

**SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL
CONTEMPORARY BRITISH AND IRISH THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME**

Dates: 7th – 18th August 2017

Times: 9.30am – 5pm (variable schedule, plus evening excursions and events)

Programme Administrator: Lauren Pope (suiss@ed.ac.uk)

Programme Directors: Dr Hannah Tweed and Dr Calum Rodger (suisssdir@ed.ac.uk)

Academic Units: 10 SCOTCAT / 2.5 US Credits/ 5 ECTS

Course Description:

Contemporary British and Irish Theatre and Performance is a unique course in the theory and practice of contemporary theatre in Britain and Ireland today. This two-week course provides a challenging, dynamic, and diverse introduction to theatre that makes a global impact. The course takes place in Edinburgh, affording students the chance to study in Scotland's beautiful capital city while the Edinburgh International Festival and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe take place.

This course offers students a supportive environment in which to develop and apply creative approaches to dramatic texts. SUISS tutors, who are experienced drama tutors and theatre-makers, lead the students in two-hour group seminars in which students workshop performances of scenes from contemporary British and Irish drama. In seminars, students also develop their critical analysis of dramatic texts and forms, with a focus on the practical implications of local, global, and socio-political contexts. Students will attend exclusive masterclasses, where they will engage in discussions and practical activities set by a selection of Scotland's award-winning writers, playwrights, and dramaturges. Among these are masterclasses offered by Scottish Playwrights' Studio – Scotland's only dedicated, independent development organisation for playwrights, who work actively with Scotland's playwrights to support, develop, and celebrate their exceptional talents. Students have a unique opportunity to develop their own critical analysis by attending a range of lectures from our concurrent Contemporary British and Irish Literature course. The lectures will be pitched high, and lecturers are advised that all students will be familiar with the texts at the time of lecture. Students will learn from a number of experts in the fields of dramaturgy, choreography, performance analysis, theatre criticism, and more.

In addition to the academic programme, SUISS offers an extensive programme of social and cultural activities. Students have the opportunity to attend events, which include talks on performance, film, and festival shows, as well as exclusive audiences with some of Scotland's leading contemporary writers and practitioners. In addition, our Theatre and Performance students will have the opportunity to attend private readings by well-known British authors, many of whom will be reading at the Edinburgh International Book Festival in August. Students have the opportunity to attend a range of additional events, which include film screenings, poetry performances, and ceilidhs (traditional Scottish dancing).

By the end of the course, students should have acquired and developed skills in performance and in performance analysis. They should be able to reflect on personal

performance practice and on that of others. Students should also hone skills in textual analysis of contemporary British and Irish drama.

The Theatre and Performance programme offers:

- **9 Workshop Seminars:** SUISS tutors lead small group workshop seminars catered to students' interests in theatre and performance. Seminars are two hours long and focus on performance and textual analysis, with reference to our reading list.
- **5 Masterclasses:** prominent contemporary British writers, critics, performers, and directors offer students an opportunity to engage in unique discussions and activities.
- **3 Lectures:** students attend select Contemporary British and Irish Literature lectures to gain additional perspectives of critical analysis.
- **Festival Performances:** students attend a range of events from the Edinburgh International Festival and Festival Fringe programme.
- **Scottish Playwrights' Studio Discussions:** students attend discussions run by accomplished practitioners from Scotland's only independent development organisation for playwrights.
- **Northern Light:** an opportunity to be published in our biennial publication, *Northern Light*. Our last issue was published in November 2015; the next is due to be published in 2017.

Suggested Reading:

Core texts and lectures for the 2017 Theatre and Performance summer programme, on which the tuition will be based, are listed below in order of study.

- David Greig, *Europe* (1995)
- Alan Moore and David Lloyd (illust.), *V for Vendetta* [graphic novel] (1989)
- John McGrath, *Hyperlynx* (2001)
- Sarah Kane, *Blasted* (1995)
- Alan Bennett, *History Boys* (2004)
- Martin McDonagh, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (1996)
- Stef Smith, *Roadkill* (2012)
- Seamus Heaney, *Burial at Thebes* (2004)
- debbie tucker green, *hang* (2015)
- Rona Munro, *James I* (2014)

Attendance:

Attendance for all seminars, lectures, performances, and masterclasses is mandatory.

Contact Hours/Academic Credit:

The SUISS credit scheme is based on a combination of contact teaching hours, independent study and formal assessment. SUISS students gain credit, therefore, by attending lectures, masterclasses, and seminars, pursuing their studies in their own time, and completing written assessments. These courses are accredited through the University of Edinburgh Credit Awarding Body (SCQF) and can be transferred into the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and to North American universities. This credit can be sought at two levels:

- SCQF8 (equivalent to junior honours [1-3 years of study])
- SCQF10 (equivalent to senior honours [4 or more years of study])

This two-tier system allows SUISS students to pursue the same credit as any other student but at a level appropriate to the stage of their studies at their home institution.

Credit for the **2-week course** is formalised as follows:

Contact Teaching Hours: **40**

Expected Independent Study Hours: **60**

Total Hours: **100**

SCOTCAT Credit Weighting: **10** points

(1 SCOTCAT point = 10 hour workload)

Assessment:

The Theatre and Performance course is assessed according to a portfolio of work developed over the course of the school. Each credit student will be expected to submit two pieces of written work, the length and expectations of which will be according to the level of credit being sought. Written work is marked first by the tutor, and then by our external examiners.

SCQF8 (1st-3rd year undergraduates)

Creative seminar exercises and class contribution – 20%

1000 word performance analysis – 30%

1000 word textual analysis essay – 50%

The creative seminar exercises and class contribution mark includes contribution to discussion in seminars, attendance, shared feedback on performance exercises, and participation in masterclasses. The performance analysis is a formal essay analysing a performance of a show seen with SUISS as part of the Edinburgh International Festival. The textual analysis essay should critique and analyse one of the dramatic set texts from the course.

SCQF10 (4th year undergraduate and above)

Creative seminar exercises and class contribution – 20%

1500 word performance analysis – 30%

1500 word textual analysis essay – 50%

The creative seminar exercises and class contribution mark includes contribution to discussion in seminars, attendance, shared feedback on performance exercises, and participation in masterclasses. The performance analysis is a formal essay analysing a performance of a show seen with SUISS as part of the Edinburgh International Festival. The textual analysis essay should critique and analyse one of the dramatic set texts from the course.

Learning Outcomes:

SCQF8 (1st-3rd year undergraduates). The course will enable students to:

- Identify and interpret performance events with reference to a range of appropriate performance theories
- Learn how to develop critical self-assessment, to critique and be critiqued constructively
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of selected aspects of contemporary British and Irish theatre and performance, and British and Irish drama criticism
- Articulate and communicate their responses to the material studied on the course both orally and in the form of essays
- Develop organisational and analytical skills so as to be able to present and argue a case cogently and effectively
- Show familiarity with contemporary methods of information retrieval and apply them to good effect in their written work

SCQF10 (4th year undergraduate and above). The course will enable students to:

- Identify and interpret performance events with reference to a range of appropriate performance theories
- Learn how to develop critical self-assessment, to critique and be critiqued constructively
- Explain how British and Irish theatre and performance have related to wider cultural, social and political debates and activities
- Demonstrate an appreciation of the meaning and significance of theatre in different societies and be able to engage critically with cultural debates related to theatre
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a wide range of contemporary British and Irish theatre and performance, and British and Irish drama criticism
- Analyse creative works with a focus on craft effectiveness, and articulate the strengths and weaknesses in a piece of theatre or performance in a nuanced and analytical manner, both orally and in the form of essays
- Develop organisational and analytical skills so as to be able to present and argue a case cogently and effectively
- Show familiarity with contemporary methods of information retrieval and apply them to good effect in their written work

Reading List and Inspirations

- David Greig, *Europe* (1995)
- Alan Moore and David Lloyd (illust.), *V for Vendetta* [graphic novel] (1989)
- John McGrath, *Hyperlynx* (2001)
- Sarah Kane, *Blasted* (1995)
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- Rona Munro, *James I* (2014)

We'll also take inspiration from the many trips, readings, events and masterclasses scheduled:

Week 1

Arthur's Seat Hike

Author reading

Acting Masterclass

EIF Performance

Week 2

EIF Performance

Author reading

Clowning Masterclass

Gender Masterclass

Playwrights' Studio Masterclasses

Otherwise, Edinburgh is an exceptionally vibrant city that boasts a flotilla of exhibitions, galleries, literary events, museums, buildings, libraries, bars, theatres and natural features for you to gain inspiration from. Getting out of the city is highly recommended. Scotland's unique highlands and islands are a must-see (even in the rain). Tutors are happy to share ideas in class!

You are also a direct source of inspiration:

- Each student will be asked to give the group a **10 minute**

presentation on one of the seminar texts.

- We'll set up a '**Inspiration Library**' on **Dropbox** to add links to books, films, plays, websites, interviews, artwork and other resources that keeps us working, from grammar tips to inspiring writer/actor interviews.
- Each student is encouraged to **keep a journal** for the duration of the course to reflect on their creative process, improve the verbalisation of their thoughts (free-writing 'pages' is a daily recommended practise) or just to use as a private space to collect quotes and ideas.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Directors, Dr Hannah Tweed and Dr Calum Rodger, at suissdir@ed.ac.uk.