

MW 1:00-4:15pm  
THST S393 (CRN: 30936)  
Session B, July 1 - August 2

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CA: TBD

## Modern Drama in Literature and Art

### Course Description

This seminar reads illustrative texts of dramatic literature from the Anglo-European world in, roughly, the twentieth century and the two adjacent "turns of the century." We will read with an eye toward discovering the unique ways authors adjusted theatrical form, content, and event to new conditions of modernity. We will link developments in modern drama with those in modern art by periodic visits to the Yale Art Gallery.

### Schedule

*Readings and viewings are due prior to the meeting.*

*\*If you can read the works in the original language, please do.*

*[Indicates suggested material.]*

**July 1** Georg Büchner, *Woyzeck*, trans. Carl Mueller\* (available as PDF in Canvas)

**July 3** Frank Wedekind, *Spring's Awakening*, trans. Eric Bentley\*

**July 8** Avant-Garde movements: Futurism, Surrealism.

**July 10** Sophie Treadwell, *Machinal* and Expressionism.

[Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (film)]

**July 15** Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest\**, trans. Miller

**July 17** Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

**July 22** Sam Shepard, *True West*

**July 24** Maria Irene Fornes, *Fefu and Her Friends*

**July 29** Suzan-Lori Parks, *Venus*

Visit to the [Yale Cushing Center](#).

**July 31** Anna Deavere Smith, *Fires in the Mirror*

*This syllabus is subject to change. Changes, if any, will be announced with at least 48 hours' notice, and you are responsible for such changes and for information sent to your yale.edu email address.*

### Readings

The texts are available to you in three formats.

*Please choose which method suits your reading needs best.*

- Buy the play at the [Yale Bookstore](#).

- Read the play in hard copy at the Reserves Desk at [Yale's Bass Library](#).
- Read the play online through the Canvas Course Reserves page. (You can also find the play in the [Yale Orbis catalogue](#) and link to it electronically from there.)

Note: Translation matters. For plays written in a language other than English, we will all read the same English translation indicated on the syllabus.

*Be prepared to read from the plays each session by bringing the text to class.*

### Requirements and Grading

**Attendance is required at each seminar meeting for Yale Summer Session.** It goes quickly, and you simply can't cover the content of the course if you miss. The only grounds for excused absences are documented cases of illness, family emergency, or religious holiday observance. For religious holidays, alert me at least two weeks in advance. If you miss more than one meeting, you will not pass the course.

**Preparedness and participation.** 40% Read and view the assigned materials. Think and speak about the work. Participate in group discussions!

**Weekly discussion prompts.** 30% *Due Wednesdays at noon.* Each week, please come prepared with a few sentences responding to this prompt:

Select one device we have discussed in the class (ex. plot, characterization, imagery, etc.) and analyze its use in this week's plays. How do the playwrights wield this tool differently and to what end?

**Final Paper.** Due August 1, 5pm, via email. Guidelines available on Canvas. 30%.

### Bonus Invitation!

We encourage you to see a play at the Yale Summer Cabaret. Details will be shared.

### **Course Accommodations**

If you have already established accommodations with Student Accessibility Services (SAS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course. If you have not yet established services through SAS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but are not limited to: mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact SAS at (203) 432-2324 to make an appointment. General information for students can be found on the Get Started page of SAS's website (<https://sas.yale.edu>). SAS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s), and SAS. It is important to Yale University to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

**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 Code of Conduct specifically prohibits the following forms of behavior: cheating on examinations, problem sets and all other forms of assessment; falsification and/or fabrication of data; plagiarism, that is, the failure in a dissertation, 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 or dismissal.

**Content Warnings and Discussions.** *(This language is crafted by Sophie Siegel-Warren, and it speaks for both of us.)*

The plays we will be reading together navigate and depict a range of difficult human experiences. I will let you know ahead of each week if the work you'll be reading for the following class contains material or language that some students may find offensive, traumatic, or otherwise upsetting. I encourage everyone to be mindful of how the materials and histories we discuss interact with their own bodies and the bodies of our classroom community: what for some might be a theoretical concept read on a page might be a lived experience for others. I ask you all to commit to one another with mutual care as we deal with diverse subject matter and to help to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity.

As we read these plays and ask how to represent them on the theatrical stage, I encourage you to take the time and space you need to participate to the best of your ability. I understand that you want to be here, just as I understand that there may be content that makes you so uncomfortable that it gets in the way of your learning. You always have the option to excuse yourself if this is the case. You will still, however, be responsible for material that you miss, so if you leave the room for a significant time, please arrange to get notes from another student or see me individually. Please reach out if you have any questions; I am available to talk through any of the course material or readings.

**Tutoring** is available to you this summer, at no charge, through Yale's Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Language Study. Take advantage of this as soon as you can by connecting through the website: <https://summer.yale.edu/admitted-students/summer-session-tutoring>. For tutoring specifically in writing, the Yale College Writing Center offers free, one-on-one writing help to all students enrolled in Yale Summer Session. To reserve an appointment or drop-in during a Zoom shift, visit: <https://yaleuniversity.mywconline.com/>.

### **Class Time**

According to the rules for theater established by AEA (Actor's Equity Association), teams must have a 5-minute break for every 55 minutes of rehearsal and a 10-minute break for every 80 minutes of rehearsal. I've always found that these guidelines suit my own attention span and physical comfort pretty well, so I'll apply them, albeit loosely, to our class. A typical class might look like this:

1-1:55            Class

*5-minute break*

2-3:20            Class

*10-minute break*

3:30-4:15        Class