

# THEATER (THEAT-UH)

## THEAT-UH 1010 Making Theater (4 Credits)

*Typically offered Spring*

This class develops a practical and conceptual work process for making theater that is assembled through investigation of researched models of practice, consideration of the elements involved, and the student's own intuition, interests and drive. We will explore: why make theater? For whom? With whom? How? When? About what? In this class, "Theater" is defined as a story told in the third dimension to a live audience. This course is extremely rigorous and hands-on. It involves independent creative work, a readiness to collaborate and profound curiosity. All students are expected to engage actively in class discussions and projects.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded

**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater Major: Required
- Bulletin Categories: Theater

## THEAT-UH 1011 Thinking Theater (4 Credits)

*Typically offered Fall*

This course offers a survey of theater in the modern and contemporary era exploring its aesthetic, social and cultural dimensions. Thinking theater from an intercultural and interdisciplinary perspective allows for the critical exploration of a plurality of practices and discourses while questioning the role of the artist, the place of the spectator as well as the very nature of the theatrical event and the ethics of representation. The aim of this course is to give students a solid knowledge of theater, performance practices and major theoretical frameworks, while focusing on the distinct geopolitical conditions in which these practices and theories are situated. Students engage with the work of artists such as Ariane Mnouchkine, William Kentridge, Werewere Liking, Faustin Linyekula, Lola Arias, Bruce Gladwin, Laila Soliman, Omar Abusaada and Mohammad Al Attar. Through screenings, readings of plays, artists' talks, live performances and critical texts in theater, art history, literature and postcolonial theory, this course aspires to create an analytical and critical platform for thinking theater as a collaborative process of creation within and beyond the limits of the stage.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded

**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Film New Media: Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater Major: Required
- Bulletin Categories: Theater
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

## THEAT-UH 1110 Fundamentals of Acting (4 Credits)

*Typically offered Fall*

Students begin to build a performance vocabulary by using a range of techniques for translating the actor's imagination into stage action. Students are introduced to the internal and external demands of turning creative impulse into behavior, and explore acting fundamentals such as exploring text by connecting it to physical action; responding fully to one's acting partner; personalizing fictional material; and exploring the role of actor-as-creator via games, improvisations, and exercises; scene work; ensemble techniques; and solo performance.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded

**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Film New Media: Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

## THEAT-UH 1111 Creating Original Work (4 Credits)

*Typically offered Spring*

This class explores devising as a means of innovating both process and form. Students will research and experiment with historical approaches to the devised process, while also building their own short-form performance projects in order to: gain insight into the nature of a process journey; develop a more intimate understanding of their own identities as creative problem-solvers; learn how to constructively engage critical conversations about work that is still in process; gain experience in the use of creative process as a form of research.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded

**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives

## THEAT-UH 1112 Fundamentals of Playwriting (4 Credits)

*Typically offered Fall*

This course introduces students to the art and craft of playwriting by drawing from Eastern, Western, Middle Eastern and African traditions. The course engages students in a rigorous study of form, content, structure and philosophy in order to arrive at a methodology that each writer can adapt and develop in order to write plays that are ambitious in terms of the ideas and forms they deal with. The main objectives are: to develop one's voice as a playwright; to develop tools and techniques to realize that voice; to write a one act play.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded

**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: LITCW: Creative Writing Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Literature: Topics Electives
- Bulletin Categories: No longer in use
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: LITCW: Required
- Crosslisted with: Literature Creative Writing
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1115 Scenic Design (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

This class engages in an active exploration into design for performance by investigating the characteristics of stage designs that render them a unique built form. On its most simplistic level a set design is the creation of a temporal space for the actions of a performative event to unfold in over time. What constitutes the "event" is broad: set designs can be created for dance performances; narrative plays; nonlinear plays; performance art; exhibition design, fashion and opera and other music events, etc. Focusses throughout the semester will be on the consideration of theatrical time, composition, and the process of manifesting conceptual or theatrical ideas visually and spatially. How do spaces progress in time with the performative and textual demands of the piece? How does composition express visual and conceptual ideas? What are the relationships between an originating text or prompt and its visual/spatial manifestation? How does a scenic design manifest the core ideas of a production while still offering space for the multiple layers of the actors and work of other creative design disciplines? What is the basis for these choices?

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Art Art History: Art Practice/Design Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Art History Elective for Visual Arts Track
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Art Art History

**THEAT-UH 1121 Design for Performance (4 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

In this course students learn to create visceral, theatrical experiences that tell clear stories through deep investigation of what comprises aesthetic experience and the fundamental tenants of design and stage composition. Students will acquire tools to: identify, externalize, and develop aesthetic impulses; actualize the world of a text through simple, powerful choices; facilitate collaborations with a design team; synthesize script analysis and point of view with rich, textured design worlds; develop an empathetic imagination; and build work with generosity toward the audience's experience.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Art Art History: Art Practice/Design Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Art History Elective for Visual Arts Track
- Bulletin Categories: Design Minor Design Thinking Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Design Minor Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Art Art History
- Crosslisted with: Design
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1122 Voice, Speech, and Text (4 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

Students learn the fundamentals of voice, vocal production, and vocal expression. The course is designed to help students discover their vocal potential, to reduce obstructive physical habits and tensions and to move towards free, full-range voices. This course is built to cultivate vocal-physical development and sensorial acuteness. Students will begin to understand, in themselves, the connection between thought/impulse/idea, voice, communication and audience.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives

**THEAT-UH 1126 Costuming Performance (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

The curriculum focuses on the creation and consideration of costumes in live theatrical performance. Anchored in dialogue with contemporary arts philosophies in visual arts, design and fashion, an investigatory approach is taken to consider what it means to clothe, dress and adorn the body for performance. Sociological investigations: how clothes 'perform' on bodies in the present and past; why people wear what they wear; correlations to larger global phenomena (the fashion system, social media, history of regional and vernacular communities) will be key in designing costumes for real and fictionalized characters. Through theoretical projects, students will begin a design process, going through a sequence of steps: dramaturgical analysis, gathering pictorial and relevant research; engaging creative imagination, and visualizing designs through sketching and collage to create a concrete presentation of designs, ideas, transformations. Projects will include text-based drama, opera, dance and performance art. Emphasis is on experimentation, creativity and collaborative process within a creative team. Lab and workshop sessions in conjunction with the NYUAD costume shop accompany class.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Art Art History: Art Practice/Design Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Art History Elective for Visual Arts Track
- Bulletin Categories: Design Minor Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Art Art History
- Crosslisted with: Design
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1127 Ugly (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

UGLY is an investigative studio practice course where students from a wide array of arts disciplines are encouraged to generate new explorations and creative work exploring UGLINESS as a prompt and radical aesthetic impulse. How do we understand ugliness? Is the concept recognized only in negation or comparison (opposed to beauty)? Is it culturally and historically specific? Might it shift historically with a new generation's gaze? Is ugliness always manifest via form? Does ugliness 'happen' unintentionally or can we willfully employ ugliness as a viable strategy? Organized around a series of themes: The Discarded; The Monstrous and Grotesque; Repulsive Body; Haunted; Brutalism; Mundane and Overabundance; the class will combine historic and theoretical readings, peering into select moments of 20th century avant-garde arts practice and visits by living artists from an array of disciplines (visual arts, performance, choreography, music). Key texts are: "Ugliness, The Non-beautiful in Art and Theory", ed. Andrei Pop, Mechtilde Widrich; "On Ugliness" Umberto Eco; "On Beauty and Being Just" by Elaine Scarry; Selections from Artaud, Bataille, Kristeva and Freud.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Art Art History: Art Practice/Design Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Art History Elective for Visual Arts Track
- Bulletin Categories: Design Minor Design Thinking Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Design Minor Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Art Art History
- Crosslisted with: Design
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1128 Specific Performance (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

This course will address the making of performance that is non-theatre and that aims to engage with meaning and histories derived from site-specific investigations in order to understand how artists have used site-specific methodologies to reach audiences who might otherwise not come to the theater. In this sense, site-specific performance tends to engage deeply with its chosen site and often will be drawn into engagement with the political, social and often religious issues that stem from place. We will discuss the works of major artists such as Mike Pearson and his company Brith Gof theater company, Richard Long's Circle of Silence and explore the works of Jelil Atiku and his performance activism through site. We will look at different sites relating to the land, domestic spaces such as kitchens and living rooms, found spaces such as cupboards and wardrobes and we will end by exploring the campus as a site for performance. Students will develop skills in originating and executing site specific performance by engaging in the planning and development of their own mini site-specific performance projects.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives

**THEAT-UH 1129 Faith, Ideology and Power: Writing a play as an examination of contemporary times (4 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

In 'Faith, Ideology and Power,' students create theatrical texts which foreground the ideological complexities of faith, capitalism and other structures of power within which contemporary societies operate across the world. Conversations, readings and exercises will guide students to examine their own ideological conditions and question the presence of power in modern times. Research will be student-driven and focus on the different scenarios that students and professors bring to class. A central theme for the writing will be the rise of religious bigotry, the use of such bigotry and other discrimination to control populations, and the ways in which common people deal with such ideologies. The course serves as a studio program for new theatrical writing on these and other critical political and social issues.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Film New Media: Electives
- Bulletin Categories: LITCW: Creative Writing Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Literature: Topics Electives
- Bulletin Categories: No longer in use
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media
- Crosslisted with: LITCW: Required
- Crosslisted with: Literature Creative Writing
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1131 Fundamentals of Dance and Choreography (4 Credits)**

Where does movement come from? Nature? Traditions? Lived experiences? How does one transform this initial impulse into choreographic sketches? These are some of the questions that will be addressed through this course. This studio practice course is an overview and reinterpretation of major trends in dance and performance of the 20th and the 21st centuries, looking at performance theory through the filter of physical exploration. The focus is dance as a creative gesture by an individual artist or an artists' collective, not folk or popular dances, even though the latter have often served as sources for many choreographic projects. Each session will be a mixture of dance practice and theory, students are therefore expected to wear flexible and comfortable clothing that will not hinder their ability to move, including but not limited to working on the floor. Most practice sessions will be conducted barefoot, unless otherwise specified, and some sessions will require physical contact.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1512 Representing the Real (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

The most provocative theatre today reflects upon its own representational strategies in relation to complex and challenging subjects. In our post-truth era, theatre-makers are creating work about theatre's ability to represent and interpret events. Included in this international body of work are telling stories untold, challenging political convictions and legal determinations, and examining the relationships between information and truth, and aesthetic preferences and ethical choices. Plays, performances, and essays about some of the most important issues of our time: apartheid, terrorism, the Holocaust, racial clashes, and corruption. Authors include Thembi Mitshali, Yael Farber, Vivi Tellas, Richard Norton-Taylor, Milo Rau, Sophie Treadwell, Griselda Gambaro, Rabih Mroué, Back to Back Theatre, and Peter Weiss among others. Questions include: Can theatre effectively critique social life? What is the boundary between "fiction" and "nonfiction?" What is the interface between real events and representational realities? How do the aesthetic demands of theatre shape stories about real events? Can theatre's representation of real events help us understand "fake news" and the collapse of the distinctions between the real, the simulated, and the virtual? Student work will include developing short works that critically engage real stories, class presentations, and essays.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: History, Theory, Criticism Electives

**THEAT-UH 1519 Installation Art (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

Installation is a hybrid genre which escapes traditional categorizations. This course approaches Installation Art as a methodological framework across cultural, social and geopolitical discourses in order to analyze new models of spectatorship that expand the limits of what could be identified or recognized as art: installations can be participatory or not, can involve performers or lack human presence, can be site-specific or nomadic, can intervene in urban context or taking place in nature, can be durational or limited in time. Instead of following a genealogy of installation art, the course is structured around focal points such as theatricality, site-specificity, immersion, publicness. Through artist and curator talks and field trips in the UAE, students engage with the work of leading artists such as Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, Blane De St. Crois, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Yinka Shonibare. Drawing on a wide range of theoretical texts in theater, art history, political theory and urban studies, this course explores the artistic, social and cultural effects of Installation Art.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Art Art History: Art Practice/Design Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Art History Elective for Visual Arts Track
- Bulletin Categories: Film New Media: Breadth Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Interactive Media:Media Design Thinking Elective
- Bulletin Categories: Museum Curatorial Studies
- Bulletin Categories: Pre-Professional: Museum Curatorial Studies
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: History, Theory, Criticism Electives
- Crosslisted with: Art Art History
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media
- Crosslisted with: Interactive Media Minor: Required
- Crosslisted with: Interactive Media
- Crosslisted with: Museum Curatorial Studies
- Crosslisted with: Pre-Professional: Museum Curatorial Studies
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 1520 Dramaturgy (4 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

The German playwright, Gotthold Lessing, coined the word “dramaturgy” in the 18th century to describe the practice of creating historical and theoretical meanings in theatre. Now dramaturgy also plays a part in making dance, live art, staging spectators, and gallery and museum curation. Doing dramaturgy is the subject of the course. Students will engage in visiting galleries and museums, reading plays, and seeing performances, keeping in mind the staging of experience and spectators, context, aesthetic style, authorship, diversity, decolonization, and the ghosts of place. Questions of the course include: What aesthetic assumptions are operating? Who is the anticipated spectator and what is their anticipated response? What is the structure of the experience offered? How might a dramaturg intervene in the production of meaning? Student work includes: developing a dramaturgical method, creating a personal archive, researching specific works, writing dramaturgical analyses of visual scenes and program notes, short essays, and group reports.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: History, Theory, Criticism Electives

**THEAT-UH 1521 Women Who Kill (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

Who, how, and why do women kill? What are the circumstances, motives, and explanations for their murder? Are there recurring reasons that women kill? The subject of women who kill is uniquely situated in different cultures. Colonialism, spirit possession, revenge, sexual deviance, freedom, insanity, self-defense, and cultural tradition all play a part in how female murderers are understood and represented. Theater, literature, and film have developed diverse representational strategies and forms of theatricality when portraying women who kill. Looking at plays and films from different cultures and time periods and accompanying theoretical articles, students will examine the portrayal of women who kill in relation to the historical moment of authorship, the legal circumstances of the protagonists, and the motives that inform their “aberrant” acts. How do plays about women who kill relate with real murders by women? Are there common plot structures, characters, and styles? Case studies include infamous female murderers such as Pan Jinlian (The Papin sisters, Ruth Snyder, Komachi, Medea, and Clytemnestra, among others).

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Core: Cultural Exploration Analysis
- Bulletin Categories: LITCW: Introductory Literature Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Literature: Topics Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: History, Theory, Criticism Electives
- Crosslisted with: Core: Cultural Exploration Analysis
- Crosslisted with: LITCW: Required
- Crosslisted with: Literature Creative Writing
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 2110 Character and Action (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

Students develop advanced performance skills by using techniques associated with Patsy Rodenburg, Shin'ichi Suzuki, Stanislavski, Anne Bogart, and Yoshi Oida, among others. Training exercises are used to develop kinesthetic awareness, focus, listening, character, action, creativity, imagination, and collaboration. Through a holistic approach connected to recent findings in cognitive science, students build technical craft as well as begin to remove obstructive physical, vocal and mental habits, so as to release the full potential of the responsiveness, expressivity, and presence of their actor/performer instruments: the body-mind.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives

**THEAT-UH 2111 Making Documentary Theatre (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

This course introduces the students to Documentary Theater and explores the different ways to make it. Students will learn to identify their personal sense of urgency in relation to the world. Students will learn exercises to help them to utilize research as a way to create a performance. They will create three projects during the semester exploring the different possible starting points as well as different relationships between form and content.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives

**THEAT-UH 2112 Endurance Performance (4 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

Endurance performance helps us to recognize the relationship of all bodies to neoliberal systems. The untimely body in durational performance resists being colonized by structures of time that make human activity predictable, profitable, and efficient (Truax xiii). In this class, students are invited to understand the nature of endurance performance as the undoing of a measured time that above all controls, mediates, and imprisons both subjects and things as objects of measure (Lepecki). In this case, this is a project-based class by which students will engage in a creative process, seeking to understand what it takes to create endurance performance. Through practice based activities aimed at understanding how the body operates through repetition and prolonged action. The coursework will explore work performance artists such as Marilyn Arsem, Oupa Sibeko, Zhang Huan and many others. Students will research and experiment with different approaches to conditioning the body for an endurance performance, through in-class workshops, while also building their own performance projects over the course of the semester.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No**Prerequisites:** Any other THEAT-UH course.

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 2115 Directing (4 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

What brings a play to life? What story do you most want to tell? Who is your audience, and why? What is the collaborative environment you seek? This course explores conceptual and practical approaches to directing a play. In addition to script discovery and analysis, emphasis is placed on the development of each student's unique and subjective point of view on the material at hand. Students will journal regularly, share work in-progress with the class, create image banks, and engage in vigorous experimentation and conversation centered around the nature and art of directing theater.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- Bulletin Categories: Film New Media: Electives
- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Arts Practice Electives
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Film New Media
- Crosslisted with: Theater Major: Required
- Crosslisted with: Theater

**THEAT-UH 3090 Capstone Seminar (4 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

In the spring semester of their third year, theater majors participate in this formal capstone seminar intended to guide rising seniors through the conceptualization of a capstone, a year-long independent artistic project of the senior's own design, and to express that concept in the form of a polished written proposal. This seminar is an interdisciplinary arts forum where students are expected to reflect upon and articulate their projects as expressions of aesthetic theory and practice, and where they can draw upon their own scholarly and artistic experience to constructively support the work of their peers. This class will support students in acquiring the methodological tools in theater and performance necessary for the realization of their vision, and will offer strategies designed to support speaking, reflecting, writing and archiving these projects.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No**Prerequisites:** THEAT-UH 1010 and THEAT-UH 1011.

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Capstone

**THEAT-UH 4001 Capstone Project A (2 Credits)***Typically offered Fall*

These two mandatory and sequential 2-point courses provide seniors with a clearly articulated, year-long work process and support structure within which to bring their theater capstone projects to fruition. The course sequence includes regular meetings and group discussions of topics such as process, research, and collaboration in art practice and scholarship. The Capstone Project Supervisor who oversees the course sequence works in tandem with capstone advisors and (as applicable) theater program production staff. Students are further supported in the development of their capstone writing, presentation, and digital archiving skills.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No**Prerequisites:** THEAT-UH 3090.

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Capstone

**THEAT-UH 4002 Capstone Project B (2 Credits)***Typically offered Spring*

These two mandatory and sequential 2-point courses provide seniors with a clearly articulated, year-long work process and support structure within which to bring their theater capstone projects to fruition. The course sequence includes regular meetings and group discussions of topics such as process, research, and collaboration in art practice and scholarship. The Capstone Project Supervisor who oversees the course sequence works in tandem with capstone advisors and (as applicable) theater program production staff. Students are further supported in the development of their capstone writing, presentation, and digital archiving skills.

**Grading:** Ugrd Abu Dhabi Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No**Prerequisites:** THEAT-UH 4001.

- Bulletin Categories: Theater: Capstone