

TH113-30 Contemporary Performance Practices

23/24

Department

SCAPVC - Theatre and Performance Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

anna six

Credit value

30

Module duration

18 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Through tutor-led practical workshops, seminar discussions, and presentations, this first-year core module will introduce you to a range of contemporary performance practices through three units - 'Myself/Others: Participatory Performance', 'Out of Place', 'Intimate/Archaeologies'. You will engage with practitioners and examples drawn from the 2010s and 2020s in order to introduce you to up-to-date and current modes of creating and presenting performance. Each unit will culminate in an experimental scratch performance or sharing of creative work - this is not assessed, but students will then reflect on their work through their journals in order to document their learning and insights.

You will explore these artistic practices through your own creative work, through watching videos and examining web-based and written documentation of theatre and performance, and, where possible, through theatre visits and artist-led workshops. Each unit will culminate with a group-devised intervention or response to the questions and approaches examined. You will document your reflections and ideas emerging out of this work through a 'Performance Lab Journal' and the module culminates with a more substantive piece of performance devised with your peers.

The module will form your first stepping stone towards developing your own artistic practice as performance makers. Through experimentation, play and creative-risk taking it will introduce you

to a diverse range of artists and approaches to making performance in order to open up plural ways of both thinking about and ways of making contemporary performance.

Module aims

This module will introduce students to a range of contemporary performances practices and practitioners. It aims to encourage inquisitive, playful and innovative approaches to creative practice. Students will gain core skills which will allow them to lay the foundations for creating their own arts practice in the 2nd and 3rd year/beyond. Finally, the module aims to encourage students to have an outward-facing sense of making performance for production via the website component of the final assessment.

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.

SPRING TERM

UNIT 1: Myself/Others: Participatory Performance - what are the ethics of asking audiences or participants to get up and be active in performance-based work?

Week 1: Participatory theatre - for and with

Week 2: Core methodologies

Week 3: Performance lab response 1

UNIT 2: Out of Place - how do space and place influence performance? Can performance intervene in, and transform, place?

Week 4: Bodies in place

Week 5: Place in motion

Week 6: Reading Week

Week 7: Performance lab response 2

UNIT 3: Intimate/Archaeologies - what does it mean to create intimate performance in which we reveal and reflect ourselves?

Week 8: One-to-One performance

Week 9: (Auto)biographies

Week 10: Performance lab response 3

SUMMER TERM

Major project - the major project invites students to create work which responds to an overarching theme (for example 'Distance', 'On: Being Human', or question which changes each year, and is presented in the format of a mini-festival of work.

Weeks 1-3: Tutor-led workshops on approaches to devising and exploration of the theme and stimuli.

Weeks 4-8: Student-led devising

Week 9: Performance

Week 10: Reflections on the module

Learning outcomes

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

- To have attained competencies in core areas of performance making
- To have acquired a knowledge of a range of leading contemporary practitioners and their approaches to making art
- To be able to collaborate effectively
- To be able to present creative work to a high standard
- To be able to offer constructive feedback to peers
- To have a confident engagement with politics and performance
- To create a dynamic, creative web interface for their artistic work

Indicative reading list

Jen Harvie and Andy Lavender, *Making Contemporary Theatre* (Manchester University Press, 2010)

Dee Heddou and Jane Milling, *Devising Performance* (London: Palgrave, 2005)

Emma Govan, Helen Nicholson, Katie Normington, *Making Performance* (London: Routledge, 2007)

Alison Oddey, *Devising Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1994)

Tim Etchells, *Certain Fragments* (London: Routledge, 1999)

Scott Graham and Steven Hoggett, *The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising* (London: Routledge, 2009)

James Yarker and Mark Crossley, *Devising Theatre with Stan's Café* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017)

Cathy Turner and Stephen Hodge, *A Misguide to Anywhere* – www.misguide.com

Alex Mermikides and Jackie Smart, *Devising in Process* (London: Palgrave, 2010)

Kathryn Mederos Syssoyeva, *Collective Creation in Contemporary Performance* (London: Palgrave, 2013)

Katie Mitchell, *The Director's Craft* (London: Routledge, 2008)

Paul B Crook, *The Art and Practice of Directing for Theatre* (London: Routledge, 2017)

DeRon S Williams et al. *Contemporary Black Theatre and Performance* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023)

Lola Arias, *Minefield*

Selina Thompson, *Salt*

Class, *Scottee* (Edinburgh, UK: Salamander Street, 2020).

Sheila Ghelani, *Grafting and Budding* (<https://www.sheilaghelani.co.uk/grafting-budding>)

Rachel Zerihan, 'One to One Performance: A Study Room Guide on works devised or 'audience of one' https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/OnetoOne_Final-copy.pdf

Research element

Research needed to develop a devised performance

Subject specific skills

By the end of the module students will...

- have acquired competencies in core areas of performance making
- have acquired a knowledge of a range of leading contemporary practitioners and their approaches to making art
- be able to collaborate effectively
- be able to present creative work to a high standard
- be able to offer constructive feedback to peers
- have a confident engagement with politics and performance
- have created a dynamic, creative web interface for their work
- have created an original piece of live performance

Transferable skills

- effective collaboration skills
 - development of website
 - research skills
 - communication skills
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 2 hours (1%)
Project supervision	4 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Practical classes	18 sessions of 3 hours (18%)
Supervised practical classes	18 sessions of 4 hours (24%)
Private study	100 hours (33%)
Assessment	48 hours (16%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Reading of plays and background material
Devising and rehearsing performances
Preparing summative assessments

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Performance Lab Journal	30%	8 hours	Yes (extension)
The journal should document and reflect upon the students' journeys throughout the three units in the first term of the module. It should include an engagement with key examples of practice and practitioners, their own judgments of the work, and their reflections on their performance lab responses. Each unit is framed by a central question, which their reflections and analysis should engage with. The portfolio can contain up to 10 images and/or illustrations. These will not count towards the overall word count. The submission must be a digital portfolio (submitted via Tabula).			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component			
Live performance	70%	40 hours	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none">15-20-minute live performance and website documentation			

Reassessment component

Performance pitch	No
The student should create a presentation that shares their ideas for a performance. This should relate to the areas explored in the module, sharing the aims of the performance, key stylistic and aesthetic influences, and practical and logistical concerns regarding its staging.	

Feedback on assessment

Students will receive written feedback on all assessments. Students will also be offered one-to-one or small group tutorials on their assessment (as fits the task individual or group). Students will also be able to discuss their feedback with their personal tutors.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UTHA-W421 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies
- Year 1 of UTHA-W422 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 1 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies