

Friends!

Thanks for considering Performance Beyond Theatres (Theatre 2202G) as a possible course for your schedule this year. This is your Prof Kim speaking!

Because this is a winter-term course – and because some exciting developments are afoot for winter 2020! – I don't have an updated syllabus to share with you yet. In the meantime, below you'll find last year's 2202 syllabus, which will give you a good idea of the kinds of materials we read and watch, potential assignments, and how we learn in class together (and online, too).

Here's an important note for winter 2020: for the first time, this year Theatre 2202 will be partnering with CityStudio, an initiative developed by Innovation Works in conjunction with the City of London.

As part of our CityStudio work, we will conduct some of our classes downtown at Innovation Works (the rest of the time, we'll be in UC1110, a fabulous active learning classroom). **Best of all, we will be working together on final projects that will see us creating performance interventions around town, to support real, deliverable outcomes for the City of London. This is experiential learning in action!**

I'm in the process right now (June 2019) of having conversations with a range of people at the City, looking for the best project to match to our class. Stay tuned for more information in the fall!

Meanwhile, if you have any questions at all about Theatre 2202, just email me at ksolga@uwo.ca, or drop into my office in the autumn term. Official office hours will be Tuesdays 1-3pm, or by appointment via the email above.

Enjoy your fall semester!

Kim

Theatre 2202F: Performance Beyond Theatres Fall 2018

T 3:30-4:30; Th 2:30-4:30 (SH3305)

Course Description

Performance isn't just for actors at the theatre; we are all performing, all over the place, all the time. Since the 1960s, scholars and makers of theatre have been exploring a vast array of performances of "everyday life", from church services to hockey games to the way you flirt when you're out at the bar. "Performance Studies" is the discipline dedicated to thinking about how performance works outside the carefully stage-managed four walls of the theatre; Performance Beyond Theatres is the course that will introduce you to the many ways we might usefully conceive of performance as a part of our quotidian being in the world – and to the many socially and politically significant reasons *why* thinking about performance in this way can help us to become more active, engaged, community-minded citizens.

Meet your Teaching Team!

This course is led by Professor Kim Solga; call her Kim. Kim's office hours are Tuesdays 12-2pm and Thursdays 12-1pm, or by appointment. Reach her at ksolga@uwo.ca.

Kim lives in Hamilton, and when she's not teaching she works from home. You can always book a Skype / FaceTime / WhatsApp video appointment with Kim on days she's not on campus; just send her an email.

Kim has a dog called Emma; Emma is old and gentle, and often comes to campus with Kim. If you would prefer Emma was not around when you come to visit Kim's office, just let her know.

A note about email: Kim doesn't check her UWO email on the weekend. Any messages received by Kim after 6pm on Friday will be addressed first thing Monday morning. This ALSO means that *nothing* for our class is so urgent that you need to worry about it over the weekend – weekends are for self-care. Enjoy them!

Our course on the web

We will use OWL for the basics: written assignment submission; announcements and messages; returning assignments and logging grades.

For everything else, we will use <https://performancestudiesatwestern.wordpress.com> – *you will want to find and bookmark this site now!*

Our Wordpress site is where Kim will provide weekly pre-class questions (see below, under “Participation”), where we will communicate with one another after class hours, and where we will share some of our class work. The site is public (that is, anyone can find it), but it’s not coded using metadata (that is, it’s not easily searchable by strangers). It’s important that we remember the public nature of the site whenever we post to it, but don’t be too worried about being spammed or trolled. If that happens, Kim will step in to make sure we are all safe.

Land Acknowledgement

When we talk about performance happening “beyond” theatres, we also talk about the spaces of our wider world – spaces that are not neutral, or just “there”. Early this semester we’ll talk about the way spaces *come to be* (in our imaginations, as political entities, as social or cultural places) as a result of performances we undertake in relation to others, to memory, and to ideas about place. This means that space, and everything it means, requires our careful and ongoing reflection.

Below is UWO’s official land acknowledgement, and one from Kim that she’s created for herself. She invites you to create a land acknowledgement of your own; it can take any form you wish, as long as it is both respectful and accurate.

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. (This particular land acknowledgement comes from Western’s Indigenous Strategic Plan, circa 2016.)

*Kim is a White settler, the first-generation child of German immigrants. I was born in a suburb of Montreal, on the lands of the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Kanien’hehà:ka, and Mohawk nations and grew up in Edmonton, on the lands of the Métis, Tsuu T’ina, and Nēhiyawēwin nations. Today, I live on Treaty 3 land in Hamilton. That land was traditional to the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples; in 1784 Treaty 3 was signed by chiefs representing the Mississaugas of the New Credit nation and agents of the British Crown. (This particular land acknowledgement come from Kim’s new book, *Theory for Theatre Studies: Space*.)*

Course objectives

Below are Kim’s goals for our class. Please make some of your own!

Students who take our course seriously and commit to our shared labour can expect to:

- be introduced to a host of contemporary performance theories and practices;

- develop the capacity to critique a piece of non-scripted, non-traditional performance;
- learn the value and power of collaborative teaching and learning;
- practice critical thinking using written text, video, and audio tools;
- continue to improve their research, writing, and editing skills;
- practice, develop, and improve public presentation skills;
- experiment with independent and/or team performance-making;
- take some risks, make some mistakes, and have fun!

Required Texts

There are no textbooks to purchase for our course; all readings are available online, and free of charge, via the “Course Readings” tool on our OWL portal. Access Course Readings using the left-hand navigation bar when you are looking at the “overview” page for our course in OWL.

We will be undertaking two field trips, both of which come with modest costs:

- on 20 September (Thursday) in the evening we will be attending *Prom Queen: The Musical*, at the Grand Theatre. You are responsible for booking your own ticket; use <http://grandtheatre.com/under30> to get a ticket for \$29.95. (**NB:** If you can’t be free that evening, attend any show that week, Tuesday through Sunday; we will discuss the production the following week in class. If you’re not booking for Thursday, call Monica Hodgson on 519-672-9030 x. 291 and tell her you’re in Kim’s class. She’ll set you up with a ticket for either \$30 or \$35 depending on the date and time you want.)
- on 29 September (Saturday) we’ll head to Toronto for Nuit Blanche, the all-night art festival. We’ll leave campus around 5pm and return in the small hours. Depending upon numbers and feasibility, we will either car pool or arrange for a van or bus transport for this trip. Your cost will be approximately \$25 per person for transport; there is no charge for attending Nuit Blanche.

Assessment

In Performance Beyond Theatres, you’ll be evaluated like this:

1. Case study (10%; 1250 words)
2. Video report from the field (10%; 5 minutes in length)
3. Performance action (30%; 10-15 minutes, live or video)
4. Artist’s reflection (10%; 750 words)
5. Participation (10%)
6. Final exam (30%)

1. Case Study: Performance Genealogies

Value: 10%

Length: 1250 words

Due: Friday 5 October

Protocol: hand this work in via OWL, by 11:55pm on the due date

In our first two weeks together we'll read a fair bit about the history of the discipline now known as "performance studies". For this exercise, you'll locate a department or program at any university in the English-speaking world that labels itself, either in whole or in part, as "performance studies"; then, you will research the ways in which it represents itself online. Whose version of "performance studies" does it follow? What kinds of performance events does it most value, and which does it not value, or even marginalize? Does it include or exclude theatre? Dance? Other forms of "formal" performance? What do its course offerings tell us? What about faculty profiles? Your case study should take essay form, and it should include a thesis that builds an argument about the ways in which your chosen department understands and teaches the term "performance".

2. Video Report from the Field

Value: 10%

Length: 5 minutes of video recording

Due: **Friday 9 November**

Protocol: upload your video's URL to our Wordpress site (there's a page for that!), and also to OWL, by 11:55pm on the due date. Specific upload instructions are available at <https://performancestudiesatwestern.wordpress.com/post-your-video-report-links-here/>

Early in the term we'll take two field trips that could be considered ripe for a "performance studies" analysis. This assignment asks you to conduct field research at a public and/or cultural event of your choosing; you will then undertake a performance analysis of that event using one of our course readings as a framework. How does your chosen event exemplify, test, expand, or expose the limitations of the core argument articulated in the reading? Your analysis should be scripted and delivered on video along with the field footage you'd like to include. You may work in pairs if you wish; pairs will be graded as a unit. If you include commentary from people not in our class in your video, please seek their permission to record them. Get this permission in writing.

3. Performance Action

Value: 30%

Length: minimum 10 minutes; maximum 15 minutes; live or video

Due: **in class, on 27 + 29 November**

Protocol: see below.

For this final project, you will work in teams to develop a public performance intervention somewhere at Western. Your action might be for a large, ad-hoc audience; it might be "flash mob" style; or it might be an intimate performance that you create just for our class.

Your piece should be 10-15 minutes in length, and it should explore a topical issue that holds meaning for you and your team. It should be directly inspired by or related to one of the readings or performances we will have explored together in class, and you should

undertake original research into your specific issue in order to make your action meaningful, precise, and nuanced.

Use one of our guiding class themes to help you frame your initial performance action research. Note that these questions are *an initial guide only*; your action should ultimately delve deeply into a particular idea, event, or issue, for which performance will become your vehicle of exploration.

- What counts as “performance” and who decides?
- How does performance organize the spaces of our world?
- How does performance shape our understanding of our human bodies?
- How does performance organize our communities?

Your performance can be wholly live, or may use video or other media tools as you see fit. If you plan to use media extensively, remember that help is available through the Arts and Humanities technical team in UC.

You’ll be given a week of “studio” time in November to work hard on making your performance action as polished and nuanced as possible. You’ll be expected to be in class for both of your studio days, and Kim will be available for assistance throughout.

Your performance will be presented to your peers, and to any other audience members you wish to invite, in the second-last week of the term. Following our performance action presentation days, we’ll conduct a full in-class debrief of our actions, including self- and peer-to-peer evaluations. These will contribute to Kim’s final assessment of your work.

4. Artist’s Reflection

Value: 10%

Length: 750 words

Due: **Monday 26 November**

Protocol: submit your artist’s reflection via OWL by 11:55pm on the due date.

Your artist’s reflection is written independently (IE: not as part of your performance action team). It should briefly articulate your team’s aims for your performance action, and then reflect critically on the research you undertook for the action (including into an inspiring reading or performance event from class). How did this research contribute to specific performance action choices? The reflection should look not unlike an “exhibit statement” you might see accompanying an artist’s work in a museum or art gallery.

5. Participation

Value: 10%

Length: unspecified

Due: every day in class!

Protocol: see below.

Each week, by Monday afternoon, Kim will post a prompt question, statement, video, or some other thing, based on our week's readings, to our Wordpress site (<http://performancestudiesatwestern.wordpress.com>). You will have a think about that prompt **before class on Tuesday** and respond to it on the website.

You can respond in writing, by uploading content you make via audio or video, by linking to something relevant from the web (and telling us about it!), and so on. **Engage with the prompt meaningfully.** Kim will use that engagement to help frame our discussions in class.

Every time you post in response to a prompt, you earn 2% of your 10% participation mark. That means, if you respond 5 times over the course of the term, you're there – 100% for participation.

In other words: earning 100% for participation is not hard. But keeping your 100% also requires some effort.

To maintain your participation mark, you need to be in class, on time, every week. Every time you miss a class without accommodation, you lose 5%. Miss more than three classes without accommodation, and you forfeit your entire 100%.

6. Final Exam

Value: 30% (Department of English and Writing Studies policy)

Length: TBA

Due: TBA

Protocol: see below.

Our final exam will be a crowd-sourced deal; we'll create the exam together as part of our term review in the last week of classes, and you'll know going in what's expected of you. This means the exam will reflect all of our shared interests, concerns, and conundrums over the course of the term, and will allow you to prepare meaningfully to write a really ace paper that captures your term's learning well.

Three key protocol notes for assessment

One: RUBRICS

Every assessment above has a rubric that Kim uses for marking. The rubric tells you what an "A" assignment, a "B" assignment, a "C" assignment, and a "D" assignment looks like. Find these on OWL, in the portal for each individual assignment. There's also a "hard" virtual copy of all rubrics in the Resources folder on OWL.

Two: EXTENSIONS + LATE PENALTIES

Kim cannot grant extensions, unless she's been asked to do so by your academic counsellor. To seek an extension, visit your counsellor with medical or compassionate documentation. Otherwise, late work is penalized at 2% per day, not including weekend days.

The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Three: PLAGIARISM

Students must write/create their assignments in their own words. Whenever you take an idea or passage from another author, you must acknowledge your debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Week by week schedule

All materials are available via Course Readings on OWL, unless otherwise specified.

Week 1 | September 6

Introduction

The lay of the land. Names + faces. A shared definition of performance.

THEME 1:

Disciplinary Genealogies: What is “performance studies” – and who decides?

Week 2 | September 11 + 13

READ: Kirschenblatt-Gimblett; Jackson

Week 3 | September 18 + 20

READ: Levin and Schweitzer

ATTEND: class trip to see *Prom Queen: The Musical* at The Grand Theatre (Richmond + Queen) on Thursday 20 September. The show is at 7:30pm. Please book your ticket ahead of time at <http://grandtheatre.com/under30>.

THEME 2:

How does performance shape space and place, our cultural geographies?

Week 4 | September 25 + 27

READ: Levin and Solga; C. Austin et al (in *Canadian Theatre Review*; not J.L. Austin!)

ATTEND: we're going to Nuit Blanche in Toronto **on Saturday 29 September!**

Week 5 | October 4*

*NO CLASS 2 OCTOBER: catch up on your sleep!

READ: Carlson

Week 6 is READING WEEK

Week 7 | October 16 + 18

READ: Young

VIEW: *Get Out*, dir. Jordan Peele (on reserve via Course Readings, or find a copy wherever...)

THEME 3:

How does performance shape our human bodies?

Week 8 | October 23 + 25

READ: J.L. Austin; make a start on Judith Butler (trust me: just make a start)

Week 9 | October 30 + November 1

READ: Butler con't.

VIEW: *Paris is Burning*, dir. Livingston (on reserve via Course Readings, or watch on Netflix)

THEME 4:

How does performance organize our bodies in community?

Week 10 | November 6 + 8

READ: Turner

ATTEND: this week, sexual health educator at PhD candidate Danielle Carr will offer a workshop for us on sex, gender and their everyday performance.

Week 11 | November 13 + 15

READ: Robinson

VIEW: *Vigil*, by Rebecca Belmore (online at her website – link on Course Readings)

Week 12 | November 20 + 22

PERFORMANCE ACTION STUDIO WEEK: attendance is mandatory!

Week 13 | November 27 + 29

PERFORMANCE ACTION PRESENTATION WEEK: it's showtime!

Week 14 | December 4+6

We will review key ideas and questions, build the final exam TOGETHER (yes, you read that right!), complete our course evaluations, each some cake, and say farewell.

Course readings and films/videos with full citations

- Austin, Caitlin, et al. "Taking the Measure of Nuit Blanche 2014..." *Canadian Theatre Review* 163 (2015): 107-10.
- Austin, J.L. "How To Do Things With Words: Lecture II." 1962. *The Performance Studies Reader*. 3rd ed. Ed. Henry Bial and Sara Brady. London: Routledge, 2016. 205-10.
- Belmore, Rebecca. *Vigil*. 2002. Talking Stick Festival, Full Circle First Nations Performance. Firehall Theatre, Vancouver, BC. Video.
- Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory." *Theatre Journal* 40.4 (1988): 519-31.
- Carlson, Marla. "Ways to Walk New York After 9/11." *Performance and the City*. Ed. D.J. Hopkins, Shelley Orr, and Kim Solga. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009. 15-32.
- Jackson, Shannon. "Professing Performance: Disciplinary Genealogies." *TDR: The Drama Review* 45.1 (2001): 84-95.
- Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "Performance Studies." 2002. *The Performance Studies Reader*. 3rd ed. Ed. Henry Bial and Sara Brady. London: Routledge, 2016. 25-36.
- Levin, Laura, and Marlis Schweitzer. From "Introduction: Mapping Genealogies and Geographies of Performance Culture." *Performance Studies in Canada*. Ed. Laura Levin and Marlis Schweitzer. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017. 13-23.
- Levin, Laura, and Kim Solga. "Zombies in Condoland." *Canadian Theatre Review* 138 (2009): 48-52.
- Livingston, Jenny, dir. *Paris is Burning*. Art Matters Inc., 1991. Video.
- Peele, Jordan, dir. *Get Out*. Universal Pictures Home Entertainment, 2017. Video.
- Robinson, Dylan. "Enchantment's Irreconcilable Connection: Listening to Anger, Being Idle No More." *Performance Studies in Canada*. Ed. Laura Levin and Marlis Schweitzer. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2017. 211-35.
- Turner, Victor. "Liminality and Communitas." 1969. *The Performance Studies Reader*. 3rd ed. Ed. Henry Bial and Sara Brady. London: Routledge, 2016. 97-106.
- Young, Harvey. From "The Black Body." *Embodying Black Experience: Stillness, Critical Memory, and the Black Body*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010. 1-22.

Thanks for being part of TS2202!