, font size, color, pictures, etc.)

**V. Course Policies:**

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. Please contact me *in advance* if any circumstances arise where you cannot come to class, even if it is an email twenty minutes before class. Appropriate proof is necessary in order for an absence to be excused (e.g. doctor’s note or letter from the dean). Students are permitted *one* unexcused absence, no questions asked. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your final grade by 5 percentage points. You are responsible for obtaining notes, handouts, or important information for days you miss.

Please be aware that missing class does not excuse you from submitting assignments on time, except in the case of extreme illness or family emergency as verified by your doctor or the dean. If you know you are going to miss class, please make prior arrangements so that I receive your materials, *even if you are using your free absence*. If you miss class on your presentation day, you will receive a zero on the assignment.

Come to class on time. Lateness will negatively impact your participation grade. If your schedule makes it difficult for you to get to class on time, let me know in advance.

**Assignments:** Homework is due at the end of every Monday class. You will submit an electronic copy of your final artist’s statement through SafeAssign on Blackboard.

**\*\*\* Late assignments will be docked ten percentage points a day.**

**Extra Credit:** To obtain 10 points of extra credit, you may attend an additional performance from the list provided (or a pre-approved performance that deals with issues of intimacy). Present me with a 300-word, typed, double-spaced reflection along with the ticket stub and program.

**Grading Scale:**

A =100–93% B = 86–83% C = 76–73% D = 66–63%

A-= 92–90% B- = 82–80% C- = 72–70% D-=62–60%

B+= 89–87% C+= 79–77% D+= 69–67% F =59% and below

**VI. Schedule**

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| **Date** | **Topics/Readings/Assignments Due** |
| Week 1: **Performance as Research** | |
| M 3/31 | Introduction to the instructor, students, and syllabus. |
| W 4/2 | * **READ**: Kershaw et al. “Practice as Research: Transdisciplinary Innovation in Action.” * **DUE:** BuyCourse Pack |
| Week 2: **Postdramatic Theatre** | |
| M 4/7 | * **READ**: Richard Schechner, “Six Axioms for Environmental Theatre;” Gordon, “Antonin Artaud, the Actor’s Body, and the Space of Performance.” * **WATCH**: *Dionysus in 69* (Bb, Library Resources, Course Reserves) * **DUE**:Homework #1 |
| W 4/9 | * **READ**: *A Dream Play* |
| Week 3: **The Senses** | |
| M 4/14 | * **READ**: Di Benedetto, “Sensual Engagements: Understanding Theories of the Senses and their Potential Applications within Theatre;” Cohen, “Sightless Touch and Touching Witnessing: Interplays of Authentic Movement and Contact Improvisation;” “Banes, Olfactory Performances;” “Schechner, Rasaesthetics.” * **LISTEN & WATCH**: *Everyday Moments* (Bb, Assignments, Week 3); *Tragedia Endogonidia,* excerpts (Bb, Assignments, Week 3). * **DUE**: Homework #2 |
| W 4/16 | * **Group 1 takes over the class.** |
| Week 4: **The body** | |
| M 4/21 | * **READ**: Schneider, *The Explicit Body in Performance*, excerpts; Giannachi, “Cyborg Theatre;” Broadhurst, “Digital Practices: New Writings of the Body.” * **WATCH:** Karen Finley (Bb, Library Resources, Course Reserves); Carolee Schneeman (Bb, Library Resources, Course Reserves); Bobby Baker (Bb, Assignments, Week 4) * **DUE**: Homework #3 |
| W 4/23 | * **Group 2 takes over the class.** |
| Week 5: **The Real** | |
| M 4/28 | * **READ**: White, “Risk and Rational Action;” Martin, “The Theatricalization of Public and Private Life;” David Bauwens, et al. “On Courting the Audience.” * **WATCH:** Ontroerend Goed videos (Bb, Assignments, Week 5) * **DUE**: Homework #4 |
| W 4/30 | * **Group 3 takes over the class.** * **DUE:** Final Project groups. |
| Week 6: **Interactivity** | |
| M 5/5 | * **READ**: Dixon, “Videogames;” Stelarc, “Prosthetic Head: Ideas and Anecdotes on the Seductiveness of Embodied Conversational Agents;” Boal, *Rainbow of Desire*, excerpts, (Bb, Documents). * **DUE**: Homework #5 * **ATTEND**: *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind,* Neo-Futurists |
| W 5/7 | * **Group 4 takes over the class.** |
| Week 7: **Immersion** | |
| M 5/12 | * **READ**: Kim Solga, “Artifacting an Intercultural Nation: Theatre Replacement’s BIOBOXES;” Worthen, “The written troubles of the brain”: *Sleep No More* and the Space of Character;” Oddey, “Rethinking the Theatrical Frame: The Opera Director, Video Artist, and Visual Artists.” * **ATTEND:** The Chicago Home Theatre Festival * **DUE**: Homework #6 |
| W 5/14 | * **Group 5 takes over the class.** * **DUE:** Final Project Proposal (one per group) |
| Week 8: **Presence** | |
| M 5/19 | * **READ**: Matthew Causey, “Televisual Presence;” Power, “Signifying Presence.” * **DUE:** Homework #7 * **WATCH:** TBD |
| W 5/21 | * Rehearse final performances |
| Week 9: **Site-Specificity** | |
| M 5/26 | * **Memorial Day: No Class** |
| W 5/28 | * **READ**: Marla Carlson, “Ways to Walk New York after 9/11;” Alison Oddey, “Narratives of the City, Interpretations of Director, Reflections of Spectator;” (Bb, Documents). * **ATTEND:** *Far Away, Thou Proud Dream,* or TBA * **DUE**: Homework #8 |
| Week 10: **Site-Specificity** continued | |
| M 6/2 | * Rehearse final performances |
| W 6/4 | * **First round of final performances** |
| Finals Week | |
| M 6/9 | * **Second round of final performances** * **DUE:** Artist’s Statement |

**Office Hours:** I will hold office hours by appointment only. Depending on the time of day, we might meet in the Plaza Café in the Library, in my office in Ayers College of Commerce and Industry, or over Skype. If you would like to meet, please email me with your availability.

**VII. Class-Related Northwestern Policies**

**Safety During the Study of Theatre and Dance:** The study of Theatre and Dance involves intensive physical and emotional challenges. Every effort is made to provide a supportive and reasonably safe learning environment. To aid in this regard, students enrolled in Theatre and Dance courses are responsible for the following standards: (1) All members of the class, including the instructor, are to be treated with respect. No one may intentionally hurt themselves, another person or the physical space and its contents at any time. (2) Students have the right to egress from any class activity, to step out of work that they believe may compromise their well-being. (3) Students will not abuse the privilege of egress, a privilege that will be respected by the classroom community. (4) Students are responsible for informing faculty of anything that might limit their full participation in the class (injuries, restrictions, etc.) Appropriate physical contact, between student and student, as well as student and instructor, can be expected in the practice of Theatre and Dance. A student who does not wish to be touched, for whatever reason, is responsible for informing the instructor. Failure of students to meet these standards may result in disciplinary and academic consequences.

**Students with Disabilities:** In compliance with Northwestern University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Request for academic accommodations need to be made during the first week of the quarter, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are required to register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

For more information, visit: <http://www.northwestern.edu/disability/>

**Academic Integrity at Northwestern:** Students are expected to comply with University regulations regarding academic integrity. If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, speak to the instructor before the assignment is due and/or examine the University website. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating on an exam (e.g., taking material from sources without citation, copying another student’s paper). Failure to maintain academic integrity on an assignment will result in a loss of credit for that assignment – at a minimum. Other penalties may also apply. The guidelines for determining academic dishonesty and procedures followed in a suspected incident of academic dishonesty are detailed on the university and school websites. For more information visit:

<http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/programs/undergraduate/policies_procedures/academic_integrity/>

\*\*In order to ensure a safe, respectful and honorable learning environment, the university maintains both an Academic Integrity Policy and a Sexual Harassment Policy. Students have an affirmative responsibility to familiarize themselves with these policies, which can be found at:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/uniprin.html> and <http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment/policy/index.html> respectively.

**\*\*\* Please note that the instructor reserves the right**

**to alter the syllabus at any time as necessary. \*\*\***