

COURSE SYLLABUS

THEATRE PRACTICES PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE

Course Director/Instructor: Dr. Nan Smithner

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COURSE DESCRIPTION/OVERVIEW

This course interrogates pointed questions about theatre and aesthetics in educational and applied settings through examination of the power and efficacy of theatre practices in a wide range of venues. Students will develop and collaboratively explore a broad vocabulary of theatrical skills (physical theatre, mask and puppetry work and Theatre of the Oppressed) for exploration in formal and informal contexts. Participants also explore the ways in which theatre supports advocacy and social change. Various approaches to applied theatre will be considered, especially those shaped by Freire and Boal. Students will read widely, engage in theory through practice, and reflect on their evolving understandings of the art form, theatre pedagogy, and theatre as a tool for community-based work. While in Puerto Rico, students engage in active workshops, dialogues on diverse drama processes, and critically reflective practices as they respond to artistic experiences and community-centered events.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

- Learn to collaborate effectively in artistic, academic, and social capacities.
- Demonstrate competence in a variety of artistic techniques.
- Reflect on and articulate learning both theoretically and practically.
- Explore how to modify technical skills, theoretical knowledge, and creative processes to meet individually identified interests.

ATTENDANCE POLICY Students are expected to **attend all class meetings and scheduled events**, demonstrating a commitment to in-depth exploration of diverse art forms and collaboration with their peers and the course facilitators. Should an individual need to miss a class or workshop for any reason, **the individual is responsible for reaching out directly and immediately to the Director of the course (646-522-3654).**

STUDIO WORKSHOPS:

MASKS & PUPPETRY

For everyday work with masks & puppets, participants should dress in casual clothing, allowing them to move and work freely. Especially early on, working with the masks & puppets can get messy, so please pack accordingly (the hotel DOES offer both laundry services & coin laundry).

- **For the final performance, participants should bring solid black clothing:** long pants or skirts are recommended; shirts should have long sleeves and high necks, and no tights please (masks look best next to fabric, rather than bare skin).
- **Each group member should bring 1 yard of cloth (solid color - not black).**

PHYSICAL THEATRE

Participants must have comfortable clothing for each day of work. Every studio workshop will primarily focus on the body as an artistic instrument and source of knowledge. Participants should arrive in Puerto Rico having memorized a 1-minute text of their choice – which could be, for example, a poem, lyrics to a song, a part of a monologue, a spoken word piece or an original piece or writing. **Instructions for memorizing are as follows:**

- **Monologue should be fully memorized prior to arrival** (last-minute memorization makes the physical work unnecessarily challenging).
- **Monologue should be memorized in a “neutral way”** (without accent, intention, or preconceived perceptions of meaning).
- Monologue should be memorized without regard for given punctuation (as if the monologue is a series of sequential but unrelated words and sounds).

For breakdown of groups please see Appendix A.

READINGS:

Prior to the start of the experience, all participants are responsible for reading and understanding each of the articles/videos posted on NYUClasses (unless otherwise indicated). It is not necessary to have hard copies with you, although access to readings will be important throughout. The assigned articles, chapters, and/or video are listed in the syllabus (and on NYUClasses). **Please do explore ALL ASSIGNMENTS, understanding their implications and interconnectedness.**

Books:

Boal, A. (2006) *Aesthetics of the Oppressed* New York: Theatre Communications.

Boal, A. (1985) *Theatre of the Oppressed* New York: Theatre Communications.

Cruz, J.C. (2004) *Local Acts: Community Based Performance in the United States* NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Articles:

CURRENT EVENTS (CONTEXT BUILDING – PLEASE READ FIRST)

Lin-Manuel Miranda: Puerto Rico needs Congress's help. Now. - The ...
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/...puerto-ricans.../fc03ccca-dfb3-11e7-8679-a9728984...>

How to Rebuild Puerto Rico - Bloomberg
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2017-12-14/how-to-rebuild-puerto-rico>

Fahey, F. (2001). Beyond the island: Puerto Rican diaspora in America and América. *Post Identity*. 3(1). *NY Times Articles & Video: Pierluisi: Urgent Need for Congressional Action*

APPLIED THEATRE & PERFORMANCE

Callery, D. (2001) *Through the Body: A Practical Guide to Physical Theatre*. London: Nick Hern Books Ltd. Select chapters: Introduction pp. 1 – 16; (Un)masking the Actor pp.45-68; Devising pp. 159- 194.

Friere, P. (1973) *Education for a Critical Consciousness*. NY: Continuum. Introduction and pp. 3- 31.

Haseman, B. & Winston, J. (2010). Why be interested?' Aesthetics, applied theatre and drama education. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*. 15(4).

Lorca, F. G. (2008) "The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife" in *Lorca: Six Major Plays*. Trans. Caridad Svich. CA: NoPassort Press.

Marquez, R. L. (1999). "The Play is the Thing...The Thing is to Play". *The Open Page*, 4, March, p. 31-25.

Montgomery, D. (2016). Applied Theatre and Citizenship in the Puerto Rican Community. *Artistic Citizenship: Artistry, Social Responsibility and Ethical Praxis*. Eds. Elliott, D., Silverman, M. & Bowman, D. New York: Oxford University Press.

Peters, M. (2004). Education and the philosophy of the body: bodies of knowledge and knowledges of the body. *Knowing bodies, moving minds: Toward embodied teaching and learning*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Tabares, V. M. (2004). The Freedom of the Mask: an Interview with Deborah Hunt. *Sargasso: Caribbean Theater and Cultural Performance*. Eds. Everson, S. Fiet, L. & Walicek, D. San Juan: UPR.

Callery, D. (2001) *Through the Body: A Practical Guide to Physical Theatre*. London: Nick Hern Books Ltd. Select chapters: Introduction pp. 1 – 16; (Un)masking the Actor pp.45-68; Devising pp. 159- 194.

PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE:

Attend all classes punctually. Contribute actively and constructively to all workshops & conversations. Complete assigned tasks as outlined (including readings). This cohort should function as an ensemble inside the classroom and out. As such, ensemble members should:

- Be Respectful
- Be Supportive
- Be Collaborative
- Be Communicative
- Be Open-Minded (Non-Judgmental)
- Be Committed
- Exhibit Willingness to Compromise
- Exhibit Willingness to Take Risks
- Be Fun-Loving

Additionally, ensemble members should **respect one another's personal spaces, needs, belongings, and opinions and be willing to both give and receive constructive, yet critical feedback (when appropriate)**. Finally, ensemble members should work to **connect to and immerse themselves in the local culture**.

ARTISTIC ENGAGEMENT: Collaboration and Performance, Process and Product:

- Demonstrate competence in dramatic techniques specific to the identified art form.
- Contribute creatively to the ensemble.
- Approach collaborative work with flexibility and focus.
- Reflect in and on action, through discussion and evaluation, as well as peer and group assessment where appropriate.

WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS:

JOURNAL

Students will keep an ongoing documented record of their experiences in the Caribbean, and the

implications of the work in personal, professional, and creative contexts. This record should include: written log entries outlining emerging understandings; artifacts, visual reflections, and artistic explorations of content that demonstrate learning; analyses of the readings wherein theoretical connections are made; as well as materials not listed that represent inspiration and depth of thought. Students should feel free to note new awarenesses, observations, and/or emerging questions/understandings (10 pages minimum but you can add more if you like).

1) Opening Statement

Students will bring an opening statement outlining their goals for the course, and describing what they hope to achieve from the Caribbean experience (1- 2 pages). **Due January 3rd at the Opening Reception, in hard copy.** This statement should also be included in the final journal.

2) Midpoint assessment

Journals will be shared with the instructor midway through the course (**students may create and turn in a handwritten or digital journal**). If handwritten, writing must be legible (if writing is illegible and/or incomprehensible, authors will be asked to rewrite and submit again). **PLEASE NOTE:** The instructor will be reviewing journals at the midpoint of the course, so as to track personal journeys alongside each student, while also troubleshooting, clarifying, and supporting each individual amidst such intensive studies. The instructor will respond to entries with minimal reflections, things to consider, and/or questions. This assignment is crafted to engage all participants in critical reflective practices; as such, it is process rather than product focused. **A student's journal should reflect all entries up to but not including the given day (though at the conclusion of the course, students should have one entry/day).**

3) Closing Statement

Journals should also include a **closing statement** summing up your experience. You should address the following prompts:

- To what extent has your time in Puerto Rico thus far influenced your artistic trajectory?
- To what extent has your time in Puerto Rico influenced you as a facilitator, teacher or counselor?
- In what ways have you met your goals?

Journal responses are assessed for depth of thought, rather than writing mechanics (though all writing should be legible). Only the individual author and the course instructor will be privy to the contents of one's journal. Please see schedule at the end of the syllabus for specific meeting times with the instructor.

BLOG ENTRY

Each participant is responsible for contributing one blog entry to the Theatre Practices blog while in Puerto Rico. **Students are assigned a given date, and are then responsible for capturing that day's experiences and reflecting on them** through text, annotated photos, links, videos, audio, or any combination of the above. In contrast to the ongoing journal assignment, the individual blog post represents one's formal writing for public consumption; as such, it should clearly indicate one's point-of-view and make meaning of personal experiences for the reading audience.

Each student is assigned a specific day of study that marks a unique point in the journey; blog posts should feel authentic, reflective, and should be written in the first person. There are no limits to this assignment, outside of the given time constraints. **Posts that favor depth over breadth are often the most successful,** especially when presented from a clear perspective. **Consider the following as you write:**

- Write toward a goal, a point, or a message, and keep it flowing. The authorial voice should be authentic and alive (rather than academic).

- Keep the writing active and in the present tense when possible. Tone is important as a blogger... humor, pith, and rhetorical devices are great tools. Try to choose something interesting to you (something you are passionate about). Write clearly, with grammar, spelling, and punctuation at the forefront (use spell check- PLEASE) The ideal blog post reads in about 4-5 minutes (1000 – 1100 words).
- Entries should be posted by **10AM the morning after** a student's given date. Login information, instructions for posting, and assignment details can be found at the end of the syllabus.

FINAL PROJECT: Original Applied Theatre Project Proposal

This project will be an individually designed and self-directed extension of each student's work in Puerto Rico. Students will meet individually with Dr. Smithner in San Juan to discuss, brainstorm and clear their ideas for final projects, making sure that expectations are clear, and needed structures are in place.

Participants will work individually to create a community or classroom engaged proposal for an original applied theatre project that could occur in the United States. The proposal should outline a project that you plan to do, summarizing how you will complete the project realistically, and what the major components of the project will be. You will function as the lead artist/investigator/teacher or facilitator for the project. You will introduce the proposal as an idea that you have for an applied theatre project to a potential partner, sponsor, or granting organization, which could be a public or private school (K – 12); a non-profit theatre company or presenting organization; an academic institution; or a social service organization.

The proposal must illustrate how the project is nested within the larger field of applied or educational theatre, through use of secondary sources in the course readings, and how it is influenced and informed by aesthetic practices or theoretical notions learned throughout the Puerto Rican study abroad experience. In other words, through your experience engaging in aspects of the course, interpreting them in your own way, and you will transform this new awareness into a plan.

The proposal will include five sections:

- 1) Overview/Introduction -- including the key questions that you, as the researcher or investigator, will explore. Identify your target audience, i.e. classroom, community group, artistic or social service organization.
- 2) Background and Significance -- clearly explain how this project fits into the targeted community, classroom or organization. How does your background, as well as your experience and potential contribute to the success of the proposed work?
- 3) Program Description, Procedures and Time Frame – what will you accomplish in the lesson/performance project/installation? Explain clearly what you plan to do. How will you logistically accomplish this within a given time frame?
- 4) Conclusion – sum up your goals briefly.
- 5) Bibliography – cite sources you used to inform the research/study.

The first 4 sections should not exceed 5 pages, excluding any charts, visuals and the Bibliography. Students should discuss, brainstorm and clear their ideas with Dr. Smithner.

Criteria for assessment:

- There is a well-specified plan, and the feasibility of undertaking the project is clear
- The timeline for the project is realistic

- Collaboration between lead artist/investigator and partner organization is logical and realistic
- The plan can represent a significant contribution to the field
- Evidence of connections and realizations made on the course
- Writing is delivered free of grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors and within the page limit

Journals and Final Projects are due on Friday, Feb 9th, 2017, by 10:00 PM. They can be turned in digitally (through NYUClasses) or in hard copy, at Nan's office (Pless Annex Room 223, 82 Washington Square East).

Assessment: Students will be assessed on the above criteria accordingly:

Attendance & Participation:	25%	Journal:	20%
Collaboration/Performance:	15%	Final Project:	25%
Blog:	15%		

Final grades will be published at the end of the spring semester, and will be assigned using NYU's published grading scale:

93-100%: A	90-92%: A-	88-89%: B+	83-87%: B	80-82%: B-
78-79%: C+	73-77%: C	70-72%: C-	68-69%: D+	63-67%: D
62% and less: F				

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (The following language has been modified from text on the school's site.)

Students are responsible for knowing the university's standards of academic honesty, as outlined in the student handbook. While the nature of this particular course demands open discussion of ideas and opinions, all creative work and individual assignments should be original, including citations for direct quotes and/or paraphrased text in APA as needed. If this is unclear, please make a point to meet with the instructor in advance of articulated due dates.

NYU Steinhardt's school-wide approach to suspected academic dishonesty begins with dialogue between the student and professor of note. The standard penalty for cheating/plagiarism and/or any other academic violation includes: referral of the incident to program and department chairs, as well as the Associate Dean for Student Affairs; if the incident represents a repeated violation, indicates unusual circumstances, and/or concludes with a recommendation for dismissal, faculty will refer the issue to the Committee on Student Discipline for resolution. In all cases, the student maintains the right to appeal action taken in accordance with the school's Student Discipline Within the Steinhardt School (outlined in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development Student's Guide).

The following is an excerpt from NYU Steinhardt's Statement on Academic Integrity: The relationship between students and faculty is the keystone of the educational experience in The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at New York University. This relationship takes an honor code for granted. Mutual trust, respect and responsibility are foundational requirements. Thus, how you learn is as important as what you learn. A university education aims not only to produce high quality scholars, but to also cultivate honorable citizens. Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do: from taking exams, making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others, and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours. You violate the principle of academic integrity when you:

- Cheat on an exam
- Submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from your professors

- Receive help on a take-home examination that calls for independent work
- Plagiarize

Plagiarism, one of the gravest forms of academic dishonesty in university life, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. In a community of scholars, whose members are teaching, learning and discovering knowledge, plagiarism cannot be tolerated. Plagiarism is the failure to properly assign authorship to a paper, a document, an oral presentation, a musical score and/or other materials, which are not your original work. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following:

- Copy verbatim from a book, an article or other media Download documents from the Internet
- Purchase documents
- Report from other's oral work
- Paraphrase or restate someone else's facts, analysis and/or conclusions
- Copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you

The Steinhardt School Statement on Academic Integrity is consistent with the New York University Policy on Student Conduct, published in the NYU Student Guide. **For more information visit:** http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PARTICULAR NEEDS

Participants are highly encouraged to open a dialogue with the instructor regarding particular learning, emotional, or physical needs that may influence interactions, participation, and most importantly, personal well-being, as an important goal for this course is the creation of a safe and inclusive forum for learning and communication. Disclosure of any needs or circumstances is of course optional, and all participants can expect that any communications made will be kept in confidence.

Note: Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212 998-4980, 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor. <http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html>

OPEN DOOR POLICY

If at any time participants feel unsafe or uncomfortable, please feel free to address these issues with the course director. Making an appointment to discuss concerns in person is recommended. This can be done via email or text.

EMAIL & NYUCLASSES

This class has an active NYUClasses site. Here, course participants can access the syllabus, readings, key documents, and additional resources. For this reason, it is imperative that all community members have an active NYU email account and check it on a regular basis, as course-related correspondence may be routed there (although immediate messages or changes in schedule may be relayed via text).

PROPOSED DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

MPAET-GE.2151 Theatre Practices
January 3 - 17, 2018
San Juan, Puerto Rico
Course Leader: Dr. Nan Smithner

Wednesday January 3

Opening Reception: **Hotel Miramar**, 606 Avenida Juan Ponce de Leon, Condado neighborhood of San Juan

- 6-7pm meet and greet
- 7-8pm Syllabus review (Q & A)

Thursday, January 4

- 9:00AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus to El Cascarón Studio: Meet in hotel lobby to travel together
- 10:00 Welcome and Ensemble Building: Nan Smithner, Rosa Luisa Marquez, Javier Cardona and Deborah Hunt
- 11:00 – 1:00PM Workshops begin: **Students have selected either Physical Theater and the dramaturgy of the actor (Javier Cardona) OR Building and performing with masks (Deborah Hunt)**
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own in Old San Juan
- 2:00 – 4:00PM Tour of Old San Juan (possible trip to El Morro)
- 4:00 – 6:00PM Visiting Deborah's Studio, Physical Theatre group return to Cascaron
- 6:00PM Dinner on your own in Old San Juan (we propose dining as a group but this is not required)
- Return to hotel on your own, or with the group if you like

Friday, January 5

- 9:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 10:00 – 1:00PM Morning Workshops – Masks and Physical Theatre
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 – 6:00PM Workshops continue
- 6 – 8PM Dinner on your own

- 8:15PM Performance: “Cuento/Tale 53 Snowwhite” by Deborah Hunt @ Cascaron

Saturday, January 6

Three Kings Day: Puerto Rican Holiday – Festivities in Old San Juan

- 9:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 10:00 – 1:00PM Theatre of the Oppressed Workshop #1 with Rosa Luisa
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 - 5:00PM Possible children’s show directed by Maritza Perez: Location TBA

Sunday, January 7

- 9:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 10:00 – 1:00PM Morning Workshops in Mask and Physical Theatre
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 - 6:00PM Workshops continue
- Evening free

Monday, January 8

- 9:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 10:00 – 1:00PM Morning Workshops in Mask and Physical Theatre
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 - 6:00PM Workshops continue
- 8:00PM Dress rehearsal of Hij@s de Bernarda at El Cascaron

Tuesday, January 9

- 8:30AM Students congregate to travel to University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras on public transportation
-
- 10:00AM – 1:00PM Workshop # 2 with Rosa Luisa Marquez @ UPR
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- 1:00PM – 2:30PM -- Lunch together in Rio Piedras
- 2:30PM – 6:00PM – Exploring Rio Piedras OR visit to the MAC: TBA
- 4:00 – 6:00PM – Travel back to Old San Juan, Dinner on your own in Old San Juan

- Evening – Workshops may continue TBA

Wednesday, January 10

- 8:15AM Depart for Antonio Martorell's Studio in Ponce. Assemble 8AM in front of hotel.
- 10:00AM – 12PM Arrive in Ponce, workshop with Antonio Martorell
- 12:30 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own and explore Ponce
- 2:00 – 3:30 visit to Museo de Arte de Ponce
- 3:30PM Return to San Juan on the bus/meetings with Nan Smithner
- 5 – 8pm one on one meetings with Nan
- Evening free

Thursday, January 11

DAY OFF

Friday, January 12

- 9:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 10:00 – 1:00PM Morning Workshops in Mask and Physical Theatre
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 - 5:00PM Workshop and lecture with Jessica Gaspar, @ Bastion
- 5:00 – 8:00PM Dinner on your own/midpoint meetings with Nan Smithner @ hotel

Saturday, January 13

- 8:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 9:00 – 11:00PM Workshop # 3 with Rosa Luisa
- 11:00 – 1:00PM Planning for MAC workshops with Rosa Luisa & Nan
- 1:00 – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 – 6:00PM Workshops at the MAC
- Evening TBD: possible performance or discussion of Ay Maria, directed by Maritza Perez, @ Bastion

Sunday, January 14

- **Morning off**
- 1.00 - 6.00PM Workshops continue in Mask and Physical Theatre

Monday, January 15

- 9:30AM Travel to Old San Juan via public bus
- 10:00 – 1:00PM Morning Workshops @ El Cascaron
- 1:00 – 2.00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 – 6:00PM Workshops at the MAC
- 8:00PM Open rehearsal of Zapatera, directed by Rosa Luisa

Tuesday, January 16

Performances may be at the MAC or El Cascaron

- 10:00 -- 1.00PM Final Dress Rehearsals for Performances
- 1:00PM – 2:00PM Lunch on your own
- 2:00 – 4:00PM Group sets up and prepares for Performance
- 4:00 - 6:00PM Final presentations by NYU students
- 6:00 - 9:00 PM Closing dinner and Fiesta (NYU to host, Location TBD)

Wednesday, January 17

End of Academic Program -- Participants Depart Puerto Rico

