



What is the marriage of **performance** and **curiosity**?

Introduction to Performance

Beginning from a dynamic relationship with Hafiz, a mystic poet from the 14th century, this course asks: *what urgently merits our curiosity, and about what are you most curious?*

In this course, you will create, perform, write, read, and train from the basis of (a) rich, required texts, (b) in-class activities, and (c) out-of-class fieldtrips. You will gain skills in design and public (d) performance you develop and share for yourselves and one another. You will (e) write in partnership with these processes, in blog entries and a midterm and final exam.

Reason for the Class

In the U.S., a rapidly streamlined barrage of ads, products, and practices encourage us to place our worth in “being seen” more than seeking to understand, or be understood. We are guided to pursue an “ease” of everyday living, which may color the *unknown* as a “difficulty” more than a delight. In India this summer, several performance mentors encouraged the practice of “sensing *beyond* what we see or think in this moment.” This develops the skills for new or deepened relationships with others, and with self, in the movement between extremes of joy and challenge in the world around us.

Inspired by this advice-- and Hafiz’s intense poetics of curiosity -- we will encounter performance not just as a product, but a mode of radical inquiry, developing relationships with the *unorthodox*, the *unexpected*, and the *unfamiliar*. We will work with methods of *story*, *movement*, *interviews*, and *poetry* to learn about performance as: (1) an historical form of knowing, (2) a present way of being, and (3) a future-oriented process of critical, cultural engagement.

What does this require? That you show up with your full self every day, to build in partnership a space of safety and trust; an education made through integrity, commitment, and experiment.

Below, you will see exactly how to do this.

Assignments

Course Texts:

Ladinsky, *A Year with Hafiz*, Daily Contemplations (translations of the Persian poet’s work), *and* Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Bell, *Theories of Performance* (excerpts)

Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, *Games for Actors/NonActors* (excerpts)

Cohen-Cruz, *Radical Street Performance* (excerpts)

Knight, Schwarzman, *Beginner’s Guide to Community Based Arts* (excerpts)

Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: The Aesthetics of Peacebuilding* (excerpts)

Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Politics, Performance, Practice* (excerpts)

Papa, Singhal, Papa, *Organizing for Social Change: Theory and Praxis* (excerpts)

Pollock, *Remembering: Performance and Oral History* (excerpts)

Supplemental stories, dance practices from Lerman, Halprin, Conquergood, Wasamba, many others

Available at our website: <http://performanceintro5@wordpress.com>

Blog Entries

As a site for your own development, feedback to classmates, and rigorous dialogue with our texts, you will create weekly blog entries.

You will write a total of 7 (of 9 possible) weeks' entries. Blog posts are due by 8P on Monday night for that week's readings.

- (1) **Discuss** the reading for the next week's class by writing 1 key question, sticking point, or place of deeper understanding, raised for you by an important theme of the assigned material. Paragraph form (4-5 developed sentences).
- (2) Provide one multimedia **performance example** related to your discussion question. Your example may be in the form of an embedded video/image/sound recording, or other representative media showing acts of performance. (Performance examples can be either (a) recently witnessed by you, at a local performance event or in your daily surroundings, or (b) researched as an example of excellent, creatively approached performance material. Have fun with this: do your research, be imaginative).

Projects

To understand performance, you must do it. What a wonderful opportunity. To perform well, one must be met with high expectations, and high support: you have both.

Performance Work: 3 total (Introduction, Invitational Performance, Dialogue Performance)

Midterm - Take-home questions (3-4p) to accompany your Invitational Performance

Final Exam - Research Paper (5-7p), plus "Re-mix" to accompany your Dialogue Performance

Fieldtrips

Spending good time with performance, particularly from diverse perspectives, allows you to see it as both a critical form of *analysis* and *experience*. Among multiple options throughout the semester, you will attend **2** required out-of-class fieldtrips.

Participation

We will create universes together. Worry not. Just be yourself, contribute, come prepared, support your classmates, try new things.

Schedule

August 21 and 23 - **Introduction**

Reading 1: Hafiz (excerpts), Introduction to Hafiz and interpretation by Ladinsky

August 28 and 30 - **Performances 1 and 2**

September 4 and 6 - **Communication and Identity - Ethics** *Blog 1 Sept. 3

Labor Day Holiday, and Readings 1 and 2: Madison, Ethics and Theories of Performance

September 11 and 13 - **History, and Culture - Dialectics** *Blog 2 Sept. 10

Reading 1: Organizing for Social Change

Reading 2: Organizing for Social Change

September 18 and 20 - **Conscientization** *Blog 3 Sept. 17

Reading 1: Pedagogy of the Oppressed Intro and Ch 2

Reading 2: Pedagogy of the Oppressed Ch 1

September 25 and 27 - **Ritual and Symbol - Possibility** *Blog 4 Sept. 24

Reading 1: Guerilla Theater, Greenpeace and supplemental

Reading 2: Safdar Hashmi, The Right to Perform and Conquergood, Health Theater

October 2 and 4 - **Play and Improvisation** *Blog 5 Oct. 1

Reading 1: Anna Halprin, Liz Lerman, supplemental

In class rehearsal

October 9 and 11 - **Invitational Performances 1 and 2**

October 16 and 18 - **Midterm and Fall Break**

Midterm due October 16 (and 18 is FB)

October 23 and 25 - **Theatre - Expanding** *Blog 6 Oct. 22

Reading 1: Theatre of the Oppressed, Poetics of the Oppressed

Reading 2: Games for Actors and Nonactors, Invisible Theater

October 30 and 1 - **Building Peace** *Blog 7 Oct. 29

Reading 1: The Moral Imagination

Reading 2: The Moral Imagination

November 6 and 8 - **Radical Realigning** *Blog 8 Nov. 5

Reading 1: Performance Studies, Conquergood, Madison Ethics

Reading 2: Pollock, Remembering, Oral History Performance

November 13 and 15 - **Reshaping witness** *Blog 9 Nov. 12

Reading 1: Remembering Oral History Performance, Witnessing, Beyond Recognition

Reading 2: Organizing for Social Change Parts 1 and 2

November 20 and 22 - **Rehearsal and Thanksgiving**

In class rehearsal (and 22 is TG)

November 27 and 29 - **Dialogic Performances**

December 4 and December 8 - **Re-mix Preparation and Final Exam**

In class roundtable

December 8, Saturday, 12 noon Final Exam and Re-mix Performances

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Attendance

We meet 28 times, with a total of 6 performance days (and final exam).

1 unexcused absence (no note necessary)

1 excused absence (you bring doctor's or dept. note)

Absences are *not excused* on any of the 6 performance days (you will perform 3 of these days, you will be audience on 3), or final exam.

Grading

Participation - 20%, Blogs - 15%, Fieldtrips - 2.5%, Performance 1 - 7.5%, Performance 2 - 15%, Midterm - 10%, Performance 3 - 15%, Final Exam - 25%

A - 90-100%, B - 80-90%, C - 70-80%, D - 60-70%, F - 0-60% (+: top 3p of ea. 10p scale, -: bottom 3p)

All rubrics posted on the blog.

Contact and Schedule

Tuesdays and Thursdays 2 to 3:15PM

Blogs by Monday 8PM

Office hours Tuesdays 3:30-4:30, or by appointment

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