

Performance Studies

FALL 2021 UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Majors-only registration found in notes in Albert. Write to lf65@nyu.edu to register for majors-only courses with limited seats.

Introduction to Performance Studies

A. Vazquez

PERF-UT 101.001 (15495) – Tuesdays, 11:00am to 12:45pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

Recitation Sections

- PERF-UT 101.002 (15588) – Thursdays, 11:30am – 12:45pm, 721 Broadway, 6th Floor Room 612, B. Ulloa
- PERF-UT 101.003 (15589) – Thursdays, 10:00am – 11:15am, 721 Broadway, 6th Floor Room 612, C. Arroyo

To enter the field of Performance Studies is to proceed with a willingness to forgo strict definitions of art “objects” and “events.” The field encourages engagement with everyday life, performers from a variety of media, things inside and outside cultural institutions, and an expansive sense of the stage to reflect on how performance impacts our sense of the world. Music, theater, visual art, dance, and film are not divided into separate areas of study, but are necessarily engaged all together. While the question, “what is performance?” has mystified the minds of many, this course moves beyond this question to investigate: *what does performance do?* And how does performance help us to ask questions about aesthetics, politics, and the social world? The question “what does performance do?,” opens the line between theory and practice; a line that falsely separates the performer from the critic. Students will work together across these divides. In addition to deepening an understanding of the field of Performance Studies, students read texts that vitalize critical thinking in the humanities. The course engages theories of the field as they emerge from performances themselves, especially from the robust creative repertoires of New York City.

Performance Theory

J. Evans

PERF-UT 102.001 (15558) – Thursdays, 3:30pm to 6:15pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This course examines the diverse issues and methodological questions raised by different kinds of performance. Where “Introduction to Performance Studies” asks, “What is performance? What counts as performance, and what is its cultural significance?” this course asks, “How can we interpret and analyze performance? What is ‘theory’ in this context, and how do theory and practice inform each other?” Readings introduce students to key concepts in the field such as “ritual,” “performativity,” “liveness,” and “affect.” Material for the course (readings, videos, and other media) exemplify the interdisciplinary nature of performance studies by drawing from work in aesthetics, anthropology, architecture studies, ethnic/area studies, queer studies, religious studies, legal studies, literary studies, etc.

Performance Studies

trains students to document, theorize, and analyze embodied practices and events. Areas of concentration include: contemporary performance, dance, movement analysis, folk and popular performance, postcolonial theory, feminist and queer theory and performance theory.

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Interested in a Double Major or Minor in Performance Studies?

Email Laura Fortes at lf65@nyu.edu for more information.

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Tumblr: [tischperformancestudiesblog](http://tischperformancestudiesblog.tumblr.com)

Vimeo: NYU Performance Studies

Twitter: @NYUPerfStudies



Performance Histories

M. Casteñeda

PERF-UT 205.001 (23084) – Tuesdays, 10:00am to 12:45pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 613

Countering the “presentist” critique of performance studies as a field (i.e., that its emphasis on “liveness” limits it to analysis of contemporary practices), this course will examine both the long history of performance (and the specific research methodologies that are required for that examination), and the history of performance studies as a mode of social inquiry. How have performance, and the writing about performance, been deployed historically, and to what ends? How can contemporary researches access the archives that house answers to these questions, and how do archives in themselves constitute an historiographic “performance”? Students will consider the impact of performance in the contexts of (post-)colonial history, aesthetic genealogies, and other historiographic projects.

Performance of Everyday Life

F. Moten

PERF-UT 206.001 (15813) – Wednesdays, 9:30am to 12:15pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This course focuses in depth on “everyday” versions of performance (as opposed to theatrical or formal performances). Drawing from anthropology, affect studies, social psychology, sociology, architecture studies, etc. the course invites students to view seemingly non-theatrical social interaction as performance, and to consider the significance of the seeming “normal” and inconsequential nature of such performances. What happens when what is “second nature” becomes the focus of our attention? The course will also place particular emphasis on writing as a mode of illuminating and interrogating the “everyday,” as well as considering it as performance practice in and of itself.

Performance and Technology: Bodies in Transmutation

L. Ferreira

PERF-UT 304.001 (23083) – Wednesdays, 12:30pm to 3:15pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This course inquires on technology as the practices and devices through which terms as transition and transmutation are engaged. Our discussions will roam the ceaseless incompleteness of gender transition in its physical, linguistic and creative capacities. We will ask questions such as where does transition happen and how can we trace its movement? In what ways do we enact and embody transition through performative matters? What are the fundamental links between being and subjectivity that can be accessed during transition? How do we relate conceptually to processes and procedures of body modification? How does transitioning situate itself as an infinite rehearsal of subjectivity? How is existing beyond gender also existing beyond the human? Our syllabus is heavily informed by queer and transfeminist theory, transgender artists and scholars in the black diaspora, speculative fiction, and post-structuralist impressions on the technologies of being and subjectivity and the nature of the post-human.

Topics in Performance Studies: Foucault and Performance

A. Pellegrini

PERF-UT 305.001 (15642) – Mondays, 12:30pm to 3:15pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This seminar is organized around careful close reading of selected works by the philosopher Michel Foucault, who was one of the 20th century’s most influential thinkers. Foucault developed crucial concepts and tools for analyzing power and knowledge, the deployment of sexuality, the formation of subjectivity, social surveillance and self-discipline, and political resistance. Over the course of the semester, we will gain an understanding of these contributions, put them to work for theatre and performance studies, and consider their implications for the performance of self in everyday life and the performance of politics. This seminar is writing-intensive, and course enrollment is capped at 15.

Topics in Performance Studies: The Archive: Form & Perform

Y. Stern

PERF-UT 305.002 (15814) – Tuesdays, 3:30pm to 6:15pm EST

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

The archive is often assumed to be a static, concrete and sealed site or repository, marked as a location where information is preserved, while simultaneously functioning as a mechanism and set of operations which produces importance and meaning. This class will engage with the forms of the archive -- its definitions and constitutions, its presence and absences, its manifestations and failures -- through different disciplinary and artistic perspectives. We will interrogate how to archive performance, while questioning how the archive itself can perform and be performed, as and through the body. To contend with these critical intersections, we will focus on theoretical readings ranging from queer of color critique and trans studies to art history and post-colonial studies, tracing the conceptual development of the archive as a category of analysis through its current iterations and future possibilities. Each week, we will focus on a performance that utilizes archival matters, performing life into this contentious site. Alongside our endeavor to obtain a strong grasp and understanding of the politics and performances of the archive, students will develop an archive and archiving practice of their own and will present it to the class. We will interact with a range of archives, from national and institutional, to community and DIY archives to discover together how this practice treats the past, present and future as we imagine how and what will be remembered of our collective movement.

Final Projects in Performance Studies

A. Lepecki

PERF-UT 400.001 (15574)

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor

Majors-only & limited seats. Please contact Laura Fortes at lf65@nyu.edu to register. Students in this course will build on a research paper/project that they originated in another PS course, with the goal of extending, refining, and further developing it in order to synthesize what they have learned, as well as further hone their research, analysis, and writing skills.