

The Performing Body: Theories of Performance and Dance

Time: Monday 6:30pm

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This class will examine the body as a generator of political possibilities, alternative narratives and subversive tactics, highlighting the body as continuous performing entity. In this class students will learn to define performativity and performance through the lens of: ritual, everyday life, politics and social constructs. Using the critical theory we acquire in the first section of the course, students will then begin to learn about the history of modern dance and its development into contemporary dance, linking movement to social movements. Ultimately students will uncover the political potential of dance as tool for opposition, re-imagination and heteronormative defiance. They will physically use their bodies to explore the writings we encounter in class. Each session will be divided into two parts. Part one of each session will be used to discuss the readings. Part two will be dedicated to visual material from dance history as well as physical exercises allowing us to examine the topics further.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- To define performance
- To define dance
- To define performativity and performance through the lens of: ritual, everyday life, politics, theatre and social constructs
- To explore the relationship between movement and philosophy
- To examine the connectivity of dance with social sciences and philosophy
- To practically use the body to explore and interact with the theory using scores, tasks and improvisation

First session: Performance of Everyday Life:

Readings:

- Goffman, E. (1956). *The Presentation Of Self In Everyday Life*. : University Of Edinburgh Social Science Research Center, pp. 8-9, 70, 73
- Taylor, D. (2003). *The archive and the repertoire: performing cultural memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp 19-21, 16
- Schechner, R. (2006). *Performance studies: an introduction*. New York: Routledge, pp 28-30
- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of "sex"*. New York: Routledge, p 12
- Austin, J. L., Urmson, J. O., & Sbisà, M. (1975). *How to do things with words*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 6 (speech act, performative utterance)
- Phelan, P. (1993). *Unmarked: the politics of performance*. London: Routledge, pp. 146, 148

Second session: Body as Tool

Readings:

- Mauss, Marcel. "Techniques of the Body." *Economy and Society*: 70-88.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 72-74, 85-90.
- Elizabeth Grosz. *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), page 47-51

Recommended Reading:

- Agamben, Giorgio, *What is an Apparatus*, 2009

Third Session: Biopolitics of Performance

Readings:

- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. 2nd ed. New York: Random House, (1977): 135-149, 170-176
- Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," *Public Culture* 15 no.1 (2003): 11-40.
- Lepecki, A. (2013). Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: or, the task of the dancer. *TDR/The Drama Review*, 57(4), page 20
- Lepecki, A. (2006). *Exhausting dance: performance and the politics of movement*. New York: Routledge, page 1-13, 86-106, 106-122

Fourth Session: Dance as Movements

Readings:

- Banes, S. (1983). *Democracy's body: Judson Dance Theater, 1962-1964*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, pp. 26-42, 80-83
- Lepecki, A. (2012). *Dance: documents of contemporary art*. London: Whitechapel Gallery, pp 44-47, 59 (Yvonne Rainer), 61 (Trisha Brown)
- Sheets, H.M. (2015, January 22). Dance Finds a Home in Museums. *The New York Times*.
- Larisa Crunteanu, 'The Power of "Co-" in Contemporary Dance', *Revista Arta*

Class Discussion:

Recommended Reading:

- Kleist, H. *On the Marionette Theatre*

Fifth Session: Becoming

Readings

- Body without Organs: Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 150-151, 153, 157, 164
- Becoming Intense Becoming Animal: Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 238, 257-258
- Haraway, D. J. (2008). *When species meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 3
- Haraway, D. J. (2009). *A cyborg manifesto: science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century*, p. 3
- Elizabeth Grosz. *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), page 166, 173

Sixth Session: Becoming II

Readings:

- Artaud, A. (1981). *The theatre and its double*, pp. 36, 41, 63, 93-94
- Hijikata, Tatsumi. "Plucking Off the Darkness of the Flesh"
TDR: The Drama Review, Volume 44, Number 1 (T165) Spring 2000, pp. 51, 53
- Lepecki, A. (2012). *Dance: documents of contemporary art*. London: Whitechapel Gallery, pp. 107-109
- Muñoz, José E. " *Cruising Utopia the then and there of Queer Futurity*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2009, page 91-113
- Lygia Clark "On The Act"

Introduce the works of:

- Isadora Duncan
 - Martha Graham
 - Mary Wigman
 - Merce Cunningham
 - Judson Church Movement
 - Adrian Piper
 - William Pope L
 - Hijikata Tatsumi
 - Helio Oiticia
 - Lygia Clark
- and more during class discussions