Course title and number: MUSC/PERF/THAR 301: Performance and World Culture
Term (e.g., Fall 200X): Spring 201X
Meeting times and location: TBA

Course Description and Prerequisites

Catalog Description: Application of the tools of performance studies to explore the enactment of the arts in world cultures and the ways the people of every society express themselves in performance; examination of different genres of performance through music, theatre, verbal art, and dress.

Prerequisite: Junior or senior classification or permission of the instructor

We all know that it's a small world: Houston is one of the fastest growing multicultural cities in the US, College Station has two sushi restaurants, and TAMU has a campus in Qatar. Many of us have family and friends living outside the US, most of us have a few stamps in our passports, and some of us call another nation home. As we travel to and from other cultures (eating their foods, dancing their dances, wearing clothes inspired by their folk costumes, visiting their national landmarks), we transfer our culture to new locations and peoples, and new cultures transfer to us.

Performance studies scholars understand dance, performance art, plays, music, and everyday acts as performances of cultural identity. In this class, we'll explore the roots of various "American" performance genres and styles by reading, watching, talking, and writing about a variety of cross-cultural performances, paying particular attention to how performance frames and creates national, ethnic, racial, and sexual identity. We'll look at how performance traditions change between cultures and throughout time, and how these traditions build a sense of cultural heritage. This course will familiarize students with the field of performance studies and explore the enactment of the arts in world culture.

Learning Outcomes

We'll spend the majority of our class time evaluating and analyzing a variety of performances understood as cross-cultural because of their style, narrative content, intended audience, or production process. When you finish this course, you will

- analyze representative cross-cultural performances and performers
- apply theories of cross-cultural performance in discussions and a project
- explain how performance facilitates cultural transfer
- synthesize course concepts by devising cross-cultural performance situations
- critically evaluate a variety of performance styles and genres.

We will measure our mastery of these course objectives through

- in-class, graded discussion labs
- three quizzes
- final exam
- group performance project and written analysis.
Instructor Information

Name Kirsten Pullen
Telephone number 845-2899
Email address kpullen@tamu.edu
Office hours TR 11-12
Office location LAAH275

Textbook and/or Resource Material

Required Texts: All texts are available online on WebCT. I expect you to print each document and bring it to class so that we can refer to it, read from it, perform it, or otherwise explore its ideas.

Required Performances: You must see two live performances this term, Khari Powell (18 February; 7:30pm; Rudder Forum Theatre) and My Children! My Africa! (15-17 April at 8:00pm and 18 April at 2:00pm; Rudder Forum Theatre; $5.00/students). You must also see three films (Devdas; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; and The Color Purple). These are on reserve at EDMS and available through Media Matrix.

Grading Policies

Participation (25): Class works when we’re all engaged. I expect you to attend every class, to have completed and considered all the readings, and to participate in all discussions, small group work, guest artist residencies, and other activities. Except for the three full-length films, we view performances in class. This facilitates cross-viewing (where the experience is informed by the reactions of other audience members) and allows us to develop an interpretive community through which we’ll interrogate performances of culture. Because learning happens in the classroom, I take attendance; each unexcused absence results in 2.5 points subtracted from your participation grade.

Discussion Labs (25): In your performance groups, you will discuss a specific question about a reading or screening. These discussions may take place over email, in person, or on the WebCT discussion board and will integrate the readings and viewings associated with the question. When you’ve completed your discussion, one group member will synthesize the responses into a 250-word page paper and posting it on WebCT. In class, you’ll all discuss your question with reference to this paper and to your own notes. There are 5 discussions this term, and group members may earn up to five points for each discussion. The group member who takes on the synthesis role of synthesis may earn up to six points—she will earn a bonus point for the administrative tasks associated with the assignment.

Quizzes (125): We will take three short, in-class quizzes over the course of the term. These quizzes will cover lectures, required readings, in-class viewings, guest artist residencies, films, and performances. The first two quizzes are worth 50 points; the final quiz (over My Children! My Africa!) is worth 25 points.

Group Project (200): Working in groups of 4-6 students, you will perform culture. You might present a cultural practice from your own or other group members’ heritage; you might stage a portion of a play (either original or canonical) filtered through one of the intercultural theories we’ve studied; you might take up another cultural position and present one of its cultural products; you might come up with a better idea yourselves! We’ll view these performances in class. In addition to the performance itself, your group will submit a performance proposal (500 words) that indicates your style and genre of performance, your topic, and your theoretical and artistic contexts as well as a project plan with a timetable, rehearsal schedule, identification and allocation of tasks, and other relevant information about your process. After you complete your performance, you’ll each write a performance analysis (1000 words) that identifies and contextualizes your cultural performance, explains your artistic aims, analyzes
your intended and actual outcomes, details your technical and geographic constraints, and develops your artistic and theoretical contexts. You'll also submit a revised project plan that reflects the actual work done by group members on the performance. Proposals and preliminary project plans are due 23 March (25 points); analyses and revised plans are due 12 May (75 points), and performances will take place in class 27 and 29 April (100 points).

Final Exam (125): We'll take an exam as scheduled by the registrar's office, on May 12. It will cover readings, in-class screenings, discussions, artist residencies, performances, and activities from the entire course.

You are responsible for all in-class viewings, lectures, guest-artist residencies, and performances. All readings and screenings are due on the date indicated. No work will be accepted via email without prior arrangement. No late assignments, no extra credit. In the case of excused absences, refer to TAMU Student Rule 7 at [link].

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<th>Grade Distribution:</th>
<th>Grade Equivalency:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Discussions</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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A=500-450 Exceptional ability to conceptualize and present ideas; effort beyond meeting basic criteria; you have sought out new ideas and information; your work is thorough and original; your work shows initiative and imagination; there are few to no errors in your written work; overall your work shows a trajectory of development and growth. You have exceeded expectations for research, writing, or speaking at the upper division level in a Research I university.

B=449-400 Solid work; meets basic requirements; evident language competency; few errors; you are able to engage but generally do not go beyond information and ideas readily accessible through class, readings, and discussions. Your research, writing, and speaking are commensurate with upper division standing in a Research I university.

C=399-350 Marginal work; writing assignments and discussions demonstrate limited ability or effort to engage ideas and information; written assignments have many errors (sentence structure, spelling, grammar, etc.) and/or are underprepared. Your research, writing, and speaking are slightly below expectations for students with upper division standing in a Research I university and should be improved with additional effort.

D=349-300 Quantity and quality of work falls far below the expectations of upper division students in a Research I university. You are either not expending enough effort or you need help to accomplish the work required.

F=below 300 Fails to achieve any of the above.
Course Topics, Calendar of Activities, Major Assignment Dates

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
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| 9   | Global Cinema, Discussion III          | *The Color Purple*  
*Crouching Tiger/Hidden Dragon*  
| 10  | Global Cinema                          |  
Ordez, Evangeline. *Visitor's Guide to Arivaca (Map Not to Scale)*  
Kushner, Tony. *Homebody/Kabul*  
| 11  | Discussion IV, Quiz II                 |  
Theatres of Culture |
| 12  | Theatres of Culture                    |  
Performances, Discussion V  
Finals week Final Exam |

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit http://disability.tamu.edu

Academic Integrity

For additional information please visit: http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do."