**Production Seminar: Gender, Justice, and the Body Politic**

Fall 2019

M/W 10:30-12:20

Dr. Shilarna Stokes

[shilarna.stokes@yale.edu](mailto:shilarna.stokes@yale.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays, 2-5

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An examination of gender, justice, and politics in contemporary plays, culminating in an ensemble-driven production of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure. Admission by audition and/or interview during the first week of the Fall 2019 term.

**COURSEWORK/PRODUCTION WORK**

This course is structured around a production that serves as a Senior Project for three students in Theater Studies. It examines Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* through contemporary and historical lenses of gender, justice, religion, and political life, in order to create an ensemble-driven, partially-devised adaptation of Shakespeare's play that responds to contemporary questions. Students who take this course should expect to have a role in the production that suits their interests, to learn to create scenes in collaborative nontraditional ways, and to speak/embody/physicalize Shakespeare's own words alongside the words of other writers, including themselves.

Though this could change, I expect that we will spend the **first five weeks** of the course doing two things every day:

* Reading/Research – *MfM* (of course),contemporary plays by women that resonate with the themes of

*MfM*, a handful of short essays, other relevant materials drawn from popular media

* Scene study, character development, devising and adaptation – we all do everything.

The **next six weeks** will be spent rehearsing the script (a heavily adapted *Measure for Measure*) for public performance. Rehearsals will take place in class and in the evening. Evening rehearsals will be scheduled as early in the semester as possible, once decisions about roles and conflicts are known. Changes to the script are likely to continue during this time though your primary directorial/dramaturgical team promises to be reasonable in their expectations.

The **two/three weeks after the production** are devoted to reflection upon the process and readings of other adaptations of the play.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

**Plays**

♦ Bhatti, Gurpreer Kaur. *Behzti (Dishonour)*

♦ Brecht, Bertolt. *Round Heads and Pointed Heads* in *Brecht: Collected Plays 4.* Methuen Drama, 2015

♦ Fornés, Maria Irene. *The* *Conduct of Life* in *Plays: Maria Irene Fornés*. PAJ Books, 2001

♦ Kim, Chungmi. *Hanako (Comfort Women)*

♦ Nottage, Lynn. *Ruined*

♦ Shakespeare, William. *Measure for Measure*

♦ Vega, Felix Lope de. *Fuenteovejuna*

**Excerpts, Chapters, and Essays**

♦ Chedgzoy, Kate. *William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure*. Oxford UP, 2000 (excerpts)

♦ Hampton-Reeves, Stuart. "The Play's Intellectual and Cultural Contexts" in *The Shakespeare*

*Handbooks: Measure for Measure*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2007 (chapter)

♦ Williams, Nora J. (2018) "Writing the Collaborative Process: *Measure (Still) for Measure,* Shakespeare, and Rape Culture" in *PARtake: The Journal of Performance as Research*: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 6

♦ Hattaway, Michael. "Male Sexuality and Misogyny" in *Shakespeare and Sexuality,* Cambridge UP, 2001 (chapter)

♦ White, Gareth. *Audience Participation in Theatre: Aesthetics of the Invitation.* Springer, 2013 (excerpts)

**Other**

♦ Wagner, Richard. *Das Liebsverbot* (audio recording)\*

♦ Performance, Art, and Media Clips (collection of articles and videos)\*

**All required course materials will be made available in pdf form and posted to Canvas.**

**ASSIGNMENTS**

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| --- | --- |
| * Group Presentation on one of four possible readings | 10% |
| * Group Presentation on a contemporary play by a female playwright | 10% |
| * Group Presentation on a play or film written prior to World War II | 10% |
| * Short Paper #1 (4 pp.) - Intellectual and Creative Contributions | 10% |
| * Short Paper #2 (4 pp.) – Purpose and Process | 10% |
| * Final Paper (10 pp.) – Remaking *Measure for Measure* | 25% |
| * Rehearsal Engagement (assessed weekly from Weeks 6-11)   (4% per week, 1% extra) | 25% |

Descriptions of all assignments can be found Canvas after the second week of the course.

**OUTSIDE OF CLASS**

* Site visits to observe, explore, and map the final performance (on Course Schedule below)
* Rehearsals when called: Mondays-Thursday, 6:30-10 pm; Fridays, 1:30-4 (Weeks 6-11)

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

This course requires a consistently high level of engagement. Attendance at all class sessions and rehearsals for which you are called is, therefore, mandatory. All requests for excused absences must be cleared in writing two weeks in advance. To receive an excused absence, please present written documentation within one week of the absence. Students with three unexcused absences by the end of the semester will find their final grade reduced by one third of a letter grade (for example, B to B-). Students with six absences (excused or unexcused) will be unable to pass the course and will be immediately notified.

**MAINTAINING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s work, words, or ideas as if they were your own. Here are three reasons not to do it:

* By far the deepest consequence to plagiarizing is the detriment to your intellectual and moral development: you won’t learn anything, and your ethics will be corrupted.
* Giving credit where it’s due but adding your own reflection will get you higher grades than putting your name on someone else’s work. In an academic context, it counts more to show your ideas in conversation than to try to present them as sui generis.
* Finally, Yale punishes academic dishonesty severely. The most common penalty is suspension from the university, but students caught plagiarizing are also subject to lowered or failing grades as well as the possibility of expulsion. Please be sure to review [Yale’s Academic Integrity Policy](http://yalecollege.yale.edu/new-students/class-2019/academic-information/intro-undergrad-education/academic-honesty).

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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| --- | --- |
| **Week 1** | **Introductions** |
| W, 8/28 | Introduction to the Course |
| F, 8/30 | *Measure for Measure,* Acts One and Two |
| **Week 2** | ***Measure for Measure*** |
| W 9/4 | ♦ *Measure for Measure*, Acts Three, Four, and Five |
| **Week 3** | Devising and Audience Engagement |
| M,9/9 | Devising Work |
|  | **Monday, 9/9 from 8-10 pm – Site Visit (Whitney Humanities Center)** |
| W, 9/11 | Devising Work |
| **Week 4** | **Plays 1 and 2** |
| M, 9/16 | ♦ Gurpreer Kaur Bhatti*, Behzti (Dishonour)*  ♦ Performance, Art, and Media Clips  ---DUE--- Group Presentations (Group 1, 2) |
| W, 9/18 | ♦ Chungmi Kim, *Hanako (Comfort Women)*  ♦ Performance, Art, and Media Clips  ---DUE--- Group Presentations (Group 3, 4) |
| **Week 5** | **Plays 3 and 4** |
| M, 9/23 | ♦ Lynn Nottage, *Ruined*  ♦ Performance, Art, and Media Clips  --DUE--- Group Presentations (Groups 1, 2) |
|  | **Monday, 9/23 from 8-10 pm – Site Visit (Whitney Humanities Center)** |
| W, 9/25 | ♦ Maria Irene Fornés, *The Conduct of Life*  ♦ Performance, Art, and Media Clips  --DUE--- Group Presentations (Group 3, 4) |
|  | **START OF EVENING REHEARSALS**  **(schedule to be determined once casting decisions have been made)** |
| **Week 6** | **Rehearsal (Week 1)** |
| M, 9/30 | --DUE-- adaptation drafts, sketches, and materials  Rehearsal: Read-Through |
| W, 10/2 | Rehearsal |
| **Week 7** | **Rehearsal (Week 2)** |
| M, 10/7 | ♦ Rehearsal |
| W, 10/9 | ♦ Rehearsal  ---DUE---Paper #1 due to Canvas by midnight |
|  | **Monday, 10/7 from 8-10 pm – Site Visit (Whitney Humanities Center)** |
| **Week 8** | **Rehearsal (Week 3)** |
| M, 10/14 | ♦ White, selections from *Audience Participation in Theatre: Aesthetics of the Invitation*\*  ♦ Intimacy Directors International, "The Pillars"\*  Rehearsal |
| **Week 9** | **Rehearsal (Week 4 start of Whitney Theater Residency)** |
| M, 10/21 | ♦ Rehearsal |
| W, 10/23 | ♦ Rehearsal |
|  | **October Break** |
| **Week 10** | **Rehearsal (Week 5)** |
| M, 10/28 | ♦ Rehearsal |
| W, 10/30 | ♦ Rehearsal |
| **Week 11** | **Rehearsal (Week 6)** |
| M, 11/4 | ♦ Rehearsal |
| W, 11/6 | ♦ Rehearsal |
|  | **Thursday, 11/ 7 – Saturday, 11/9: *Measure for Measure* Performances** |
| **Week 11** | **Reflections & Play 5** |
| T, 11/11 | ♦ Reflections: Story Circle |
| Th, 11/13 | ♦ Lope de Vega, *Fuente Ovejuna*  ---DUE--- Group Presentation (Group 1,2) |
|  | **Thursday, 11/ 7 – Saturday, 11/9: *Measure for Measure* Performances** |
| **Week 12** | **Plays 6 and 7** |
| T, 11/18 | ♦ Richard Wagner, *Das Liebesverbot*  ---DUE--- Group Presentation (Group 3,4) |
| Th, 11/20 | ♦ Bertolt Brecht, *Round Heads and Pointed Heads*  ---DUE--- Group Presentation (Group 1, 2) |
|  | **Thanksgiving Break** |
| **Week 13** | **Play 8 and Conclusion** |
| M, 12/2 | ♦ *Dente per Dente* (film)  ---DUE--- Group Presentation (Group 3 4) |
| T, 12/4 | ♦ Reflections: In-class Writing |

**FINAL PAPERS**

**Due Thursday, December 12th by 5 pm to Canvas**