



Study abroad.

SYLLABUS

THE PLAY'S THE THING: WRITING FOR THE STAGE

Instructor: Althea Stewart

Contact Hrs: 39

Language of Instruction: English

LONDON, ENGLAND (ILACA)

This course is aimed at encouraging students to find their own way into writing for the stage. Over the semester, we will be going to contemporary theatre in London. Students will be asked to observe particular areas of theatre practice to heighten awareness. Post-show class discussions will be a vital part of the course.

Throughout the semester we will focus on Narrative and the various ways a story can be told.

We will explore

- a) Structure
 - b) Character
 - c) Language
 - d) Plot
 - e) Image and its use in narrative
 - f) Staging. How does a theatre director realise a script
 - g) Lighting and Sound. How do these skills affect narrative.
 - h) Naturalism, Expressionism, Absurdism, Epic Theatre with reference to Shakespeare and Bertolt Brecht.
 - i) The importance of myth. We will watch the film of Mephisto as a stimulus and also as a reference to uses of Expressionism and politics.
 - j) Personal script problems and how to overcome them.
- The use of improvisation storyboards.

THEATRE VISITS

We will be watching a cross section of contemporary London theatre which will be discussed in class and used as a springboard for students' own writing.

OTHER VISITS IN LONDON

We will visit a museum or art gallery to explore how external stimuli can influence the writer's imagination.

FINAL EXAMINATION

Students will be expected to write a small play which will be graded at the end of the semester. This final text will account for 70% of their grades. The other 30% is for class debate and four early drafts of this playlet. Reading work out loud and class critique will be an important part of class work. No grades will be given until half way through the semester.

READINGS

Julia Pascal's play Theresa (which we will watch as a DVD)
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Eugene Ionesco's RHINOCEROS
Max Frisch's THE FIRE RAISERS
Peter Brook's THE EMPTY SPACE
Martin Esslin's THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

Please note that because the London courses are able to take advantage of the numerous and ever changing exhibits, theatre programs, and local offerings that some topics are subject to change. Please visit the AHA London Centre website at www.ahalondon.org.uk/ for the current syllabus.