Committee on Theater and Performance Studies

Website: https://arts.uchicago.edu/theater-and-performance-studies

Core Faculty

Chair

• David Levin, Departments of Germanic Studies and Cinema & Media Studies

Professors

• Philip Bohlman, Department of Music
• Thomas Christensen, Department of Music
• Martha Feldman, Department of Music
• Theaster Gates, Department of Visual Arts
• Tom Gunning, Departments of Cinema & Media Studies and Art History
• Elaine Hadley, Department of English Language & Literature
• Loren Kruger, Departments of English Language & Literature and Comparative Literature
• Larry Norman, Department of Romance Languages & Literatures
• Freddie Rokem, Wiegeland Visiting Professor of Theater & Performance Studies
• Yuri Tsivian, Departments of Art History, Cinema & Media Studies, Comparative Literature, and Slavic Languages & Literatures
• Judith Zeitlin, Department of East Asian Languages & Civilizations

Associate Professors

• Berthold Hoeckner, Department of Music
• Matthew Jesse Jackson, Departments of Art History and Visual Arts
• Agnes Lugo-Ortiz, Department of Romance Languages & Literatures
• Sarah Nooter, Department of Classics
• William Pope.L, Department of Visual Arts
• Steven Rings, Department of Music
• Catherine Sullivan, Department of Visual Arts
Committee on Theater and Performance Studies

- Christopher Wild, Department of Germanic Studies

Assistant Professors

- Seth Brodsky, Department of Music
- Ariel Fox, Department of East Asian Languages & Civilizations
- John Muse, Department of English Language & Literature
- Rocco Rubini, Department of Romance Languages & Literatures

Professors of Practice

- Leslie Buxbaum Danzig, Assistant Professor of Practice in Theater & Performance Studies
- Annie Dorsen, Visiting Assistant Professor of Practice in Theater & Performance Studies

Emeritus Faculty

- David Bevington, Departments of English Language & Literature and Comparative Literature

Lecturers

- Heidi Coleman, Director of Undergraduate Studies
- Shade Murray
- David New
- Pamela Pascoe
- Jessica Wardell

Staff

- Laura Ashlock, Production Manager of University Theater
- Carla Barger, Coordinator for the Center for Theater & Performance Studies
Overview

The PhD program in Theater & Performance Studies is a joint degree program that affords students rigorous and comparative work across two disciplines. Students develop a program of study within TAPS that reflects their particular training and interests, and pursue that program together with a degree from an affiliated department: Art History (http://arthistory.uchicago.edu), Cinema & Media Studies (http://cms.uchicago.edu), Classics (http://classics.uchicago.edu), East Asian Languages & Civilizations (http://ealc.uchicago.edu), English Language and Literature (http://english.uchicago.edu), Germanic Studies (http://german.uchicago.edu), Music (http://music.uchicago.edu), or Romance Languages & Literatures (http://rll.uchicago.edu). Students may also extend their curricular experience through the development of performance work, engaging national and international artists in intellectual and artistic collaborations. Graduates are well prepared for professional opportunities in a variety of fields within and beyond the academy.

The program consists of five main components: course work, artistic work, oral examinations, a joint PhD dissertation, and teaching. Compared to single degree programs, we expect the joint degree to involve up to an additional year of coursework.

The TAPS program option in the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH) (http://maph.uchicago.edu/theater-and-performance-studies-option) offers a concentrated introduction to the comparative aspirations and rigorous expectations of TAPS at the University of Chicago. For more information about the TAPS option in the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH), including details about admissions and aid, visit the program’s website (http://maph.uchicago.edu).

The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Students cannot receive a stand-alone PhD in TAPS. Rather, they enter through another department and pursue their degree jointly with that other discipline. Degree requirements for the combined degree in TAPS will of necessity vary slightly from student to student.
in order to accommodate the requirements of the participating entry departments, but all candidates are required to complete the following minimum requirements. Each student will take a total of 12 courses toward the TAPS degree, typically by the end of the third year. The coursework in TAPS will include:

1. A two-course graduate sequence in the History and Theory of Theater and Performance, designed to provide a rigorous introduction to advanced study in the discipline.
2. Three TAPS-related seminars within the entry department, to be determined in consultation with the advisor.
3. Five courses outside the entry department.
   - Three courses in theater or performance practice (e.g., advanced acting, directing, set design, choreography, etc.).
   - Two seminars, selected in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies that complement the student’s disciplinary training.
4. Two-Term qualifying paper and/or performance project.

In addition, students in TAPS will be expected to:

- Participate in the TAPS graduate workshop (https://cas.uchicago.edu/workshops/theaterperformancestudies). The TAPS workshop brings together students and faculty to discuss work in progress as well as current research in the wider field of Theater and Performance Studies.
- Complete two internships in theater or performance practice with a professional theater, dance, or performance company. At least one of the internships should be completed over the summer (e.g., with the Chicago Performance Lab), while the other can be completed outside of Chicago with one of our national or international partners.

**Qualifying Examination and Dissertation Proposal**

Students are expected to complete the Qualifying Exam in TAPS at the outset of the fourth year and to prepare a dissertation proposal and assemble a dissertation committee by the end of the fourth year.

- The qualifying exam is an oral exam based on a reading list of 20–30 works and a brief thesis paper (5-10 pp.) summarizing key issues and concepts guiding the student’s intellectual agenda. The exam provides an opportunity for the student to look back and lend coherence to his or her coursework and also to look forward to the dissertation proposal and to the longer-term project of developing a profile as a scholar, artist, or scholar-artist.
• The dissertation proposal and dissertation committee should reflect the program’s joint nature by including at least one faculty member from the Committee on TAPS. The exact structure of a student’s dissertation proposal will be determined in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies of the entry department. Ideally, the proposal should be approximately 15-20 pages in length and should detail three things: (1) the scholarly and artistic stakes of the project; (2) the methodologies to be employed; and (3) a detailed outline of the planned chapters and, if appropriate, the planned creative work. The proposal should be completed and defended one quarter after the Ph.D. exam (not counting the summer) and no later than the end of the fourth year. The dissertation should be completed no later than the end of the sixth year.

Fellowships

Students admitted to doctoral study are typically awarded a five-year fellowship package that includes full tuition, academic year stipends, summer stipends, and medical insurance. Pedagogical training is a vital part of the educational experience at the University, so all fellowships include a required teaching component.

Practical Opportunities

TAPS offers students access to a strong network of professionals throughout the area. There are many opportunities to develop administrative skills and technical training, understand the inner workings of a theater company, and forge substantial contacts in the theater community. Chicago’s theater scene is collaborative and inclusive. UChicago faculty and students have collaborated with a variety of partners on campus as well as companies throughout the greater Chicago area, including:

About Face Theatre (http://aboutfacetheatre.com)


Court Theatre (http://www.courttheatre.org)

Doc Films (http://docfilms.uchicago.edu/dev)

Every House Has a Door (http://www.everyhousehasadoor.org)

First Floor Theater (http://www.firstfloortheater.com)

Goodman Theater (https://www.goodmantheatre.org)
The House Theatre (http://www.thehousetheatre.com)

Hubbard Street Dance (http://www.hubbardstreetdance.com)

The Hypocrites (http://www.the-hypocrines.com)

Joffrey Ballet (http://www.joffrey.org)

Lookingglass Theatre (http://lookingglasstheatre.org)

Lucky Plush Productions (http://luckyplush.com)

Manual Cinema (http://manualcinema.com)

Neo-Futurists (http://neofuturists.org)

Second City (http://www.secondcity.com)

Steppenwolf Theatre Company (https://www.steppenwolf.org)

Theater Oobleck (http://www.theateroobleck.com)

University Theater (https://arts.uchicago.edu/theater-and-performance-studies/performing-groups/university-theater)

Victory Gardens Theater (http://victorygardens.org)

Writers Theatre (http://www.writerstheatre.org)

**Foreign Language Requirement**

Students must adhere to the Foreign Language Requirement of the entry department.

**Teaching Requirements**

Students in a joint degree program need to meet teaching requirements of their entry department. In conjunction with that requirement and in consultation with the Directors of
Graduate Studies in the entry department and TAPS, they are expected to teach two quarters of courses related to TAPS. This could take the form of teaching a section in the TAPS core, or a teaching assistantship or instructorship for a TAPS-related course in the entry department. Two annotated syllabi for courses in Theater and Performance Studies - one undergraduate, one graduate - will form part of each student’s Ph.D. exam materials.

How to Apply

The application process for admission and financial aid for all graduate programs in the Division of the Humanities is administered by the Divisional Office of the Dean of Students. The Application for Admission and Financial Aid, with instructions, deadlines and department specific information is available online at http://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/admissions. Questions about admissions and aid should be directed to humanitiesadmissions@uchicago.edu or (773) 702-1552.

Theater and Performance Studies Courses

**TAPS 31440. Court Theater Artist Master Class. 100 Units.**
This advanced acting class will develop the actor’s ability to apply contemporary acting technique to the performance of classical roles. Additionally, there will be opportunities to attend different stages of the rehearsal process for Harvey at Court Theatre, question the process techniques observed, and learn from guest lecturers affiliated with Chicago’s top classical theatres. ATTENDANCE AT FIRST CLASS SESSION IS MANDATORY.
Instructor(s): T. Kane Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 21440

**TAPS 32312. Virtual Theaters. 100 Units.**
This course probes the nature and limits of theater by exploring a range of theatrical texts whose relation to performances are either partially or fully virtual. Like the works we will read, the course transgresses disciplinary, generic, and temporal boundaries, bringing together from various centuries philosophical dialogues (Plato), closet dramas, novel chapters in dramatic form (Melville’s Moby-Dick, Joyce’s Ulysses), radio drama, nonsense drama, and new media forms that test conventional definitions of theatrical performance: twitter theater, digital theater, algorithmic theater, and transmedia games.
Instructor(s): J. Muse Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 32312
TAPS 32600. Chance in Performance. 100 Units.
The course will cover the historical, theoretical and practical issues surrounding the use of chance in artistic production, with an emphasis on how these techniques have been used in live performance. We begin with the historical avant-garde, particularly Dada and Duchamp, continue with mid-century experiments by Cage/Cunningham and Fluxus artists, and finish with contemporary work like “No Dice” of Nature Theatre of Oklahoma and “Algorithmic Noir” by Eve Sussman. By creating performance projects using, or responding to, the techniques studied, students will have an opportunity to develop their own critical and practice-based point of view.
Instructor(s): A. Dorsen Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 22600

TAPS 34879. Theater and Performance in Latin America. 100 Units.
This course is an introduction to theatre, performance, and visual art in Latin America and the Caribbean. We will examine the intersection of performance and social life by looking at performance practices in key historical moments in Latin America and the Caribbean. We ask: how have embodied practice, theatre and visual art been used to negotiate particular moments in Latin American history? We will study performances during independence, revolution, dictatorships, processes of democratization, truth and reconciliation, as well as the rise of neoliberalism. In our investigation, we will pay close attention to how ideologies of race, gender, and sexuality are articulated and disseminated within these performances at critical historical junctures. Our corpus may include blackface performance traditions in the Caribbean, indigenous performance, queer performance and we will look closely at the artistic works of Coco Fusco, Neo Bustamante, Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis, Yuyachkani, Griselda Gámbaro, and others. We will also read key theoretical work in Performance Studies including the work Joseph Roach, Richard Schechner, Diana Taylor, Jill Lane, and others.
Instructor(s): D. Roper Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 28479 ,SPAN 39117,LACS 29117,LACS 39117,GNSE 29117,GNSE 39117,CRES 29117,CRES 39117,SPAN 29117

TAPS 36400. Post-Dramatic Theater. 100 Units.
This class sets out to explore the gamut of contemporary experimental theater, encompassing its varied theories and practices. Using Hans-Thies Lehmann’s path-breaking study Postdramatic Theatre as an ongoing point of reference, we consider a diverse array of practices from an eclectic group of artists spanning a broad range of eras and theatrical cultures (e.g., Elevator Repair Service, Forced Entertainment, Richard Foreman, Heiner Müller, Theater Oobleck, SheShePop, Robert Wilson) in a format that encompasses seminar-style discussion and laboratory-style practical experimentation. Team-taught by Seth Bockley (Chicago-based director) and David Levin (Chair of TAPS). Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.
Instructor(s): David J. Levin, Seth Bockley Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 36401
TAPS 36500. The Contemporary Sublime. 100 Units.
This class uses Annie Dorsen's upcoming performance project “The Great Outdoors” as a frame within which to explore contemporary notions of the sublime as both an aesthetic and a political imaginary. Our readings include a survey of the classic texts (Longinus, Burke, Kant) as well as modern and contemporary writers (Lyotard, Nye, Costa) as a way into formulating hypotheses about the position of the sublime in our hyper-linked and environmentally fragile era. Practice-based experiments and exercises will respond to the readings, offering an opportunity to test ideas against their applications.
Instructor(s): A. Dorsen Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Attendance at first class meeting is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 26500
TAPS 36510. Drama/Theatre/Performance and Philosophy. 100 Units.
This seminar will explore the multi-faceted interactions between the discursive practices of Drama/Theatre/Performance and Philosophy which have recently become a central focus for theatre and performance studies. The course will explore two interrelated and closely connected dramatic, performative and philosophical constellations: Sophocles' Theban Plays, Plato's Symposium and selected passages from Aristotle's Poetics, on the one hand, and a selection of texts by Kafka, Benjamin and Brecht as well as some of Brecht's key productions like his Antigone and Mother Courage and her Children and the Model-Books that were composed on the basis of these productions.

The theoretical discussions and the dramaturgical exercises will focus on the following issues and the connections between them:

1. The agon and the encounter
2. Violence and the ludic logic of tragedy
3. Entrances, exits and supernatural interventions
4. Models 'for' and models 'of' theatrical and performative practices
5. Dramaturgies of thinking and doing

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Instructor(s): F. Rokem Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 26510
TAPS 36550. Shakespeare's History Plays. 100 Units.
This course on Shakespeare's English history plays will adopt an unusual stratagem of reading the plays in order of the historical events they depict: that is, starting with King John, who ruled England from 1199 until his death in 1216, down to Henry VIII (1509-47), the father of Queen Elizabeth. The emphasis will be on the great plays, Richard II, Henry IV Parts 1 and II, Henry V, and Richard III. My hope is that this approach will enable us to explore Shakespeare's concept of English history over a large sweep of time. (D, E)
Instructor(s): D. Bevington Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 36550,FNDL 21405,TAPS 16550,ENGL 16550

TAPS 38410. Ingmar Bergman: Cinema & Theater. 100 Units.
This course will focus on cinematographic representations of theatrical and other artistic practices, primarily exemplified by many of Ingmar Bergman's films (e.g. The Seventh Seal and Fanny and Alexander) but also in the work of other film-directors. It will explore historical and theoretical issues related to the mutual interactions between cinema and theatre also discussing cinematographic techniques in playwriting as exemplified in plays by Henrik Ibsen (e.g. Peer Gynt) and August Strindberg (e.g. A Dream Play and The Ghost Sonata).

Throughout most of his creative career Bergman worked both in theatre and film and even if he is mostly known outside of Sweden as a film director, his theatrical career was as innovative. The work of the film-auteur and the theatre director are for Bergman closely connected, not only through the actors he worked with – during summers for the screen and during the theatre seasons in stage productions – but also through the choice of themes, which are often in direct dialogue with each other in the two media, generating complex meta-aesthetic, inter-medial discourses, depicting and problematizing the work and role of the artist in a broad range of social and ideological contexts.

Interested 3rd and 4th year undergraduates allowed by ins

Instructor(s): F. Rokem Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 28310

TAPS 38422. Opera in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility. 100 Units.
Focusing on a diverse set of productions of Mozart’s "The Magic Flute" by Ingmar Bergman, William Kentridge, Martin Kusej, Simon McBurney, and Julie Taymor, we will seek to locate opera in the contemporary medial landscape, exploring some of the theoretical stakes, dramaturgical challenges, and interpretive achievements that characterize opera on film, DVD, and via live-streaming. Readings by W. Benjamin, T. W. Adorno, F. Jameson, M. Dolar, C. Abbate, P. Auslander, et al.
Instructor(s): D. Levin Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 37717,TAPS 28422,CMST 28301,CMST 38301,MUSI 24517,MUSI 34517,GRMN 27717
TAPS 38427. Comedy Central. 100 Units.
Comedy is a serious subject and art is no laughing matter, but levity displays a type of intelligence that is both profound and nimble and must be met on its own terms. Toward that end, this interdisciplinary seminar will investigate: the various modes through which comedy infects contemporary art, questions of form in the art of comedy, performative objects, the object of comedic performance, and the seriousness of play. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor(s) required; English and DOVA students will have priority.
Instructor(s): L. Berlant Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Advanced undergraduates admitted with the consent of instructor
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 32407

TAPS 38432. Imagining Futures: Speculative Design and Social Justice. 100 Units.
This experimental course seeks to disrupt dominant narratives about “the future”: a monolithic concept that often comes from technologists and policymakers. Instead, we explore what alternative futures might look like when imagined by and with marginalized communities. Beginning with movements such as Afrofuturism, we will read speculative and science fiction across media, including short stories, critical theory, novels, films, transmedia narratives, and digital games. Rather than merely analyzing or theorizing various futures, this course will prepare students in hands-on methods of “speculative design” and “critical making.” Instead of traditional midterm essays and final research papers, the work of the course will consist primarily of blog responses to shared readings, coupled with short-form, theoretically-founded, and collaborative art projects. These projects will imagine alternative futures of climate change, gender, public health, finance, policing, and labor. The work will be challenging, transdisciplinary, and will blur expectations about the relationship between theory and practice at every turn. As such, it is not a course for the craven; it is a course for students who wish to explore the complexities of collaboration and the sociopolitical possibilities of art. (B, H)

Instructor(s): P. Jagoda and T. Soundararajan Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 31110, ARTV 21110, ARTV 31110, CMST 21110, CMST 31110, TAPS 28432, ENGL 21110
TAPS 38495. Literature and Performance in Medieval Japan. 100 Units.
This course acquaints students with some of the major genres of medieval Japanese literature and performance, including setsuwa (explanatory tales), sarugaku (“monkey music”) and dengaku (“field music”), imayō (popular songs), gunki monogatari (warrior tales), and the noh and kyōgen theaters. We will explore the religious, social, and political contexts from which these genres emerge, as well as the rich and intricate ways in which performance and literature overlap throughout the medieval period. Specific topics of interest include the significance of “medievality” in conceptions of Japanese culture, the shifting relationship between elite and commoner culture, the emergence of a “national” culture, and the role of women authors and performers. We will read primary texts in translation, examine visual materials, and watch and listen to recordings of contemporary performances. Additionally, we will read relevant secondary scholarship in order to broaden our understanding of both the medieval texts themselves and their reception over time and space. No Japanese language ability is necessary, although students who have taken Japanese literature or culture courses will be particularly well prepared.
Instructor(s): A. Lazarus Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 34810, TAPS 28495, EALC 24810

TAPS 41451. Palace of Lasting Life: History, Drama, Fantasy. 100 Units.
This course covers the history of Chinese theater from its emergence as a full-fledged art form in the 10th-11th centuries (the Northern Song) up through its incorporation into modern urban life and nationalist discourse in the first decades of the 20th century (the Republican period). In addition to reading selections from masterpieces of Chinese dramatic literature such as Orphan of Zhao, Romance of the Western Chamber, The Peony Pavilion, we will pay particular attention to the different types of venues, occasions, and performance practices associated with different genres of opera at different moments in time. A central theme will be the changing status of the entertainer and the cultural meanings assigned to acting. All texts to be read in English translation, but students are also encouraged to read Chinese texts in the original if feasible.
Instructor(s): J. Zeitlin Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Good command of classical Chinese.
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 41451

TAPS 46016. Senecan Tragedy. 100 Units.
In this course we will read all of Seneca's eight genuine surviving tragedies in translation and several in the original, together with major scholarship on the plays and related issues. Special focus will be given to the relationship between Seneca's dramatic poems and Stoic philosophy.
Instructor(s): D. Wray Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): LATN 46016
TAPS 59306. Performance Theory: Action, Affect, Archive. 100 Units.
This PhD seminar offers a critical introduction to performance theory and its applications not only to theatre but also to performance on film and, more controversially, to ‘performativity’ to fictional and other texts that have nothing directly to do with performance. The seminar will be organized around three key conceptual clusters:

.a) action, acting, and other forms of production or play, in theories from the classical (Aristotle) through the modern (Hegel, Brecht, Artaud), to the contemporary (Richard Schechner, Philip Zarilli, and others)

.b) affect, and its intersections with emotion and feeling: in addition to the impact of contemporary theories of affect and emotion (Massumi, Sedgwick) on performance theory (Erin Hurley), we will read earlier modern texts that anticipate recent debates (Diderot, Freud) and their current interpreters (Joseph Roach, Tim Murray and others), as well as those writing about the absence of affect and the performance of failure (Sara Bailes and others)

.c) archives and related institutions, practices and theories of recording performance, including the formation of audiences (Susan Bennett and with evaluating print and other media yielding evidence of ephemeral acts, including the work of theorists of memory (Pierre Nora) and remains (Rebecca Schneider), theatre historians (Rose Bank, Jody Enders, Tracy Davis and others) as well as current theorists on the tensions between the archive and the repertoire (Diana

Instructor(s): L. Kruger Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Requirements: one or two oral presentations of assigned texts and final paper. To prepare PhDs for professional writing, final paper will take the form of a review article (ca 5000 words) examining key concepts in the field and the controversies they may engender, by way of two recent books that tackle these concepts
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 6220, ENGL 59306
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.