PERFORMING THE PAST
Winter Quarter 2000 IHUM 22a
Lecture: Little Theatre, TU/TH 10-11AM

Faculty
Ehren Fordyce 111 Memorial Hall Mon 1-2; Th 11-12 fordyce@stanford.edu 723-9730

Teaching Fellows
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RATIONALE
This class is designed to offer students a broad survey of different cultures and periods -- from the ancient to the modern; from the west to east, north to south -- and to do so specifically by using texts and artifacts related to traditions of performance. We will try to understand how history becomes embedded in performances; how performances attempt to shape and change history; how different notions about time and space inform the specific performances of different cultures; and how individual cultures themselves are subject to historical changes in the way that they process and understand their own cultural legacies. In terms of artifacts of performance, we will tend to concentrate on texts in dramatic or dialogic form that have become canonical within a specific culture or across a number of cultures. However, we will not restrict ourselves only to written texts. Whenever possible, we will also look at artifacts that give us a visual, physical, material, and performative sense of how cultures are enacted. From classical Greek vase drawings to contemporary videos, how can we reconstruct a lived sense of culture, a sense of how we constantly perform our histories in order to create our futures?

COURSE MATERIALS
REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Bookstore)
Course Reader
Nietzsche, Genealogy of Morals
Bhagavad-Gita
Shakespeare, The Tempest
Retamar, Caliban and Other Essays
Calderon, Life is a Dream

REQUIRED PERFORMANCES AND SCREENINGS
Life is a Dream, Little Theatre
The Matrix, place and time TBA

Other audio-visual materials assigned for the class will be made available at the Green Media Library for individual viewing or through streaming media over the campus network; some will be made available at the course web site (www.stanford.edu/~fordyce/past.htm).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Please consult your teaching fellow. He or she will provide information on both course-wide and section-specific policies and procedures.
**EVALUATION**

Your grade will reflect your performance on the following:

1. **Participation (25%)**
   Participation consists of attending every lecture, discussion, performance, and screening (any absence will affect your grade); fulfilling short writing exercises and assignments; and contributing to discussion, which is evaluated according to IHUM grading guidelines:

   **C range:** The student meets the basic requirements of section participation. This student is usually prepared and participates once in a while but not regularly. This student's contributions relate to the texts and the lectures and offer a few insightful ideas, but do not facilitate a discussion. (Failure to fulfill satisfactorily any of these criteria will result in a grade of "D" or below.)

   **B range:** The student participates consistently in discussion. This student comes to section well prepared and contributes quite regularly by sharing thoughts and questions that show insight and a familiarity with the material. This student refers to the materials discussed in lecture and shows interest in other students' contributions.

   **A range:** The student is fully engaged and highly motivated. This student is well prepared, having read the assigned texts, and has thought carefully about the texts' relation to issues raised in lecture and section. This student's ideas and questions are substantive (either constructive or critical); they stimulate class discussions. This student listens and responds to the contributions of other students.

2. **Presentation (15%)**
   One in-class presentation. Performance optional. See teaching fellow for details.

3. **Midterm Paper (25%)**
   One 7-page midterm critical analysis of one or more primary text. Details to follow. See grading guidelines under 4 below. **Due Tuesday, February 13.**

4. **Final Paper (35%)**
   One 8-page critical analysis of one performance text using assigned secondary material. Details to follow. Papers are evaluated according to the following IHUM grading guidelines:

   **C range:** This paper has some but not all of the basic components of an argumentative essay (i.e., thesis, evidence, coherent structure): for example, it may offer a thesis of some kind, but it presents no evidence to support this thesis; or it may present an incoherent thesis; or it may simply repeat points made in class without an overall argument. Such a paper is usually poorly organized, written and proofread. A paper will fall below a "C" if it lacks more than one of the basic components of an argumentative essay.

   **B range:** This paper's thesis is clear; the argument is coherent and presents evidence in support of its points. The argument shows comprehension of the material and manifests critical thinking about the issues raised in the course. The paper is reasonably well written and proofread. The argument, while coherent, does not have the complexity, the insight, or the integrated structure of an A range paper.

   **A range:** This paper is outstanding in form and content. The thesis is clear and insightful; it expands in a new way on ideas presented in the course. The evidence presented in support of the argument is carefully chosen and deftly handled. The argument is not only unified and coherent, but also complex and nuanced.
SYLLABUS
Readings are due on the date they are listed. “(R)” indicates the reading is in the Course Reader.

Jan 9  Introduction
Jan 11  *The Song of Songs* (R) and Paul Celan’s “Death Fugue” (R)

Jan 16  *Iliad*, Bks. I-II, VI, XXII (R)
Jan 18  *Agamemnon* (R)

Jan 23  *Libation Bearers* (R); Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue” (R)
Jan 25  *The Eumenides* (R)


Feb 1  *The Bhagavad-Gita*

Feb 6  *The Bhagavad-Gita*
Feb 8  The *Mahabharata* in performance: Selections from Indian *kathakali*; Balinese *wayang kulit*; Peter Brook, *The Mahabharata*

Feb 13  Stanislavski, “Action” (R); Artaud, “On the Balinese Theater” (R); Grotowski, “Towards a Poor Theatre” (R) ***Midterm Paper due***
Feb 15  Montaigne, “On Cannibals” (R)

Feb 20  Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
Feb 22  *The Tempest*

Feb 27  Retamar, “Caliban” and “Caliban Revisited”
Mar 1  Plato, *The Republic*, Bk. VII (R); Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Chaps. 1-3, 5-9, 15, 17-19) (R)

Mar 6  Calderon, *Life is a Dream*
Mar 8  *Life is a Dream*

Mar 13  *The Matrix* (Warner Bros.)
Mar 15  Conclusion ***Final Paper due***