

DANC/THEA-357

Space and Materiality: Performing Place

Winter 2021
Four-week Session

Professor: Marcela I. Oteiza
Class hours: 10 am to noon
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Course Description

Scenography explores and shapes the material world in and through the performative event. In site-specific performances, it transforms place and time to create an alternative reality in which the materiality of the artistic design and the performer's body intervene in the architecture of a place and the spectator's reception of meaning. In this course, we will study site interventions through the lens of street performance, immersive theater, and the theatrical apparatus to build a theoretical and direct understanding of the material potential and limitations of the four key elements involved in the scenographic project -- artistic design, the actor's body, architecture, and time.

This course is divided into three units: (1) site-specific; (2) street performance; and (3) immersive performance. Each unit includes scholarly readings, assignments in performance and scenography, and specific production showings (online). There will be two written responses for the course (5-to-7-page papers) on two of the works seen online that demonstrate the student's cumulative grasp of site specificity, scenography, and materiality. There will also be a final journal showing/submission.

Learning Objectives

- To critically analyze space and scenography in performance.
- To understand place and space within the context of the performative event.
- To obtain practical experience with site-specific work.

Textbooks and Materials

*Required:**Class Reader (Moodle)*

Recommended:

Performing Site-Specific Theatre Politics, Place and Practice. Edited by Elaine Aston and Bryan Reynolds, Palgrave, 2012.

Reframing Immersive Theatre: The Politics and Pragmatics of Participatory Performance. Edited by James Frieze. Palgrave MacMillan, 2016.

Radical Street Performance, an International Anthology. Jan Cohen-Cruz, editor, Routledge 2013.

Classroom Behavior and Expectations

Participation

This is a performance/seminar class constructive peer critique and daily participation is expected .

Assignments

- 1) Daily homework (media journal entry, performance attendance, and readings); be prepared for class and on time.
- 2) Reading responses; a total of two (3 to 7 pages, double spaced, MLA style of citations).
- 3) Media journal presentation/sharing (blog, video, etc.).

Assignments *(grade weight for this category)*

- Student participation in the class discussions 15%
- Daily assignments including readings, class presentation, and online performance attendance 20%
- Media journal 15%
- Reading responses (2) 20%
- Weekly assignments (4) 20%
- Final Showing 10%

University-wide recommended syllabus statements

***The policies below should be reviewed each semester prior to sharing your syllabus to ensure that the most recent version of the policy is included. ***

Accommodation Statement

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a disability as defined by the ADA. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact [Accessibility Services](#) in order to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College, rooms 021/022, or can be reached by email (accessibility@wesleyan.edu) or phone (860-685-5581).

Religious Observances

Religious observances require that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required assignments/attendance. If this applies to you, please speak with me directly as soon as possible at the beginning of the term.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, ability, and nationality. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [the student code](#).

Discrimination and Harassment

Wesleyan University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. Wesleyan will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this Wesleyan policy, "**Protected Classes**" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact [the Office for Equity and Inclusion](#) at 860-685-4771. The [responsibility of the University Members](#) has more information.

Honor Code

All students of Wesleyan University are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the Honor Code](#) of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council—Office of Student Affairs. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). The [Honor Code Office](#) has more information.

Time Commitment

While the exact time commitment for the class will vary individually and over the course of the semester, I recommend that you budget approximately three out-of-class hours for every class hour to complete the reading, assignments, homework, and project. I have designed the class so that it should be feasible to satisfactorily complete the requirements with approximately twelve hours per week of time commitment. If you are spending more time than this on a regular basis I would encourage you to check in with me.

Course Calendar

| CLASS ACTIVITIES | READING & ASSIGNMENTS |
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| Monday January 4 Course & Student Presentation What is Performance | Reading: What is performance Schechner |
| Tuesday, January 5 Space and Place introduction | Reading: <i>The practice of everyday life</i> by Michel De Certau |
| Wednesday, January 6 How to see a performance (Analysis) | Reading: Central Concepts of Theatre and Performance Research: The Concept of Performance from <i>Theatre and Performance Studies</i> by Erika Fischer-Lichte, 2014 |
| Thursday, January 7 Site-specific concepts and history | Reading: Introduction to <i>Site-Specifics</i> by Nick Kaye, 2000 To see: Christo Gates of Central Park https://vimeo.com/152086 |
| Friday, January 8 Weekly assignment 1 showings Find a site on campus; occupy and record to share with class | To submit: First Journal shearing |
| Monday, January 11 Site-Specific Performance | Reading: Introduction to <i>Site-Specific performance</i> by Mike Pearson, 2010 To see: Marina Abramovic the artist is present https://vimeo.com/12226459 |
| Tuesday, January 12 Site-Specific relational modes Video works as site-based performance Re-thinking site. | Reading: One Place after another by Miwon kwon, 1997 See: Fura del Baus video Works: Hera https://vimeo.com/69952316 Afrodita https://vimeo.com/69883670 Marcellí Antunez Roca: Protomembrana https://vimeo.com/19739146 |
| Wednesday, January 13 Class work/analysis of performances central concepts in groups | Reading: Methodologies: Performance Analysis from <i>Theatre and Performance Studies</i> by Erika Fischer-Lichte, 2014 |
| Thursday, January 14 Site-specific and Mobility | Reading: <i>Site-Specific performance the mobility turn</i> by Fiona Wilke, 2012 |

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| <p>To see: Remote X Rimini Protocoll by Steven Keagi (choose city) https://vimeo.com/203111473</p> | |
| <p>Friday, January 15</p> <p>Weekly assignment 2 showings Find an action for your site; perform and record to share with class</p> | <p>To submit: Second Journal shearing Written response 1 Site-specific</p> |
| <p>Monday, January 18 (or MLK day) Street Performance as a post dramatic theater form Introduction</p> | <p>Reading: Post-Dramatic Theater by Hans-Thies Lehmann. Routledge 2006 Pg. 30-45</p> |
| <p>Tuesday, January 19 Street Performance</p> | <p>Reading: Dancing in the Streets': The Aurillac Festival of Street Theatre by Sue Harris, 2010 To See: Homo Catodicus at the Aurillac street theatre festival https://vimeo.com/104450521</p> |
| <p>Wednesday, January 20 Street Performance festivals and community</p> | <p>Reading: Theater Festival and their audiences Theater-2011-Meersman-79-103</p> |
| <p>Thursday, January 21 Street Performance objects and politics</p> | <p>Reading: City as Site: Street Performance and Site Permeability during the <i>Festival Internacional Teatro a Mil</i>, Chile, 2012–2015 By M. Oteiza To See: Santiago(en)vivo https://youtu.be/Jz-zz1u3L0s</p> |
| <p>Friday, January 22 Weekly assignment 3 showings Moving to a public space: Performance Intervention</p> | <p>To submit: Third Journal shearing To See: Willi Doner "Bodies in urban Spaces" https://vimeo.com/24088848</p> |
| <p>Monday, January 25 Immersive Performance Introduction</p> | <p>Reading: Immersive theatres: intimacy and immediacy in contemporary performance by Josephine Machon 2013 To see: Sleep no more by Punch drunk co http://www.sleepnomore.com/#share Punch drunk documentary: https://youtu.be/mls7Op1DpKE</p> |
| <p>Tuesday, January 26 Immersive Performance main concepts</p> | <p>Reading: The Promise of Experience: Immersive Theatre in the Experience Economy by Adam Alston(253) from Reframing Immersive</p> |

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| | Theatre: The Politics and Pragmatics of Participatory Performance. Edited by James Frieze. Palgrave MacMillan, 2016 |
| Wednesday, January 27 Immersive Performance | Reading: Outdoors: A Rimini Protokoll Theatre-Maze by Esther Belvis Pons (119) from Reframing Immersive Theatre: The Politics and Pragmatics of Participatory Performance. Edited by James Frieze. Palgrave MacMillan, 2016 To See: Immersive Theater from immersiveworld.com PBS.org |
| Thursday, January 28 Immersive Performance | Reading: Reflections on Immersion and Interaction non-zero one, 132 from Reframing Immersive Theatre: The Politics and Pragmatics of Participatory Performance. Edited by James Frieze. Palgrave MacMillan, 2016. To See: Next Wave Immersive immersiveworld.com PBS.org |
| Friday, January 29 Weekly assignment 4 showings Immersive Performance proposition | To submit: fourth Journal shearing Written response 2 Immersive or Street Performance |
| Monday, February 1 Reading day or MLK make-up day | |
| Tuesday, February 2 Final Showings | |