

# THEATRE

## THE 100 The Art of Theatre Design (4 Credits)

The course is designed to explore the nature of design in theatre and the visual arts. Students study the elements of set, costume, lighting and sound design while looking at the work of some of the most influential designers, past and present. Especially designed for those with a limited background in theatre, it involves discussions about assigned plays and projects, as appropriate to the topic. It is open to all students but particularly recommended for first-year students and sophomores. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

## THE 141 Acting I: Fundamentals of Acting (4 Credits)

Introduction to physical, vocal and interpretative aspects of performance, with emphasis on creativity, concentration and depth of expression. Enrollment limited to 14. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

## THE 142 Voice for Actors (4 Credits)

An introduction to the study of voice, exploring the connections between thought, feeling and vocalization through exercises that strengthen and enhance an actor's (or speaker's) understanding and command of vocal expression. Enrollment limited to 15. {A}

**Spring**

## THE 153 Play with Light: An Introduction to the Culture of Light (4 Credits)

This course explores the culture of light as an illuminating, form-giving and artistic medium. Students study the physics of light and the history of lighting. The course examines the leap from representation of light in paintings where light is portrayed through imitation, to reality of light as an agent giving meaning in contemporary light art. The course approaches some of the theatre designers who transformed the look of the modern stage and goes beyond theatre to investigate ways in which light continues to capture and spur human imagination in creative fields such as cinematography, architecture and digital graphics. Enrollment limited to 18. {A}

**Spring**

## THE 154 "Reading" Dress: Archival Study of Clothing (4 Credits)

How does one "read" clothing? How accurate is the interpretation? What clues does one miss or misread, especially in dress from an era unfamiliar to them? What information can one look for to "explain" the significance or meaning of the garment? This course is an introduction to a methodology for the study of dress as material culture, examining physical structure, terminology, technology of production, and some of the historical, social and cultural variables shaping, and shaped by, these objects. It is a class using objects from the Smith College Historic Clothing Collection. Each student studies several similar garments, identifying common features as well as distinctions that may reflect different classes, aesthetic choices and industrial influences. Enrollment limited to 20 students. {H}

**Fall**

## THE 155 Women in Pants (4 Credits)

What is the history of women wearing pants? How has it varied in other times and cultures? What clues are missed or misread, especially in dress from another culture or an unfamiliar era? This course is an introduction to the study of clothing as material culture, examining physical structure, terminology, technology of production, and some of the historical, social, and cultural variables shaping- and shaped by- these garments. Using examples from the Smith College Historic Clothing Collection, students look for common features as well as distinctions that may reflect different classes, aesthetic choices, and industrial influences. Enrollment limited to 20. (E) {A}{H}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

## THE 198 Theatre History and Culture: Ancient Greece to English Restoration (4 Credits)

This course surveys the history of theatre, drama and performance from Ancient Greece to the 18th century. The focus is on the theatres of Europe and Asia and their relationship to their respective cultures. Lectures and discussions are complemented by video screenings of productions of some of the plays under consideration. {A}{H}{L}

**Fall**

## THE 199 Theatre History and Culture: 18th Century to the Present (4 Credits)

This course surveys the history of theatre, drama and performance from the 18th century to the present. The main focus is on the theatres of Europe, Africa, North America (USA and Canada), Central and South America and the Caribbean, and Australia, and their relationship to their respective cultures. Lectures and discussions are complemented by video screenings of recent productions of some of the plays under consideration. {A}{H}{L}

**Spring**

## THE 200 Theatre Production (1 Credit)

This is a studio course which gives one credit for participation in a Theatre Department production. Most positions are designed for people with no previous experience. Offerings within the course cover all areas of theatre production, on stage and off, including positions as stage crew, light and sound board operators, dressers, stage managers, design assistants, box office assistants, props charges, electricians or actors. There is one general meeting at the beginning of the semester. Attendance is mandatory. Attendance at weekly production meetings may be required for some assignments. Students who wish to register for two credits in the same semester should register for two separate sections of THE 200. S/U only. Restrictions: May be taken four times for credit, with a maximum of two credits per semester.

**Fall, Spring**

## THE 213 American Theatre and Drama (4 Credits)

This course discusses issues relevant to theatre history and practices, as well as dramatic literature, theories and criticism in 18th-, 19th- 20th- and 21st centuries United States of America, including African American, Native American, Hispanic American and Latinx, Asian American, LGBTQ +, the American musical, political, feminist and contemporary theatre and performance. Lectures, discussions and presentations are complemented by video screenings of recent productions of some of the plays under discussion. {A}{H}{L}

**Spring**

**THE 217 Modern European Drama 1870s–1930s (4 Credits)**

The plays, theatres and playwrights of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe. A leap from Büchner to Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw, Chekhov, Wedekind and Gorky onwards to the widespread experimentation of the 1920s and earlier avant garde (e.g., Jarry, Artaud, Stein, Witkiewicz, Pirandello, Mayakovsky, Fleisser, early Brecht). Special attention to issues of gender, class, warfare and other personal/political foci. Attendance may be required at selected performances.

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 218 Modern European Drama 1930s–present (4 Credits)**

Pioneering and influential contemporary theatre in Europe from the 1930s to the present. The playwrights to be studied may include later Brecht, Camus, Sartre, Anouilh, Gombrowicz, Carr, Kirkwood, Beckett, Ionesco, Genet, Pinter, Duras, Handke, Fo, Havel, Schimmelpfennig, Page, Mrozek, Loher and Churchill. Special attention to issues of gender, class, warfare and other personal/political foci. Attendance may be required at selected performances. {A}{H}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 219 Colloquium: Contemporary Playwrights (4 Credits)**

A survey of plays written in the 21st century from a dramaturgical perspective – i.e., how the play is constructed – and a discussion of the cultural, political and artistic context in which they were written. Students learn the fundamentals and vocabulary of dramaturgical analysis.

Playwrights studied may include: Suzan-Lori Parks, David Henry Hwang, Kristoffer Diaz, Stephen Adly Guirgis, Paula Vogel, Martyna Majok, Jackie Sibblies Drury and Sanaz Toossi. Enrollment limited to 18. {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 220 Colloquium: Asian American Drama (4 Credits)**

In this course, students survey plays written by American writers of East Asian, South Asian and Southeast Asian descent, starting with the first wave of Asian American playwrights in the 1960s to more contemporary work. Students learn the fundamentals and vocabulary of dramaturgical analysis and employ these skills in class discussion and written assignments. Intersectional identities are emphasized and readings include work by biracial, queer and transgender writers. While the focus is on reading plays, students also explore the socio-historical context of each work via reading assignments that include critical essays, writings on the history of immigration to the U.S. from Asia and writings on the representation of Asian Americans on stage. Enrollment limited to 18. (E) {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 221 Colloquium: Women Playwrights of Color (4 Credits)**

In this survey course, students read plays written by American women of color, examine them from a theatre artist's perspective and discuss the cultural, political and artistic context in which they were written. Students learn the fundamentals and vocabulary of dramaturgical analysis and employ these skills in class discussion and written assignments. Playwrights studied may include: Alice Childress, Lorraine Hansberry, Maria Irene Fornés, Diana Son, Larissa Fasthose, Madhuri Shekar, Liliana Padilla, Sanaz Toossi, Cori Thomas, Leah Nanako Winkler and more. Enrollment limited to 18. {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 236 Colloquium: Anti-Racist Theatre (4 Credits)**

In this course we look at the practice, the history and the future of theatre as an anti-racist activity. We seek to define and understand the concept of anti-racism and to look at how theatre—through performance, through structure, through training, and in other ways—can be racist or anti-racist. We look most of all at contemporary thinking, writing, organization and making around this topic. Learning together, we seek to explore and imagine how theatre—in professional, educational and other settings—can be part of the work of anti-racism. Prerequisite: One previous course in the Theatre Department. Enrollment limited to 18. (E) {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242ad Topics in Acting II-Acting and Directing Actors for the Camera (4 Credits)**

What is the particular nature of acting for the camera? This course examines film and television production and develops an acting approach suited for work in film and television. Students act on camera and examine the results of their work. The class works with particular emphasis on the building of a performance through the process of the shoot. A limited number of students can, with instructor approval, take the course with an emphasis on directing for the camera. Prerequisite: THE 141 or FMS 280. Restrictions: THE 242 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242dt Topics in Acting II-Devising Theatre (4 Credits)**

This course engages creatives in the process of collaborating, incubating, workshopping, and producing a theatrical event from start to finish. Students explore methods of devising work that are rooted in but not limited to: documentary theatre, theatre for social justice, verbatim theatre, political theatre, and personal narratives. Students also examine structural, cultural, political, and societal systems, and their place within them, to generate topics for creative development. Prerequisite: THE 141. Restrictions: THE 242 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. (E) {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242im Topics in Acting II- Improv for Actors (4 Credits)**

In this class, students learn and build upon the principles and rules of theatrical improvisation. Through theatre games and improvisational experiences, students work towards freeing themselves physically, vocally, emotionally and mentally, to stimulate spontaneity, creativity, imagination, self-expression and the collaborative spirit. Prerequisites: one semester of acting or one semester of dance. Restrictions: THE 242 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242pt Topics in Acting II-Physical Theatre (4 Credits)**

This course explores significant points of access to Physical Theatre for actors and directors, including experiential research and practice in the Method of Physical Actions, Viewpoints, Composition, Laban Movement Analysis and Authentic Movement. Additionally, the course explores the demands and expressive potentials of physically distinct styles of performance (commedia dell'arte, melodrama, corporeal mime). Prerequisites: one semester of acting or one semester of dance. Restrictions: THE 242 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 242va Topics in Acting II-Verse (4 Credits)**

This is a course in performance, focusing on poetic expression and heightened language in the works of Shakespeare, his contemporaries, and current playwrights writing in modern verse. Students research, analyze and compare selected works with particular attention to top unifying themes, rhetorical strategies and historical perspectives, attempting to understand the requisites of performance. The class has a studio component designed to develop skills in textual analysis, physical and vocal expressiveness, and theatrical imagination. Prerequisite: THE 141. Restrictions: THE 242 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Variable**

**THE 252 Introduction to Set Design (4 Credits)**

The course develops overall design skills for designing sets for the theatre. After reading assigned plays, students learn to develop their designs by concentrating on character analysis and visualizing the action of the play. Visual research, sketches, basic drafting skills and model building are some of the areas in which students learn to develop their ideas. This course also emphasizes the importance of collaborating with every member of the creative team. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 253 Introduction to Lighting Design (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of stage lighting design. Over the semester, the course cultivates sensitivity towards the expressiveness of light and the relationship between light, form and space, eventually learning to manipulate light to articulate ideas. Through script analyses and design projects, students learn to understand the power of light in enhancing stage presentations, acquire skills in illuminating the drama and apply such skills to collaboration with the production team at large. Through hands-on exercises in the lab and in the theatres, students also become familiar with the mechanical aspects of lighting: instrumentation, control systems and safe electrical practice. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Spring**

**THE 254 Introduction to Costume Design (4 Credits)**

The elements of line, texture and color, and their application to design and character delineation. Research of clothing styles of various cultures and eras. Enrollment limited to 15. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 255 Introduction to Sound Design (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to the theory and practice of theatrical sound design, with additional relevance to sound design for dance, film and television. The course cultivates sensitivity towards the expressiveness of sound and the relationship between time, sound, actors, visuals and narrative. Through script analyses and design projects, students learn the power of sound—including music—in enhancing stage presentations, acquire skills in creating sound worlds and apply those skills to collaboration with the production team. Through hands-on exercises in the lab and in the theatres, students also become familiar with recording, editing, organizing and playback of sound. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 256 Sonic Storytelling: Broadcasts, Podcasts, and Audio Essays (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to the practice of sound design in audio-based storytelling settings, including in public radio, podcasts, and other creative audio pieces. The course explores the histories of these audio platforms and how music and sound have been included to help tell such stories as well as increase listener understanding and engagement, and sculpt the emotional journey of the listener. Through listening and producing projects, students 1) learn the power of sound and music in enhancing stories; 2) acquire skills in storytelling, recording, and editing sound; 3) and apply those skills to collaboratively and independently created radio, podcast, and other aural storytelling projects. Cannot be taken S/U. Enrollment limited to 12. (E) {A}

**Spring**

**THE 261 Writing for the Theatre I (4 Credits)**

The means and methods of the playwright. Analysis of the structure and dialogue of a few selected plays. Weekly and biweekly exercises in dramatic writing. Goal for beginning playwrights: to draft a one-act play by the end of the semester. Writing sample required. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 262 Writing for the Theatre II (4 Credits)**

Intermediate and advanced script projects. Prerequisite: THE 261. Writing sample required. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 264 Advanced Playwriting: Reimagining the Narrative (4 Credits)**

An exploration of how to reimagine, redefine and even subvert common archetypes and tropes found in mainstream theatre. In addition to discussing representation and casting, the course considers the following questions: how can portrayals of characters who are routinely depicted as victims, evil or other be redefined? How can stereotypes be subverted, not by simply reversing roles, but by rendering a character's full humanness, complexity and agency? Students learn the fundamentals of dramatic writing and employ these craft principles to write a full-length play over the course of the semester that explores these questions. Prerequisite: THE 261. Restrictions: Not open to first-years. Enrollment limited to 12. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Annually**

**THE 312ld Topics in Masters and Movements in Performance-Contemporary Latine Drama (4 Credits)**

Contemporary Latine Drama explores Latine stories by and about Latine humans as told through the lens of theatrical performance. Readings and discussions are centered around the playwright's identity and the cultural, political, societal, and artistic influences inspiring the text. This course covers a variety of subject matter from recent history up to the present. Spotlight writers include: Octavio Solis, Isaac Gomez, José Rivera, María Irene Fornés, Luis Alfaro, Eduardo Machado and more. Restrictions: THE 312 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. (E) {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 312vd Topics in Masters and Movements in Performance-Verbatim and Documentary Theatre (4 Credits)**

This course explores—through reading, viewing and making—theatre created using documentary sources, including interviews, found texts, historical documents and other sources. Students explore the dramatic, social and political implications of this work, while considering notions of authenticity and authority derived from direct testimony, documentary sources and community involvement. Students also explore the tension between maintaining truth and creating dramatic shape, theatricality and audience engagement. Readings and viewings will include the work of theatre-makers such as Anna Devere Smith, Moises Kaufman and many others. Students in the course also create original work. Restrictions: THE 312 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 312ya Topics in Masters and Movements in Performance-Theatre for Young Audiences (4 Credits)**

In this class, students will work with a variety of teaching styles focused on introducing elementary and middle school-aged children to the creative and collaborative process of theater. Through games, improvisation and the fundamentals of theatrical storytelling, classmates will also have the opportunity to adapt, design, rehearse and perform an original script appropriate for elementary through high school-aged students. Diversity, inclusion and Equity will be incorporated as students navigate the ways in which these principles become part of both a storytelling curriculum and a theatrical setting. Prerequisite: Any course in Theatre or Education. Restrictions: THE 312 may be taken for credit a total of 3 times with different topics. Enrollment limited to 16. {E} {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 313ts Masters and Movements in Drama-Contemporary Dramatizations of Teacher-Student Dynamics (4 Credits)**

Educational dynamics in teacher/student relationships as dramatized on stage from the mid-20th century to the present. Discussions of race, gender, social class and cultural differences constitute central points of exploration and intersection. Plays by BIPOC playwrights occupy a significant portion of the syllabus. e.g. Marie-Irene Fornes, Adrienne Kennedy, Dominique Morisseau, Anna Devere Smith, Eleanor Burgess, Nilaja Sun, Idris Goodwin and Julia Cho. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 316 Contemporary Canadian Drama (4 Credits)**

Michel Tremblay and contemporary Canadian playwrights. Emphasis on plays by and about women, within the context of political and personal issues of gender, class, race, sexuality and cultural identity in English Canadian and French Canadian and Native Canadian drama of the past five decades. Other playwrights explored are Judith Thompson, George Walker, Erika Ritter, David French, Rene Daniel DuBois, Margaret Hollingworth, Anne-Marie McDonald, Sally Clark, Tomson Highway, Hannah Moscovitch and Sharon Pollock. {A}{L}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 344 Directing I (4 Credits)**

This course focuses upon interpretative approaches to dramatic texts and how they may be realized and animated through characterization, composition, movement, rhythm and style. Prerequisites: THE 141. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Spring**

**THE 352 Set Design II (4 Credits)**

This course looks at the advanced challenges when designing sets for ballet, music theatre, and opera. What must the set designer consider when live music is added to each of these performing arts? Students have the opportunity to pick which ballet, music theatre, and opera they want to design, from a list provided by the instructor. The syllabus can also be customized to address a specific interest of a student with the instructor's permission. The objective of this course is to build a portfolio of set designs showing the specific needs in all of the performing arts. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 353 Lighting Design II (4 Credits)**

This course further explores light as a tool to illuminate, sculpt, and articulate ideas and their execution on and off stage. The course examines various contemporary approaches to designing for a diverse range of performing arts such as drama, dance, concert, and opera. Students design lighting for the annual Spring Dance Concert, and develop research and creative projects under the instructor's individual guidance. Interdisciplinary projects are strongly encouraged. Can be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: THE 253. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Spring**

**THE 354 Costume Design II (4 Credits)**

The integration of the design elements of line, texture, color, gesture and movement into unified production styles. Further study of the history of clothing, movement in costume, construction techniques and rendering. Production work may be required outside of the class meeting time. Prerequisites: THE 254. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 360 Production Design for Film (4 Credits)**

Filmmaking is storytelling. This story can be told by the actors or by its visuals. Every film employs a production designer who, with the director and cinematographer, is in charge of the visual design of the film. Students learn how a production designer breaks down a script to determine which scenes should be shot on location and which should be built as sets. Each student makes design choices for the entire script. Whether picking out locations or creating sets to be shot on a soundstage, this class examines what makes one design choice better than another. Students also learn the basic skills to communicate their designs through storyboards, photo research and drafting. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Alternate Years**

**THE 361 Screenwriting I (4 Credits)**

The means and methods of the writer for television and the cinema. Analysis of the structure and dialogue of a few selected films. Prerequisite: THE 261 or THE 262 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to 12. Writing sample required. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 362 Screenwriting II (4 Credits)**

Intermediate and advanced script projects. Prerequisite: THE 361. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. {A}

**Fall, Spring, Variable**

**THE 400 Special Studies (1-4 Credits)**

For qualified juniors and seniors. Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 430D Honors Project (4 Credits)**

This is a full-year course. Department permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 431 Honors Project (8 Credits)**

Department permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 432D Honors Project (6 Credits)**

This is a full-year course. Please consult the director of honors or the departmental website for specific requirements and application procedures. Department permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 512 Advanced Studies in Acting, Speech and Movement (4 Credits)**

Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 513 Advanced Studies in Design (4 Credits)**

Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 515 Advanced Studies in Dramatic Literature, History, Criticism and Playwriting (4 Credits)**

Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 580 Special Studies (4 Credits)**

Instructor permission required.

**Fall, Spring**

**THE 590D Research and Thesis Production Project (4 Credits)**

This is a full-year course. Department permission required.

**Fall, Spring**