

TH334-15 Love: Performance, Theory and Criticism

21/22

Department

SCAPVC - Theatre and Performance Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Milija Gluhovic

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Love remains an ever intriguing and complex emotion. Representations of love have been idealised, romanticised and formalised as part of theatre and performance tradition over centuries. In recent years love has also become visible (again) as a contested theoretical problem and political issue. The module addresses the “love question” as an open and exciting interdisciplinary field – one that traverses the arts, the humanities and the sciences. The module aims to explore this new, wide-ranging interest in love by looking into the ways in which the twentieth and twenty-first century artists have dealt with the subject of love as material for their work (e.g. Anski, Bergman, Pinter, Kane, Cavani, Haneke), while investigating a wide range of theories that explore changing ideologies, representations and practices related to the subject (Freud, Kristeva, Butler, Berlant and others). We will ask questions such as: What is love? Why/how is love interesting now? Can we study love historically? What does it mean about love that its expressions tend to be so conventional, so bound up in institutions like marriage and family, property relations, and stock phrases and plots? How can we re-envision love so that it creates different kinds of intimately social (rather than intimate vs. social) bonds that embrace difference (vs. sameness) and are transformative of the self? Finally, what does love bring to the study of theatre and performance? How do performances of love in theatre or cinema deconstruct or confirm its social and political coding? How do theatre and performance recreate and subvert social scenarios of love? The

topics to be covered will range from ethics and politics of love, gendered interests in love, to love as a force in radical transformations of society.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

Love remains an ever intriguing and complex emotion. Representations of love have been idealised, romanticised and formalised as part of theatre and performance tradition over centuries. In recent years love has also become visible (again) as a contested theoretical problem and political issue. The module addresses the “love question” as an open and exciting interdisciplinary field – one that traverses the arts, the humanities and the sciences. The module aims to explore this new, wide-ranging interest in love by looking into the ways in which the twentieth and twenty-first century artists have dealt with the subject of love as material for their work (e.g. Anski, Bergman, Pinter, Kane, Cavani, Haneke), while investigating a wide range of theories that explore changing ideologies, representations and practices related to the subject (Freud, Kristeva, Butler, Berlant and others). We will ask questions such as: What is love? Why/how is love interesting now? Can we study love historically? What does it mean about love that its expressions tend to be so conventional, so bound up in institutions like marriage and family, property relations, and stock phrases and plots? How can we re-envision love so that it creates different kinds of intimately social (rather than intimate vs. social) bonds that embrace difference (vs. sameness) and are transformative of the self? Finally, what does love bring to the study of theatre and performance? How do performances of love in theatre or cinema deconstruct or confirm its social and political coding? How do theatre and performance recreate and subvert social scenarios of love? The topics to be covered will range from ethics and politics of love, gendered interests in love, to love as a force in radical transformations of society.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Outline (subject to change):

Spring term:

Week 1

Love Studies / Discourses on Love / Plato's *The Symposium* (Adapted and directed by Jeffrey L. Gangwisch, 2015)

Week 2

Freud and Eros: Love, Lust and Longing / Strindberg's *Miss Julie* (with a guest, Dr Daniel Orrells, Classics Department at Warwick, tbc)

Week 3

Love, Loss, and Recovery / Anski's *The Dybbuk* / Kristeva's *Tales of Love*

Week 4

Desire, Love / Kane's Phaedra's Love; Racine's Phedre / Berlant's book Desire, Love / Butler's Precarious Life (chapter 1, on intersubjectivity)

Week 5

Love, Care and Solidarity / Bergman's Scenes from a Marriage / Haneke's film Amour

Week 6 -- Reading Week

Week 7

Love, History, Fantasy / Pinter's Ashes to Ashes; Cavani's film Night Porter

Week 8

Queer Bonds / Fraser's Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love.
(with a guest, Dr Oliver Davis, French Studies at Warwick, tbc.)

Week 9

Is One the Loneliest Number?: Arguments for the Uncoupled

Week 10

Politics of Love and Radical/Revolutionary Transformation

Summer term.

Project based assessment will ordinarily take place at the beginning of the summer term.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module students should be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of a broad constellation of contemporary plays, performances, and visual art references in the light of cultural, political, historical, and philosophical debates on the analysis, ethics and politics of love in the modern world. Furthermore, students should come away from this seminar with a new set of conceptual models and analytic tools to make use of in thinking about this complex and rich body of art. Students will achieve these learning outcomes through close reading of primary and secondary material, seminar discussions based around prescribed texts, seminar papers on specific topics, and performance and curatorial workshops. In addition to film screening, performance recordings will be used to illustrate the theatrical dimensions of the plays.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Subject specific skills

By the end of the module students should be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of a

broad constellation of contemporary plays, performances, and visual art references in the light of cultural, political, historical, and philosophical debates on the analysis, ethics and politics of love in the modern world. Furthermore, students should come away from this seminar with a new set of conceptual models and analytic tools to make use of in thinking about this complex and rich body of art. Students will achieve these learning outcomes through close reading of primary and secondary material, seminar discussions based around prescribed texts, seminar papers on specific topics, and performance and curatorial workshops. In addition to film screening, performance recordings will be used to illustrate the theatrical dimensions of the plays.

Transferable skills

teamwork technical ability, physical fitness, creativity, time management, discipline, organisation, communication

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (50%)
Other activity	18 hours (50%)
Total	36 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Other activity description

9 x 2 hour film/performance viewing (or workshops or final project work-in progress feedback sessions).

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A3

Weighting Study time Eligible for self-certification

Assessment component

Project-based assesment 50% 64 hours Yes (extension)
performance, installation, performance lecture etc.

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Essay 50% 50 hours Yes (extension)
essay

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Project based assessment: oral and written feedback
Essay: written feedback

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UENA-QW35 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of UTHA-W421 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies
- Year 4 of UTHA-W422 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Core option list B for:

- Year 4 of UFRA-R1W4 Undergraduate French with Theatre Studies

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 3 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies