

TH333-30 You, Me, and Everyone We Know: Identity and Performance

23/24

Department

SCAPVC - Theatre and Performance Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Credit value

30

Module duration

18 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module the relationship between identity and performance through a variety of artistic forms. The module will examine a range of practices from biographical drama to live art to stand up comedy in order to interrogate questions of selfhood, otherness, and identity. The module explores critical discourse but with practical experimentation focus in order to better understand how and why we represent ourselves and others in performance. Moreover, we will question what it means to have a 'self' to represent. We will examine questions of truth, authenticity, alterity, ethics, and antitheatricality.

Module aims

The module will begin by exploring key examples from different modes of performance and creating short solo practical projects and then, in the Spring Term, move towards devising skills and creating small group practice-based projects. Throughout the course of the module we will not only investigate how and why people have sought to represent 'true' lives but consider the role of performance within the our everyday identities. The module, thus, aims to offer an engaging and challenging introduction to the politics of identity and performance.

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.

NB: This is an indicative syllabus and there will be changes to the content.

Autumn Term

Week One: Chris Thorpe's Confirmation (ebook and 5 print copies available)

Week Two: Alan Bennett's The Lady in the Van (please ensure you read the play and not the original prose version – 5 print copies available)

Week Three: Bryony Kimming's Credible, Likeable, Superstar Role Model (ebook plus 5 print copies available)

Week Four: Selina Thompson, 'Chewing the Fat' and Scottee, The Worst of Scottee, both in The Oberon Book of Queer Monologues, edited by Scottee (London: Oberon, 2018) (Ebook plus print copies available)

Week Five: Richard Pryor, Live in Concert

Week Six: Reading Week

Week Seven: Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen's The Exonerated (please read the play for this and not the film adaptation – 5 print copies available)

Week Eight: Tim Crouch's An Oak Tree (ebook and 5 print copies available)

Week Nine: Kim Noble – www.mrkimnoble.com

Week Ten: Tutorials. No Reading

Spring Term

1. Body and Movement
2. Persona and Character
3. Playing with an Audience
4. Space and Environment
5. Composition and Dramaturgy
6. Reading Week
7. Supervised project rehearsal/development
8. Supervised project rehearsal/development
9. Supervised project rehearsal/ development
10. Project Assessments

Learning outcomes

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

- Students will have developed and advanced understanding of the nature of auto/biographical performance and explored the representation of self and others in a range of forms. They will be able to critique and analyse the performance of identity in plural contexts and reflect upon how far identity itself is a performative construct. They will be familiar with the range of practices and politics that one may associate with questions of identity and representation and indeed will be able to articulate complex thinking about the nature of representation itself. They will also be able to confidently discuss the capacity of performance as a methodology for understanding and interrogating self and other. They will have acquired a detailed knowledge of key thematic areas in the field including truth, authenticity, ethics, and selfhood.

- Students will also develop a strong set of devising and creative skills related to questions of representing selves and representing others. This will allow the students to develop collaborative, ensemble-based skills but also independent creative strategies. They will also be able to reflect upon the ethical questions that attend on these kinds of practices. They will be able to develop and initiate ideas and undertake critical and practical research to further their initial creative sketches. They will acquire skills in generating material and be able to think imaginatively about how to translate these ideas into artistic form.
- Students will further develop the academic training that is central to this course. They will further enhance their skills in close analysis, critical discussion, and comprehension. They will enhance their abilities to synthesise complex ideas and debate these with their peers. They will also be able to work on developing their ability to translate theory into practice and vice versa.
- Students will also further enhance their research and IT skills through independent research activities.
- Students will develop a number of personal skills in the course of this module. These include time-management, collaboration, independent critical and creative research, and the ability to receive and deliver constructive feedback. They will also develop their problem solving skills and their ability to initiate and sustain projects.

Indicative reading list

Linda Anderson, *Autobiography*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001)

K. Ashley, *Autobiography and Postmodernism*, (University of Mass Press, 1994)

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1990)

Alison Donnell & Pauline Polkey (eds) *Representing Lives* (London: Macmillan, 2000)

Maggie Gale & Viv Gardner (eds) *Women, Theatre and Performance: Autobiography and Identity* (Manchester University Press, 2004)

Alison Forsyth & Chris Megson, *C Get Real: Documentary Theatre Past & Present* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009)

Sherril Grace & Jerry Wasserman, *Theatre and Autobiography: Writing and Performing Lives in Theory and Practice*, (Vancouver: Talon Books, 2006)

Will Hammond & Dan Steward, *Verbatim Verbatim: Techniques in Contemporary Documentary Theatre*, London: Oberon, 2008)

Gerry Harris *Staging Femininities*, (Manchester University Press, 1999)

Dee Heddon, *Autobiography*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001)

Dee Heddon *Autobiography and Performance*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007)

Petra Kuppens, *Disability and Contemporary Performance: Bodies on the Edge* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2003)

John Limon, *Abjection in America: Stand up Comedy in Theory* (Duke University Press, 2000)

Lynn Miller & Jacqui Taylor, *Voices Made Flesh: Performing Women's Auto/biography*, (University of Wisconsin Press, 2003)

Derek Paget, *True Stories?* (Manchester University Press, 1990)

Grayson Perry, *Playing to the Gallery* (London: Particular, 2014)

Stanley, L. *The Auto/biographical I*, (Manchester University Press, 1992)

Rebecca Schneider, *The Explicit Body in Performance*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 1997)

Research element

Students are required to develop their own solo projects. They are also required to undertake practical research in the development of their final group projects.

Subject specific skills

Students will develop their skills in creative practice, their ability to analyse performance, and key skills in listening and seminar-participation.

Transferable skills

Key transferable skills include: presentations skills, group-work skills, developing and presenting and arguments and ideas, advanced library and IT skills, the ability to undertake and disseminate research, group work skills, time management.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	18 sessions of 3 hours (18%)
Tutorials	1 session of 1 hour (0%)
Project supervision	3 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	242 hours (81%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Students are required to undertake 6-8hrs of preparatory reading and viewing each week. In addition they will require approximately 80 hrs of independent research time and creative time for their creative projects. Their group creative projects will require substantial rehearsal time.

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 A2

	Weighting	Study time
Group practice-based project	50%	
<p>Your second assessment is a practice-based project. This may take many forms. You will begin to discuss your ideas for projects in week 10 of Autumn Term with your tutor. The projects should last no less than fifteen minutes but no more than twenty five minutes. Please also be mindful of the technical constraints you will have to work within. These projects will be shared/performed in week 10 of Spring Term. Your tech rehearsal will take place in week 9. These creative projects should emerge out of what we have studied so far on the module. The emphasis is on the ambition, integrity and creativity of the projects as opposed to 'gloss'. That is to say you will not be assessed on whether you are a 'good' actor but rather on the creative imagination and execution of the ideas. The piece should be careful and accomplished but need not have 'high-end' production values.</p>		
Solo practice-based project	50%	
<p>A solo creative project that should last between ten and fifteen minutes. This may take the form of standup set, a performance lecture, a piece of spoken word or other live forms. These creative projects should emerge out of what we have studied so far on the module. The emphasis is on the ambition, integrity and creativity of the projects as opposed to 'gloss'. That is to say you will not be assessed on whether you are a 'good' actor but rather on the creative imagination and execution of the ideas. The piece should be careful and accomplished but need not have 'high-end' production values.</p>		

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback sheets and one-to-one tutorial

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

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

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 3 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies
- UTHA-W421 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies

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