This seminar delves into the remarkably rich array of drama and performance created in English over the last 15 years. (A few exceptions to that start-date noted below.) Some playwrights listed here have been important cultural presences for many years; we’ll read their latest and, in some cases, riskiest work. Other, younger writers, now helping to create venues for new drama, have presented only a few plays so far. We’ll also drop in on the contemporary avant-garde. Several vibrant companies, heirs to the iconoclastic theaters that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, are rethinking the nature of spectacle in disorienting and occasionally disturbing ways.

A number of these playwrights and companies depict a world of rising moral and political anxiety. Others grapple with history on an ambitiously large scale. Still other artists contract their focus to a family, a relationship, or even a single individual—an intimate scale that allows us to see in richly nuanced detail the emotional effects of vast social changes. Taken together, these works provide a panoramic view of a period uncommonly rich in invention, full of daring artistic responses to challenging times.

**June 30:** Sarah Ruhl: *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* (2009)
Richard Nelson: *Sweet and Sad* (2011)
**Viewing:** *Sweet and Sad
Habit* (dir. David Levine, 2010-12; excerpt):
[https://vimeo.com/18569712/b143f4bd4b](https://vimeo.com/18569712/b143f4bd4b)

**July 2:** Young Jean Lee: *The Shipment* (2008)
**Viewing:** *The Shipment*

**July 7:** Clare Barron: *Dance Nation* (2018)
**Viewing:** Richard Maxwell: *Isolde* (2014)

**July 9:** Branden Jacobs-Jenkins: *An Octoroon* (2014)
**Viewing:** *An Octoroon*

**July 14:** Will Eno: *Middletown* (2010)
**Viewing:** *Middletown* (optional)

**July 16:** Lucas Hnath: *Dana H.* (2019)
Viewing: *The Myopia*

**July 17: Short paper due by 11:59 PM**

Rachel Anderson-Rabern: “The Nature Theater of Oklahoma’s Aesthetics of Fun”
Sara Jane Bailes: “Dislocations of Practice: Elevator Repair Service”
Viewing: Nature Theater of Oklahoma: *Romeo and Juliet*
Elevator Repair Service: *The Select (The Sun Also Rises)* (2011)
*Gatz* (2005-10) (excerpt)

Alice Birch: *Revolt. She said. Revolt again.* (2014)
Viewing: Gob Squad: *Super Night Shot* (2005)


July 30: Tim Crouch: *The Author* (2009)

**July 31: Final paper due by 11:59 PM**

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Requirements and Grading Breakdown:

Engaged participation in class (20%)
Eight blog posts on Canvas (20%)
One 6-8-page essay (topic approved by me in advance) (25%)
One 10-12-page essay (topic approved by me in advance) (35%)

Editions:

*(Many electronic editions are available through the Yale Library; you may also use other publishers’ editions.)*

Jeremy O. Harris: *Slave Play* (Theatre Communications Group)
Richard Nelson: *The Apple Family* (Theatre Communications Group)
Young Jean Lee: *The Shipment* (Theatre Communications Group)
Sarah Ruhl: *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play* (Theatre Communications Group)
Annie Baker: *The Antipodes* (Theater Communications Group)
Will Eno: *Middletown* (Theatre Communications Group)
Jackie Sibblies Drury: *Fairview* (Theatre Communications Group)
Tim Crouch: *The Author* (Oberon Books)
Alice Birch: *Revolt. She said. Revolt again.* (Oberon)
David Harrower: *Blackbird* (Faber)
Jennifer Haley: *The Nether* (Northwestern Univ. Press)
Lucy Prebble: *The Effect* (Bloomsbury/Methuen)
Martin McDonagh: *The Pillowman* (FSG/Faber)
Sarah DeLappe: *The Wolves* (Overlook)
Branden Jacobs-Jenkins: *Appropriate/An Octoroon* (Theatre Communications Group)

*Texts not in book form (under Files) and videos (under Media Library) are on the Canvas server.*

**Academic integrity:**

Academic integrity is a core institutional value at Yale. It means, among other things, truth in presentation, diligence and precision in citing works and ideas we have used, and acknowledging our collaborations with others. In view of our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity, the following forms of behavior are prohibited: cheating on examinations, problem sets, and all other forms of assessment; falsification and/or fabrication of data; plagiarism, that is, the failure in an essay or other written exercise to acknowledge ideas, research, or language taken from others; and multiple submission of the same work without obtaining explicit written permission from both instructors before the material is submitted. Students found guilty of violations of academic integrity are subject to disciplinary action.