London Theater
Summer 2015

Location       London, England  

Dates          July 18- August 15  

Credits Offered 6 Credits  

*Undergraduates:* ENGL 388.62(3cr) or THEA 397.47(3cr) and ENGL 352(3cr) or THEA TBA(3cr)  

*Graduates:* ENGL780.50(3cr) or THEA 710.56(3cr) and ENGL 715.68(3cr) or THEA TBA(3cr)  

(CUNY tuition is **NOT** included in program fee)

Application Deadline Due to housing constraints, applications will be evaluated on the rolling basis and the program may be filled early.

Financial Aid TAP, Pell, Gilman, Student loans

Program Fee $2,710 (estimate)* includes housing, theater tickets, excursions and international health insurance. **AIRFARE** is **NOT** included in the program fee (all students are responsible for arriving at their study abroad location by the first day of the program; this may mean flying the day before)

Payment schedule**$350 Application Fee & Deposit** due with all application materials.  

$2,360 Balance of the program fee due 3 weeks after the student has been admitted to the program.  

All payments must be made with certified checks or money orders. **NO CASH, PERSONAL CHECKS OR CREDIT CARDS**
Program Description

This four-week, six-credit program will explore the diversity of theatrical offerings in London and vicinity, providing a wide-ranging and historically rich understanding of British theater as it is practiced today in both traditional and experimental venues. We will attend 12 performances, which, depending on the season’s offerings, will encompass works of Shakespeare and Restoration comedy, classics of the modern British stage, and contemporary plays by leading dramatists.

Throughout the program, we will be especially attentive to the complex ways in which written texts are changed as they come to life in performance through the creative imagination of playwrights, directors, and actors in interaction with audiences. We will also be sensitive to the importance of theatrical place, especially how British theatrical institutions – such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theater, the Old and Young Vic, the Globe, the Haymarket, the Almeida, the Donmar Warehouse – present quite different styles of productions based on varying aspirations, from the aesthetic to the political. Another key feature of the classes will be regular engagement with the daily critical reception of current theatrical productions as published in London newspapers and on line, in which heated controversy and lively debate are the norm. In short, this program is an opportunity for individual and collective exploration of a representative selection of plays across the historical spectrum through the experience of world-class theatrical productions.

Because firm information about summer 2015 theatrical offerings will not be known until late March, at this point the syllabus is still necessarily tentative. However, we can always count on an extensive and exciting British theatrical summer season. For instance, in 2014 students saw classics such as Antony and Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, Medea, and The Importance of Being Earnest, as well as contemporary drama, including Wolf Hall, Bring Up the Bodies, Skylight, and Shakespeare in Love (all of which are now on or scheduled for Broadway). Modernist and experimental theater was also well represented by A Small Family Business, The Events, and 1984. There’s no doubt that in summer 2015 the variety of plays, periods, and performances will be similarly stimulating and wide-ranging.

Throughout the program, we will draw on published texts of performed works as well as relevant critical and theoretical writings. While students need to have a
copy of each play (preferably the text of the specific performance we see), links to other materials, such as reviews, will be posted on our Blackboard site. Among the topics we will tackle in our discussions: Can one recreate the experience of the original production of a given theatrical work – and should one aim to do so? What contemporary concerns are brought to bear on performances of Shakespeare? Why did Realism and Naturalism dominate the British stage in the 1940s through early 1960s? How were such traditions challenged in Absurdist theater and the Angry Young Men movement? In what ways did feminist playwrights react against such works? What concerns characterize British playwrights today? What is the relationship between the British and the American theatrical traditions? How do various elements of a given production – text, music, props, scenery, costuming, lighting, choices of individual actors, directorial aims, etc. – shape performance?

Our schedule will typically consist of a morning classroom discussion followed by attendance at an evening performance of the same play. At least four of the plays we read and see will be by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, thus providing opportunities for deeper and more focused study of those early works and their cultural context. Also included in the schedule are guided tours of Shakespeare's Globe Theater, recreated on London's South Bank, and of the National Theater, which houses several performance spaces. When possible, we will also meet with actors, directors, producers, and critics in order to explore the often hidden mechanics of theatrical production. New in 2015 is a class trip to Shakespeare’s birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon, to take advantage of the RSC’s summer season and to visit sites important in Shakespeare’s life. Most classes, performances, trips, talks, and tours will be scheduled Monday through Thursday, allowing time both for study and for exploration of London and beyond.

The summer 2015 British theatrical season promises to be an especially exciting one, whether in the West End (the equivalent to Broadway), repertory (National Theatre, Shakespeare Globe Theatre), festivals (Camden), the Fringe (similar to Off-Broadway), or Stratford. Possible productions include works by Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, Wilde, Stephens, Stafford, Morgan, Hall, Mallatrat, Berges/Chadha, Churchill, and Waters, among others. Students will be expected to comment regularly on our class blog during the four weeks of the course. Formal written work will include four short reviews (2-3 pages) completed during the course and a longer essay (10-12 pages) due by the end of August.
Students will be housed in single rooms with bathrooms in the PURE Student Living residence located in the central part of London called The City, close to tube stations, bus lines, and trendy Shoreditch and Brick Lane (http://purestudentliving.com/our-properties/city). This location includes 24-hour security, wireless internet access, laundry facilities, and kitchens and other communal spaces. Class will be held in a meeting room at PURE. Everyone will also gather for at least two group meals, a welcoming get-together and a final class dinner, at local London restaurants.

Pre-requisite: ENGL 220

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Not included in Program Fee (estimates):

- Airfare: $ 1,100
- Meals: $ 1,400
- Books: $ 170
- Local Transportation: $ 160

Total US: $ 7,100* undergrads
          $ 7,970* graduates