

# Theatre Styles: Contemporary Issues and Trends in American Theatre

Prerequisites: Theatre History I and II

Instructor: Eric Ruffin

Class Meeting: W/Fr 3:30PM-4:55PM

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## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theatre Styles examines the trends and movements in theatre post realism to present. Students will, through research, exposure in the field, and development of material in the classroom, explore how contemporary artists are shaping the art form. Particular emphasis will be given to multicultural/ multi ethnic performance. America's cultural diversity and the aesthetical contributions that result are highlighted during this course. The class is designed to inform and encourage the creation of new works. It is the culmination of theatre history study. There for students are expected to synthesize all of the information from the previous years with this course when generating their assignments.

### **This course supports the following national and depts standards for arts education:**

Content Standard 8: Understanding context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and present.

Content Standard 7: Analyzing, critiquing, and constructing meanings from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

## II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

### **Students will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of important ideas, people, and contemporary contributors to American Theater
2. Identify various theatrical trends and the cultural, political, economic, religious, forces that influenced theme
3. Articulate similarities and differences between different theatrical styles
4. Delineate a rough timeline for the development of western and world theatre
5. Engage in oral and written discussion of plays considering the works relevance in 21<sup>st</sup> Century American Society
6. Identify concepts and practices of modern theatre
7. Synthesize and apply theatrical conventions and practices to the production of a theatrical production

## III. Grading

You are required to attend class regularly, take part in discussions read assigned material write reviews and participate in group projects.

#### **IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Be present and on time for class
2. Be well prepared for class activities and discussions (inability to participate in discussion constitutes an absence)
3. Conduct research
4. Attend and review two (2) live theatre performances
5. Group performance projects that culminate in a midterm and final presentation

#### **V. METHODS OF EVALUATION**

Research	-- 30%
Presentations	-- 30%
Critiques/Play reviews	-- 15%
Participation	-- 20%

#### **VI. GRADING SCALE**

1. A -- Excellent	100-90
2. B -- Good	89-80
3. C -- Fair	79-70
4. D -- Passing	69-60
5. F -- Fail	59 and below

**This course is a survey of information essential to an understanding of theatre history. As with any survey course, the content must remain flexible if it is to address the specific needs of the students, therefore, the syllabus and course schedule are subject to change at any time. These changes are at the sole discretion of the instructor, and whenever possible will be made in writing. Further, every attempt is made to include department productions as works in the syllabus.**

**The instructor will choose chapters from a variety of sources. Students may be asked to photocopy or purchase some plays or collections.**

*(If the play you see is produced in the DC metro area, the theatre company must be listed on the website below))*

- ★ for professional shows, reference [www.helenhayes.org](http://www.helenhayes.org) for a listing of area theatre companies and show openings and closings
- ★ also check "The Guide to the Lively Arts" in the **Washington Post**
- ★ check out [www.cultural-alliance.org/tickets](http://www.cultural-alliance.org/tickets) for half price ticket info in DC