

**Lectures:**  
Tuesdays, 2:25-3:15

**Discussion Sections:**  
M/W: 9:00-9:50  
M/W:10:05-10:55  
T/TH: 11:10-12:00  
T/TH: 12:15-1:05

# PERFORMANCE STUDIES:

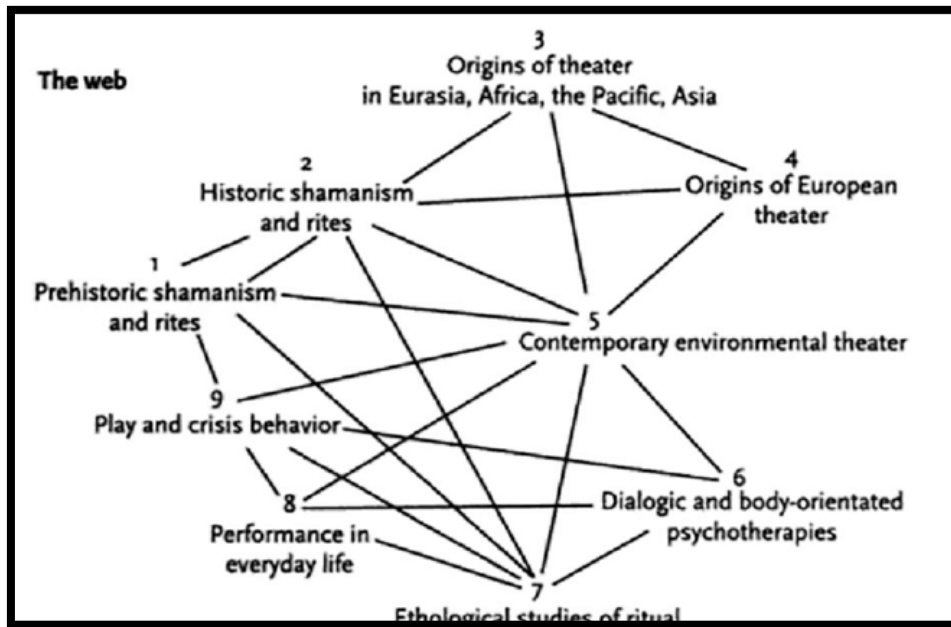


## FROM AESTHETICS TO ZOOMORPHICS

**Instructor:** Claire Mason  
**Email:** cemason2@wisc.edu  
**Office:** ILS Library (room 204)  
**Office Hours:** 3:30- 5:00 Tuesdays

**Course Materials:** Available on CANVAS  
**Submission Portal:** CANVAS  
**Collaborative Portal:** Shared Google Drive

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:



Richard Schechner's Web Illustration of Performance (2004)

*What does it mean to perform?*

*How do we study acts of performance, culture, and creative discourse?*

In this course we will explore the intersections of art, philosophy, culture, and embodiment through the large, and rather nebulous, umbrella of Performance Studies in order to think critically about what it means to make, to see, and to feel. Throughout this course, we will strive to think critically about a variety of different artistic mediums and expressions of performance, read existing scholarship, analyze performance by professionals as well as peers, and innovate performance practices of our own.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Gain a complex understanding of what it means to perform
- ❖ Explore and express what aesthetics mean to us
- ❖ Create our own style of critical thinking and expression
- ❖ Innovate performance practices and approaches to cultural output
- ❖ Expand upon our scholarly writing and analytical skills

### COURSE MATERIAL:

- All course material will be available on CANVAS and will be offered as PDFs or videos online.
- Each module will be broken up into the readings and viewings for the week.
- I recommend that you complete all readings and viewings before the Tuesday lecture, however, each week is broken up into readings for Discussion 1 and Discussion 2, with Discussion 1 as the first discussion after the lecture (e.g.- if you have MW discussions, readings for Discussion 1 are due on the Wednesday following the lecture).
- Assignments will also require additional resources not available on Canvas, so be prepared to visit the library and enjoy browsing the stacks! Additional material is also available on Google Scholar, JSTOR, Project Muse, and other academic search engines.

## CLASS GUIDELINES

For this course we will be creating our own collaborative living document in lieu of an official Class Policy dictated by one person. What this means is that we will be working together to discuss, debate, and create our unique understanding of what the Class Guidelines should be and how they should be enforced. The living document also means we can adapt or revise our policy at any time, though the collaborative nature of the praxis requires class consensus. However, each discussion section can also choose to create secondary guidelines if they so choose.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE CREATING THE LIVING DOCUMENT:

➤ **What is Participation and what is its purpose?**

- *Why do we participate?*
- *What does participation look like?*
- *How should participation be graded?*
- *Should participation be graded?*
- *What does participation mean to you?*
- *When were you particularly proud of your participation in a class?*
- *What made you less interested in participating in a class, and why?*

➤ **What is the purpose of a deadline?**

- *What are deadlines?*
- *Why do we have deadlines?*
- *How should we approach deadlines?*
- *Should late work be accepted?*
- *How should late work be accepted?*
- *What happens if there is an emergency?*
- *Who should enforce the deadline and why?*

➤ **What are grades?**

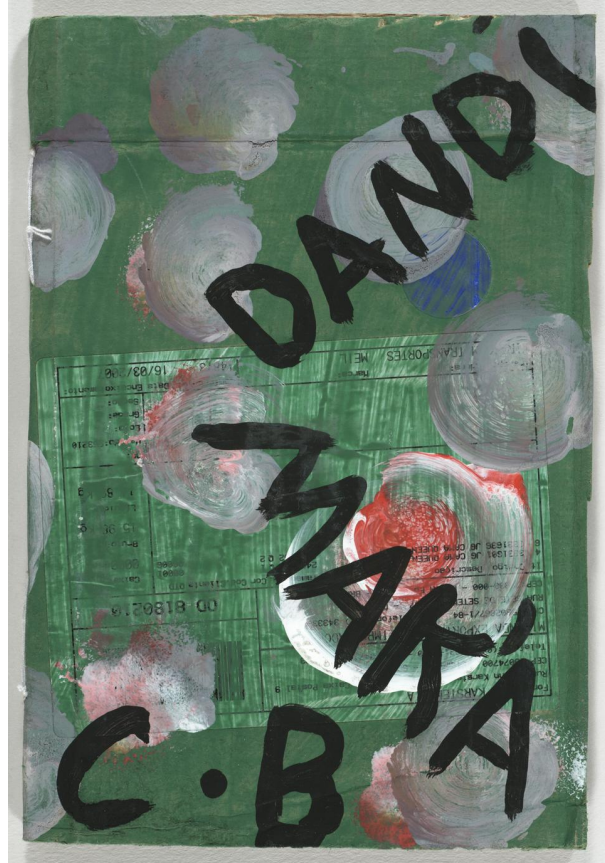
- *What is the purpose of a grade?*
- *How does one measure different levels of accomplishment?*
- *Should we allow revision for a different grade?*
- *What parameters should be placed around seeking new grading?*

➤ **What is Academic Honesty?**

- *What does it mean to plagiarize?*
- *How should plagiarism be punished?*
- *Why might we care about academic honesty?*
- *What is the purpose of learning and growth?*
- *Why might someone be academically dishonest?*

➤ **What are accommodations?**

- *What does it mean to be accommodating?*
- *Who gets to ask for accommodations?*
- *Why might accommodations be useful?*
- *When is it useful to ask for an accommodation?*



*Dandy Maká by Christino Bogado (2007)*

## GRADED ASSIGNMENTS



*Tsang Kin-Wah The Sixth Seal – HE Is Something That Should Be Overcome. You Are Something That Should Be Overcome (2004 – Guangdong Times Museum).*

After each module there will be a short assignment which will scale in size and weight as the course progresses. There will also be two graded in-class assignments and a final paper. Brief explanations are listed below with larger rubrics distributed two weeks before each assignment is due. Please note that both of the in-class assignments are available for self-grading, if the living document so decides.

### IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

#### **Discussion Leader: 100 points.**

Starting in Module Two, you will be responsible for a day where you will create groups of 2-3 to become the experts on the week's topic and lead the D1 discussion, including a short presentation in the format of your choice where you share an analytical summary of a new artist or performance piece which can be compared/contrasted to the assignments for that week, questions for sparking a class discussion, and one engaging activity to bring the themes and ideas of your presentation to life. After leading the discussion you will be individually responsible for the online self-reflection.

#### **In-Class Performance Praxis: 150 points.**

During the final two weeks of class, you will be asked to present a performance project in the medium of your choice, either as an individual or as a group. After your performance you will be responsible for the online self-reflection.

#### **Participation: 200 points**

Guidelines for participation will be decided during the living document week.

## MODULE ASSIGNMENTS:

### ***Applying Aesthetic Theory Short paper: 25 points***

Write a 1,000 word paper (3-4 pages) which synthesizes the material and ideas offered in the first module through the case study of your choice. Rubric will include MLA citations of at least three readings from the first module, application of aesthetic analysis, case study of a performance or performative event **not** used in the first module lectures or discussion, proof read, and thoughtfully articulated.

### ***Critical Theory Short Paper: 50 points***

Write a 1,000 word paper (3-4 pages) which applies critical theory to the case study of your choice. Rubric will include MLA citations of at least two scholarly works not included in the second module, three readings from either Module One or Module Two, proof read, and thoughtfully articulated.

### ***Performance Praxis Preview: 25 points***

Present a 500 word (1-2 pages) proposal for a performance praxis of your choice. Rubric will include what you plan on performing, how you will structure your work, why it is important, how you wish to engage with your spectators, and a short reference list of inspiration, aesthetic theory, and critical or cultural history.

### ***Performance Analysis Short Paper: 50 points***

Write a 1,000 (3-4 page) analysis unpacking the performance of one of your peers. Rubric will include an analytical summary of the piece, questions raised by the work, your interpretation of the piece, and its position within the larger world of performance studies.

## LECTURE QUIZES: 100 points

Each week there will be a brief quiz covering the material discussed in the lecture. Those in the lecture hall will be asked to turn in a quiz. The lowest score for each module will be dropped. Please note that, while lectures will be provided on canvas for later viewing (both if you missed lecture or if you wish to review the content), lecture quizzes will only be available in person.

## FINAL: 300 points

At the end of the course you will have the option to create one of the two following final projects:

- 1) **Critical Writing:** Write a 2,000 word (roughly 8-9 pages) essay on the performance studies topic of your choice. Rubric will include MLA citations of at least 10 scholarly sources, critical theory, aesthetic interpretation, cultural output, and/or placement within the historiography of performance studies.
- 2) **Creative Project:** Create a performative project which can be uploaded to Canvas (video of a performance, photos of an installation, musical composition, etc.) and a 1,000 word (3-4 page) explanation of the piece including at least six scholarly sources supporting the project, your analysis of the impact, your reasoning for creating the piece, and its place within critical theory, aesthetic interpretation, cultural output, and/or placement within the tradition of performance studies.

# COURSE SCHEDULE

**Key: D1 = Discussion 1 (first discussion *after* the lecture (W/TH)  
D2 = Discussion 2 (second discussion after the lecture (M/T)**

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## **\*\* MODULE ONE: WHAT? \*\***

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### WEEK ONE: The Living Document

D1 **Due: Learning Style Survey (Canvas)**

D2 **Read:**

- Richard Schechner, "Foreword: Fundamentals of Performance Studies" *Teaching Performance Studies*.

### WEEK TWO: What is Performance?

D1 **Read:**

- Jill Dolan: "Introduction: Feeling the Potential of Elsewhere" from *Utopia in Performance*
- Victor Turner: "Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbolology" in *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*

D2 **Read:**

- Dwight Conquergood: "Performing Cultures: Ethnography, Epistemology, and Ethics" from *Cultural Struggles: Performance, Ethnography and Praxis*
- Judith Butler: "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory"

### WEEK THREE: What are Aesthetics?

D1 **Read:**

- Jerrold Levinson: "Philosophical Aesthetics: An overview" in *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*
- Jacques Rancière: "The Aesthetic Revolution and Its Outcomes" from *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*

**Watch:**

- ["Aesthetics: Crash Course Philosophy #31"](#) PBS on Youtube

D2 **Read:**

- Elinor Fuchs: "E.F.'s Visit to a Small Planet"
- Theodor W. Adorno: "Lecture Two (The Aesthetics of Natural Beauty)" from *Aesthetics*
- Yuriko Saito: "Everyday Aesthetic Qualities and Transience" in *Everyday Aesthetics*

**Watch:**

- ["What is ~ A E S T H E T I C ~ Experience?"](#) – Idea Channel on Youtube

## WEEK FOUR: Applying Aesthetics

- D1 **Read:**
- Ken-ichi Sasaki: "Preface" from *Asian Aesthetics*
  - Eva Kit Wah Man: "Rethinking Art and Values: A Comparative Revelation of the origin of Aesthetic Experience (from the Neo-Confucian Perspectives)" from *Issues of Contemporary Art and Aesthetics in a Chinese Context*
- Watch:**
- ["Daechwita" by Agust D](#) (Korea)
  - ["My New Swag" by Vava ft. Ty](#) (China)
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- D2 **Read:**
- Futoshi Taga: "East Asian Masculinities" in *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*
  - Sreenath Nair: "RASTRIALOGUE: The politics of the female body in Asian performance"
- Watch:**
- ["100 Ways" by Jackson Wang](#) (Hong Kong / China)
  - ["Bijin" by Chanmina](#) (Japan / Korea)

### MODULE ONE PROJECT:

***Applying Aesthetic Theory Short paper: due Sunday night at 11:59pm to Canvas***

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## **\*\* MODULE TWO: HOW? \*\***

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## WEEK FIVE: Art and Instillation

- D1 **DUE: Discussion Leaders 1**
- Read:**
- Anne Ring Petersen: "Towards a definition" from *Installation Art Between Image and Stage*
- Watch**
- [15 UNUSUAL Art Installations- what were they thinking?](#)
  - ["Designing Video Installations with Douglas Gordon"](#) from VICE
- 
- D2 **Read:**
- Yayoi Kusama: "Prologue" from *Infinity Net: The Autobiography of Yayoi Kusama*
  - Yuko Hasegawa: "The Spell to Re-integrate the Self: the Significance of the Work of Yayoi Kusama in the New Era"
- Watch:**
- ["Yayoi Kusama's Obliteration Room"](#) – Tate Video

## WEEK SIX: Performance Art

D1 **DUE: Discussion Leaders 2**  
**Read:**

- Diana Taylor “A Savage Performance: Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco’s “Couple in the Cage”

**Watch:**

- Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco’s [“Couple in the Cage”](#)

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D2 **Read:**

- Mike Parr and Edward Scheer: “The Resistances of the Body: On Durational Art and Tehching Hsieh”

**Watch:**

- [“The Universal Language of Time, Tehching Hsieh at UNIFINISHED18”](#) Hsieh lecture
- Tehching Hsieh’s [“Time Clock Piece”](#)

## WEEK SEVEN: Live Theatre

D1 **DUE: Discussion Leaders 3**  
**Read:**

- Jacques Rancière: “The Emancipated Spectator”
- *DANCING AT THE DISCO AT THE END OF THE WORLD* by John McCann and Replay Theatre

**Watch:**

- [“DATD Trailer”](#)

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D2 **Read:**

- A.J Gunawardana and Utpal Dutt: “Theatre as a Weapon: an Interview with Utpal Dutt”
- Maggie Inchley: “Theatre as Advocacy: Asking for it and the Audibility of Women in *Nirbhaya*, the Fearless One”

**Watch:**

- [“Intellectualizing theatre is a waste of time? Utpal Dutt”](#)
- [“Nirbhaya: the Clutch”](#)

## WEEK EIGHT: Space and Place

D1 **DUE: Discussion Leaders 4**  
**Read:**

- Joseph Roach: “Introduction: History, Memory, and Performance” in *Cities of the Dead*
- Ellen Roomey: “A SemiPrivate Room”
- Achille Mbembe: “Aesthetics of Superfluity”

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D2 **Read:**

- Michel Foucault: “Questions on Geography”, translated by Colin Gordon, from *Space, Knowledge, and power: Foucault and Geography*



- Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: “10,000 B.C.: The Geology of Morals (Who Does the Earth Think It Is?)” from *EPZ Thousand Plateaus*

**MODULE TWO PROJECT:**

***Critical Theory Short Paper: Due Sunday at 11:59pm to Canvas***

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## MODULE THREE: WHY?

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### WEEK NINE: Transnational and/or Intercultural:

D1 **DUE: Discussion Leaders 5**

**Read:**

- Ulf Hannerz: “Seven Arguments for Diversity” in *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*
- Ric Knowles: “Theatrical interculturalism and its discontents” and “Theatre has always been intercultural” from *Theatre & Interculturalism*

**Watch:**

- *Rite of Spring: The Threat of Beauty* by MAAS Theatre and Dance

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D2

**Read:**

- James O. Young: “The Aesthetics of Cultural Appropriation” from *Cultural Appropriation and the Arts*
- Michael Keane, Anthony Y.H. Fung, and Albert Moran: “Rethinking Structures of Dominance, Translation Effects, and Export Models” in *New Television, Globalisation, and the East Asian Cultural Imagination*.

**Watch:**

- [“New World” by Krewella and Yellow Claw ft Vava](#) (US, Netherlands, and China)
- [“Demente” by Ghung Ha and Guaynaa](#) (Korea and Puerto Rico)
- [“N.R.I.” by Raja Kumari](#) (US-Indian)
- [“...Ready for it?” by Taylor Swift](#) (US)

### WEEK TEN: Virtual

D1 **DUE: Discussion Leaders 6**

**Read:**

- Steve Dixon: “The Genealogy of Digital Performance” from *Digital Performance: A History of New Media in Theater, Dance, Performance Art and Installation*
- Kiri Miller: “Straight Outta Ganton: Virtual Tourism, Fieldwork, and Performance” from *Playing Along: Digital Games, YouTube, and Virtual Performance*

**Watch:**

- *Love 020* Episode 28 – Game Development and Culture Speech
  - Play Grand Theft Auto or watch a Grand Theft Auto streaming video of your choice [youtube: search GTA]
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D2

**Read:**

- Matthew Causey: “Posthuman and postorganic performance: the (dis)appearance of theatre in virtual spaces” in *Theatre and Performance in Digital Culture: From Simulation to Embeddedness*
- N. Katherine Hales: “The Semiotics of Virtuality: Mapping the Posthuman.” in *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*

**Watch:**

- “Nora Inu” (Season1, Episode 7) *Altered Carbon*

WEEK ELEVEN: (Pop)Cultural

D1

**DUE: Discussion Leaders 7**

**Read:**

- Stephen Kline: “Playing with Culture” in *Out of the Garden: Toys, TV, and Children’s Culture in the Age of Marketing*
  - Dan Fleming: “Toys and Society” in *Powerplay: Toys as Popular Culture*
  - Lisa A Serbin and Jane M Connor: “Sex-Typing of Children’s Play Preferences and Patterns of Cognitive Performance”
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D2

**Read:**

- Bradford W. Wright: “Introduction” to *Comic Book Nation: The Transformation of Youth Culture in America*
- Annalisa Di Liddo: “Chronotopes: Outer Space, the Cityscape, and the Space of Comics” in *Alan Moore: Comics as Performance, Fiction as Scalpel*

**Watch:**

- [“Sizzle: Ms. Marvel”](#) on Disney+ and Youtube
- [“Miles Morales Becomes Spider-Man Scene: SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER VERSE”](#) on Youtube

WEEK TWELVE: Generational

D1

**DUE: Discussion Leaders 8**

**Read:**

- Lise Hovik and Elena Pérez: “Baby Becomings: Towards a Dramaturgy of Sympoietic Worlding”
- Ryan Moore: “The Work of Rock in the Age of Digital Reproduction” from *Smells Like Teen Spirit: Music, Youth Culture, and Social Crisis*

**Watch**

- *Sparrow*

- TEEN ambassador shorts

D2

**Read:**

- Scott Magelssen: "Senior Moments" in *Swimming: Participatory Performance and the Making of Meaning*
- Giovanni Mirabella et al: "Theatre Is a Valid Add-On Therapeutic Intervention for Emotional Rehabilitation of Parkinson's Disease Patients"

**MODULE THREE PROJECT:**

***Performance Praxis Preview: Due Sunday night at 11:59pm on Canvas***

**\*\* MODULE FOUR: FINAL PRAXIS \*\***

**WEEK THIRTEEN: Writing, Watching, Witnessing**

**Due: In Class Performance Praxis**

**Read:**

- Ronald J. Pelias: "Performative Writing as Scholarship: An Apology, and Argument, an Anecdote"
- Mary Poovey: "Creative Criticism: Adaptation, Performative Writing, and the Problem of Objectivity"
- Linda M. Park-Fuller: "Audienicing the Audience: Playback Theatre, Writing, and Social Activism"

**WEEK FOURTEEN: Returning, Revising, Renewing**

**Due: In Class Performance Praxis**

**Read:**

- Richard Schechner: "What is Performance Studies" from *Performance Studies: Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*

**MODULE FOUR PROJECT:**

***Performance Analysis Short Paper: Due Sunday night at 11:59pm on Canvas***

**FINAL:**

**Final paper due Sunday night at 11:59pm on Canvas**