## Fall 2017 Graduate Course Bulletin

**Institute of Performing Arts**

**Performance Studies**

**New York University / Tisch School of the Arts / 721 Broadway, 6th fl**

**212-998-1620 / performance.studies@nyu.edu**

### Course Schedule

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Class #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Meeting Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>PERF-GT 2616</td>
<td>16261</td>
<td>Methods in Performance Studies*</td>
<td>9:30am- 12:15pm</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>D. Kapchan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERF-GT 1080</td>
<td>21913</td>
<td>Contemporary NY Perf: City, Site and Practice</td>
<td>12:30pm- 3:15pm</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>M. Gaines</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERF-GT 2406</td>
<td>5980</td>
<td>Performance and Politics</td>
<td>3:30pm- 6:15pm</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>D. Taylor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PERF-GT 2313</td>
<td>22135</td>
<td>Creative Response: Performance Matters†</td>
<td>6:20pm- 9:20pm</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>K. Finley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>PERF-GT 2320</td>
<td>21927</td>
<td>Performative Ethnography</td>
<td>9:30am- 12:15pm</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>D. Kapchan</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERF-GT 2312</td>
<td>5562</td>
<td>Issues in Arts Politics †</td>
<td>11:00am- 1:45pm</td>
<td>C-15</td>
<td>H. Yapp</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PERF-GT 2218</td>
<td>21930</td>
<td>Perf &amp; Law: Race &amp; Reorder of Things</td>
<td>3:30pm- 6:15pm</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>Shimakawa/Yapp</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>PERF-GT 1000</td>
<td>16264</td>
<td>Introduction to Performance Studies**</td>
<td>1:00pm- 3:45pm</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>A. Lepecki</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PERF-GT 2804</td>
<td>21935</td>
<td>Fetish &amp; Perf: How To Do Things With Objects</td>
<td>4:00pm- 6:45pm</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>Browning</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>PERF-GT 2696</td>
<td>21922</td>
<td>Migrancy and Performance</td>
<td>10:30am – 1:15pm</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>A. Vazquez</td>
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### Key Dates 2017-2018

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 2017</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>New Student Orientation &amp; Advising</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>First day of fall semester</td>
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<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Last day to drop/add</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2017</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Fall recess (no classes)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Graduate advising begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2017</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Spring registration 9:00am</td>
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<td></td>
<td>22-26</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving break (no classes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2017</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Last day of fall semester</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Winter break begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Spring classes begin</td>
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### Registration Information

**Update your contact information.** Go to the Student Center in Albert and click on "Personal Information." All students are required to have an "NYU Emergency Alert" cellular phone number and emergency contact information to register for Fall 2017.

**MAJORS:**

*Graduate Core Required and Restricted 1st & 2nd year PhD Majors only

**NON-MAJORS:** Due to the one-year format of the Masters program most of our classes are restricted to majors only. If you are interested in registering for a class you must submit an External Student Registration form. If space becomes available you will be contacted with instructions:

[Click here for External Form]
MONDAY

Methods in Performance Studies (Required 1st & 2nd Year PhD students)
Deborah Kapchan, dk52@nyu.edu
PERF-GT 2616.001 (Albert #16261)
Mondays, 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points
721 Broadway, 6th floor, Seminar room 611

The development of performance studies methodologies based on interdisciplinary research paradigms (movement analysis, ethnomusicology, ethnography, history, oral history, orature, visual studies, ethnomethodology, among others) and the close reading and analysis of exemplary studies. Considers the conceptualization and design of research projects in the context of theoretical and ethical issues and in relation to particular research methods and writing strategies. Develops practical skills related to archival and library research; ethnographic approaches, including participant observation and interviewing; documentation and analysis of live performance; and analysis of documents of various kinds, including visual material. Readings address the history of ideas, practices, and images of objectivity, as well as of reflexive and interpretive approaches, relationships between science and art, and research perspectives arising from minoritarian and postcolonial experiences. Assignments include weekly readings, written responses to the readings, and exercises. Students are encouraged to bring projects to the course, especially ones that might develop into dissertations.

Contemporary NY Performance: City, Site, and Practice
Malik Gaines, mgaines@nyu.edu
PERF-GT 1080.001 (Albert #21913)
Mondays, 12:30pm – 3:15pm, 4 points
721 Broadway, 6th floor, Studio 612

In considering a range of performance practices in New York City today - from downtown performance art to dance in the museum to multimedia theater to public social interventions to Broadway itself - this seminar investigates the relationship between live performances and the discursive histories that support them. Contemporary performances will be read alongside art history, theater and dance studies, and texts from other arts disciplines that allow us to situate present institutions. In a parallel inquiry, urban studies and political and social histories, including those that underscore problems of development and gentrification, will help us locate fields of performance and the powers that animate them. Particular attention to neighborhoods such as the West Village, Harlem, Times Square, and the Lower East Side will draw focus to the relationship between city life and its performance traditions. Alongside the historical and theoretical study, the class will meet performance practitioners and see live performances that help us think about New York City as a site that demands performance.

Performance and Politics
Diana Taylor, diana.taylor@nyu.edu
PERF-GT 2406.001 (Albert #5980)
Mondays, 3:30pm – 6:15pm, 4 points
721 Broadway, 6th floor, Classroom 613

This course explores the many ways in which artists and activists and other social actors use performance to make a social intervention. We begin the course examining several theories about performance and politics (Brecht, Boal, Foucault, Ngugi wa Thiong'o among others) and then focus on issues of agency, space, event, and audience both online and off. Special attention will be paid to the role of performance in the 2016 presidential elections. Video screenings and guest lectures will provide an additional dimension for the
course. Students are encouraged to develop their own sites of investigation and present their work as a final presentation and paper.

**Creative Response: Performance Matters, Between Imagination and Experience †**
Karen Finley, karen.finley@nyu.edu, Cross-listed with Art & Public Policy - Limited Seating
PERF-GT 2313.001 (Albert #22135)
Mondays, 6:20pm – 9:20pm, 4 points
721 Broadway, Room 709, 7th floor Dramatic Writing Program

Performance Matters will consider what influences private and public performance, to consider what is performing, what we perform and how we perform. This class will look deeper into varying aspects of staging such as everyday experience, lists, menus, rituals, timing, gathering and collecting. Performing and communicating the body: gender, race and identification. Awareness of work in progress, process, such as text, script, online and improvisation will be utilized. The visual aspect of performing: such as accessories, design and costume. Listening, finding voice and giving and taking commands, and deviation from dominant norms of entertainment and product. Hopefully with deeper understanding, we will seek to challenge and stimulate our own creative content to produce original, thought provoking performance. Students will present their own work either individually or in groups, write about the theory and content of their production and have assigned readings to supplement their areas of concentration.

**TUESDAY**

**Performative Ethnography**
Deborah Kapchan, dk52@nyu.edu
PERF-GT 2320.001 (Albert #21927)
Tuesdays, 9:30am – 12:15pm, 4 points
721 Broadway, 6th floor, Classroom 613

What is a performative ethnography? How does it both document and create worlds? And how do these worlds intervene in public debates about humanism, animal studies, ecology, indigeneity and the politics of aesthetic creation? What are the ethics in writing about others?

1985 Richard Schechner wrote *Between Theater and Anthropology*, with a forward by anthropologist Victor Turner. In 1988, Turner wrote *The Anthropology of Performance*, with a preface by Schechner. The discipline of performance studies was conceived in the body of the performer – in happenings, dances, rituals, and everyday life – as well as their inscription in what Phelan calls “performative writing.” The discipline of anthropology, on the other hand, while not conceived in performance per se, has always been interested in rituals, practices and face-to-face (live) encounters, as well as in their “thick description” (Geertz).

What is the status of the relationship between anthropology and performance studies today? Is anthropology a philosophy, as Viveiros-de Castro argues? Has performance studies repressed its anthropological history in order to assert its uniqueness? Have anthropologists themselves taken the “performative turn” while dis-acknowledging the genealogies that inform it?

In this course we examine the sometimes-anxious relationship between performance studies and anthropology with an eye to how these disciplines have influenced each other. Beginning with the work of Schechner and his relation to the avant-garde, we move on to examine the work of ethnographers and social theorists like Barbara Browning, Dwight Conquergood, Steven Feld, Michael Jackson, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblatt, Heather Love, Sally Ann Ness, Deirdre Sklar, Kathleen Stewart, Michael Taussig and other writers who document aesthetic
Assessing the performative in ethnography reveals that some of the most experimental ethnographic writing is indebted to performance studies.

**Issues in Arts Politics†**

_Hentyle Yapp, Cross-listed with Art & Public Policy- Limited Seating_

PERF-GT 2312.001 (Albert #5562)

Mondays, 11:00am – 1:45pm, 4 points

25 West 4th Street- Classroom C-15

This course expands the methodological, theoretical, and discursive possibilities of situating culture and the arts in relation to the political, tracking this relationship in a transnational world. By privileging analytics from transnational feminism, critical race theory, disability discourse, and queer studies, this course specifically reimagines the issues of arts and politics in relation to questions of power and survival. However, rather than perpetuating a dominant discourse of art merely being resistant to the state, we aim to expand other narratives and analytics that seek to complicate not only the political, but also the aesthetic.

This course will first establish working definitions of aesthetic theory and practice and political discourse. While tracking shifts in visual art in relation to performance, social practice, and the intermedial, we will also find grounding in concepts from political economy like neoliberalism, biopolitics, and Marxism. By doing so, we will establish methodological approaches to how we analyze legal texts, policy documents, art objects, and moving bodies. From this theoretical and practical grounding in arts and politics, we then engage different legal, “material” sites – including but not limited to native sovereignty, immigration, citizenship/personhood, “War on Terror,” intellectual property, and labor. We will ask what analyses of culture and art reveal about such sites. In offering multiple texts, the goal is for us to track intellectual conversations that are occurring across disciplines and fields. In situating art in relation to theory and legal cases, we will examine and destabilize the disciplinary boundaries around what we take/privilege to be fact, truth, ephemera, and merely interesting. By looking at legal cases and theory, critical theory, and cultural production, our meetings will study what it means to critique the law from a “left/progressive” standpoint(s), seeking to challenge the liberal frames that inform many of our normative claims. What are the limits of both politics and art in describing and addressing bodily injury, pain, and power? The artworks we will draw from come from the Global South, along with Europe and the US.

Theorists include Hortense Spillers, Sylvia Wynter, Saba Mahmood, Sue Schweik, Mel Chen, Saidiya Hartman, Michel Foucault, Shannon Jackson, Giorgia Agamben, Jasbir Puar, Dean Spade, Hannah Arendt, and Mark Rifkin, amongst others.


_Karen Shimakawa & Hentyle Yapp, kshimakawa@nyu.edu_

PERF-GT 2218.001 (Albert #21930)

Tuesdays, 3:30pm – 6:15pm, 4 points

721 Broadway, 6th floor, Studio 612

This course examines what it means to orient theoretical and artistic work towards the “political” and to critique the idea of the law, father, or order. To do so, we will first analyze different approaches to the notion of law. We will query the broader political possibilities and limits of humanistic and aesthetic interventions into the law. What are the material thresholds of not only the law, but also theory and culture? How do liberal notions like personhood and freedom, embedded in individual laws, begin to unravel through a reordering of the concept of the law? Second, we will consider the broader implications of these interventions, particularly as they relate to questions around minoritarian life and existence. How do race, sexuality, religion, gender, class, and disability help us reorder the law, rather than simply discard it? How might such relations of reordering, as proposed by Roderick Ferguson, direct us to more nuanced understandings of political and artistic movements?

We will focus on a variety of approaches, ranging from psychoanalysis, transnational feminism, affect, postcolonialism, deconstructionism, Marxism, critical race theory, and queer theory. Authors include but are not

**WEDNESDAY**

**Introduction to Performance Studies (Required Course: Restricted to Majors Only)**

*Andre Lepecki, andre.lepecki@nyu.edu*

**PERF-GT 1000.001, (Albert #16264)**

*Wednesdays, 1:00pm – 3:45pm, 4 points*

721 Broadway, 6th floor, Studio 612

This course is designed to introduce students to the field of performance studies via examination of some of the foundational texts, tracing various genealogies of the field and considering its links to various disciplines/modes of inquiry (anthropology, theater studies, dance studies, gender studies, critical race theory, psychoanalysis, etc.). What makes performance studies *performance studies*, and why do it? In considering this question we will consider the specificity of performance as an object of study, a mode of inquiry, a practice of self-hood and sociality, and as an aesthetic practice; we will also focus on the specific challenges and potentialities in *writing* about/as performance.

**IN ADDITION TO SECTION 001, ALL STUDENTS WILL BE REGISTERED IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION SECTIONS:**

- **Recitation 2 PERG-GT 1000-002** Thursday 1:30-3:00 pm – Seminar Room 611, Yang
- **Recitation 3 PERG-GT 1000-003** Thursday 1:30-3:00 pm – Studio 613, Black
- **Recitation 4 PERG-GT 1000-004** Thursday 1:30-3:00 pm – Classroom 612, Richter

**Fetish and Performance: How To Do Things With Objects**

*Barbara Browning, Barbara.browning@nyu.edu*

**PERF-GT 2804.001 (Albert #21935)**

*Wednesdays, 4:00pm – 6:45pm, 4 points*

721 Broadway, 6th floor, Classroom 613

This course will explore the notion of fetish in the three ways in which it is most typically invoked: to refer to an object with performative power, be it through magic, through commodification, or through sexual displacement. In an ethnographic context, the term fetish is often understood as a derogatory one, indicating a naïve belief in the animation of objects. But it was precisely the model of animated objects, which allowed for Marx and Freud to elaborate theories of the role of objects, which we often take for granted. Rather than “applying” Marxist and psychoanalytic theory to objects often examined in an ethnographic context, we will go in the other direction, looking at the objects themselves as theoretical lenses through which to reconsider Marx and Freud, and the later theoretical extensions they generated. Specifically, we’ll look at *minkisi*, central African object poems, and their diasporic reformations (particularly “voodoo dolls”) in order to rearticulate, with as much specificity as we can, how it is that objects actually can, and do, make things happen.

Aside from close readings of objects, we’ll also be reading: Pietz, MacGaffey, Thompson, Hurston, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Freud, Lacan, Grosz, McCallum, Winnicott, Marx, Baudrillard, Taussig, Appadurai, Pels, Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, Nyong’o, and Mercer.
Migrancy and Performance
Alex Vazquez, atv202@nyu.edu
PERF-GT 2696.001 (Albert #21922)
Thursdays, 10:30 am – 1:15 pm, 4 points
721 Broadway, Room 613

What gets lost in those expedient narratives that always position people and things at a point of departure or arrival? What happens in between? This course takes up migrancy—and what gets picked up and left behind while on the move—as a condition of making do with the at hand, and how this “making do” presents theoretical and practical challenges to how we conceptualize aesthetics. Picking up a few cues left behind by migrant performances across literary and performative forms, students will be encouraged to repurpose place, presume bodies aren’t tractable by way of their racial, ethnic, national, sexual identifications/misidentifications, and to sense movement that isn’t always on time, documented, measurable, or predictable. Given the geographic and temporal unruliness of the course’s objects (the Caribbean, the U.S. Mexico border, Germany, and Mediterranean ports-of-call) students will work to collectively soften the calcifications found in forms of scholarship that divide media and populations into discrete and expert camps of scholars. Migrancy will not only be studied as a condition about one’s living, but also as an active quality in the seminar’s condition of thinking.