

What makes dramas written by Black American playwrights and theater collectives different from those written and or performed by such dramatists and collectives as Arthur Miller, Sam Shepard, Richard Foreman, Laurie Anderson, Judith Malina and Julian Beck's Living Theatre and Peter Brook's International Centre of Theater Research? Using recent theoretical and political debates on performance and the construction of identity, the class will trace the historical trajectory of African American theater from the 1950s to the present.

The course covers representative works from the Theater of the Black Experience, the Black Arts Movement, the Free Southern Theatre, and the African American avant-garde and experimental stage. Assigned readings may include works by Amiri Baraka, Ed Bullins, P. J. Gibson, Lorraine Hansberry, Langston Hughes, Adrienne Kennedy, Lynn Nottage, Suzan-Lori Parks, Stew, August Wilson, Tracey Scott Wilson, George C. Wolfe, and such performance artists as Fred Holland, Robbie McCauley, John O'Neal, Whoopi Goldberg, and Anna Deavere Smith.

In writing the analytical group-paper **or** in the group-dramatic performance, student-groups must create a gumbo-like analysis/performance of the lived, imagined, and performed elements found in the assigned dramas.

I. REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Lorraine Hansberry A Raisin in the Sun (NY: Signet, 1959)
LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka). Dutchman and The Slave (NY: William Morrow, 1964)
Lynn Nottage. Crumbs From the Table of Joy and Other Plays (NY: Theatre Communications Group, 2004)
Ed Bullins, The Taking of Miss Janie (1975) in William B. Branch, Black Thunder: An Anthology of Contemporary African American Drama (NY: Penguin, 1992)
Anna Devere Smith. Fires in the Mirror (NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 1993)
Anna Devere Smith. Twilight: Los Angeles 1992 (NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 1994)
Stew. Passing Strange: The Complete Book and Lyrics of the Broadway Musical (NY: Applause Books, 2009)
James Baldwin. Blues for Mister Charlie: A Play (NY: Signet, 1964)
August Wilson. The Piano Lesson (NY: Penguin, 1990)
August Wilson. Fences (NY: Penguin, 1986)

Note: Assigned and recommended texts and readings are held at the Reserve Desk on the second floor of Library West. Check the Reserve List for this course to see if any assigned essays or plays are available as PDF files on ARES (ELECTRONIC RESERVE) section on the Smathers Library Website. Look under Reid and this course's section number #101E/#1H30.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Pop Quizzes on weekly readings as well as film(s) screened in the previous class **10 points**
(1pt - 3pts each)
- 2) Individual 5-minute oral presentation and 5 min Q&A. Instructor assigns each student their oral presentation of a required reading (5 minutes) Due Weeks 3–11 **20 points**
The grade on the presentation is based on the following criteria:
 - A. The importance of the material presented to the class. Students must make brief references to primary scenes in a particular literary work (or film) to illustrate important issues and support their argument.
 - B. The clarity of the written and oral work. Here, "clarity" refers to smooth oral delivery, correct use of descriptive terminology and grammar.
 - C. The student's ability to pose important questions to the class at the end of their oral presentation. Students must introduce the argument/thesis of their oral presentation based on their assigned section.
- 3) Students are responsible for a typed 1-page outline of their 5-minute discussion. [10 points]
The outline is due on the day when the student presents her/his 5-minute discussion.
- 4) **1-page outline**
On the day of their presentation, students deliver a typed outline of their discussion. **10 points**
- 5) **MIDTERM EXAM 60MINS THURSDAY, 19 FEBRUARY** **20 points**
- 6) **15-MINUTE GROUP Dramatic Performance Due 9 and 16 APRIL (Weeks 14 & 15)**
GROUP DRAMATIC PRESENTATION **30 points**
5-minute Q&A on the DRAMATIC PRESENTATION **10 points**

III. ATTENDANCE

The only excusable absence is one that results from an illness that is documented by a written and signed physician report. Two non-excused absences lower the student's cumulative grade by minus 10 points, Three non-excused absences give the student an E, a failing grade for the course.

IV. LATE WORK

All written work and oral presentations are due **during** the class period. Students receive minus 2 points for EACH DAY (INCLUDING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS) when any assignment is late. **NOTE:** A medical excuse **will not** be accepted to explain the late delivery of any written assignment or film/video project.

V.		GRADING SCALE			
A	100.00-90.00	40.00-36.00	20.00-18.00	10.00-09.00	2.00-1.80
A-	89.99-87.00	35.99-34.80	17.99-17.40	08.90-08.70	1.78-1.74
B+	86.99-84.00	34.79-33.60	17.20-16.80	08.69-08.40	1.72-1.68
B	83.99-80.00	33.59-32.00	16.60-16.00	08.39-08.00	1.66-1.60
B-	79.99-77.00	31.99-30.80	15.99-15.40	07.99-07.70	1.59-1.53
C+	76.99-74.00	30.79-29.60	15.20-14.80	07.69-07.40	1.52-1.48
C	73.99-70.00	29.59-28.00	14.79-14.00	07.39-07.00	1.47-1.40
C-	69.99-67.00	27.99-26.80	13.99-13.40	06.99-06.70	1.39-1.34
D+	66.99-64.00	26.79-25.60	13.39-12.80	06.69-06.40	1.33-1.28
D	63.99-60.00	25.59-24.00	12.79-12.00	06.39-06.00	1.27-1.20
D-	59.99-57.00	23.99-22.80	11.99-11.40	05.99-05.70	1.19-1.14
E	56.00	22.79-00.00	11.39-00.00	05.69-00.00	1.13-0.00
	Cumulative	Performance and Q&A	student presentation 20pts, MIDTERM 20pts	presentation outline 10pts	ten or more quizzes worth 1-3pts for a total of 10pts

VI. COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS:

READINGS LISTED ON A PARTICULAR DAY SHOULD BE READ **BEFORE** THAT CLASS MEETS. POP QUIZZES WILL COVER THESE ASSIGNED READINGS AS WELL AS ANY FILMS SCREENED IN THE LAST CLASS. **ALL READINGS FOR WEEK TWO MUST BE READ BEFORE CLASS MEETS**

* Denotes that Readings are held on **RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST AT CHECK OUT DESK OR ON ARES E-RESERVE AS DOWNLOADABLE 'PDFs' [ACROBAT READER FILES]**

WK 1 NO CLASS HELD DUE TO AATTENDANCE AT THE MLA
 JAN 08 R---SCREEN: Woody King, Jr., *Black Theatre: The Making of A Movement* (1978) 114mins

WK 2 Course Introduction and INTEGRATIONIST DRAMAS WITH A WOMANIST TWIST
 JAN 15 R--- Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959); Samuel A. Hay, *African American Theatre*, introduction and chap. 1. **ON RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST**

WK 3 THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT
 JAN 22 R --- LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka) *Dutchman* (1964); also read Hay, *African American Theatre*, chap. 2. **ON RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST** and Leslie Catherine Sanders, *The Development of Black Theater in America*, chap. 3 (**on electronic reserve in library see ARES PDF**).
 ---SCREEN: Anthony Harvey, *Dutchman* (1967) 55mins
 --- Analysis of Play and its screen adaptation. Dramatic Form and Politics of Production and Distribution

WK 4 THEATER OF THE BLACK FEMALE EXPERIENCE
 JAN 29 W--- Lynn Nottage, *Crumbs From the Table of Joy and Other Plays*

WK 5 MUSICAL DRAMA, AFRICAN AMERICAN EX-PAT & SELF-DISCOVERY
 FEB 5 R---Stew. *Passing Strange: The Complete Book and Lyrics of The Broadway Musical*

WK 6 TELLING A BLACK STORY: 'THE BLOOD'S MEMORY'
 FEB 12 R---James Baldwin, *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964)

WK 7 MIDTERM EXAM 60MINS TELLING A BLACK STORY: 'THE BLOOD'S MEMORY'
 FEB 19 R---August Wilson, *The Piano Lesson* (1987);
 ---SCREEN: *THE PIANO LESSON* (1995) 99 minutes.

WK 8 TELLING A BLACK STORY: 'THE BLOOD'S MEMORY'

FEB 26 R---August Wilson, Fences (1985), and **August Wilson articles on E-RESERVE**;
---**SCREEN: A CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST WILSON** (1992) 22 minutes.

WK 9 01 - 07 MARCH SPRING BREAK

WK 10 THE SIXTIES

MAR 12 R--- Ed Bullins, The Taking of Miss Janie (1975) in William B. Branch, Black Thunder and Leslie Catherine Sanders, The Development of Black Theater in America, ch. 4 (**on reserve in library**).

WK 11

MAR 19 W---Anna Deavere Smith, Fires in the Mirror, and articles on Anna Deavere Smith (**ARES**).

WK 12 BLACK PERFORMANCE

MAR 26 R---Anna Deavere Smith, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 and articles on Smith (**ARES**).

WK 13

APR 2 R--- **GROUPS MEET IN CLASSROOM TO PREPARE THE FINAL DRAMATIC PROJECT**

WK 14

APR 9 R---**10-MINUTE GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND 5-MINUTE Q & A (20PTS)**

- GRP1: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP2: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP3: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP4: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP5: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP6: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP7: STUDENTS: _____

WK 15

APR 16 R---**10-MINUTE GROUP PRESENTATIONS AND 5-MINUTE Q & A (20PTS)**

- GRP8: STUDENTS: _____
- GRP9: STUDENTS: _____

Course: _____ **FIRST or LAST Year English Major (circle)**

Name _____ UFID#: _____

Address: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____ Year: _____

1) What other undergraduate performance, film, ethnic, women, and gender study courses have you taken?

2) Why are you taking this course?

3) What are your expectations?

4) What is/are your major area(s) of studies?

5) What do you intend to do after receiving your BA/BS degree?

6) Do you have any other comments that you wish to share?