

Faculté des sciences humaines et sociales de Tunis
Department of English
Optional Course: Shakespeare in Performance
Level: Third year
Facilitator: Soumaya Boughanmi
Academic Year: 2018 – 2019

Course Description:

This course is based on the premise that Shakespeare's drama was designed for the theatre, hence the importance of engaging with the plays' performative dimensions. Students will explore early modern theatrical culture that helped condition how Shakespeare's plays were produced at the time. We will also consider how they were reconceived in later stagings and in the modern cinema. We will watch and analyze scenes from a representative selection of film adaptations and recorded stage productions at Shakespeare's Globe theatre. The approach of this course is learner-oriented: students will contribute in investigating the performative qualities of dramatic texts (extracts) and analyzing video segments.

Course Outline:

Unit 1: Shakespeare and Early Modern Playhouse Culture

- Outdoor and indoor amphitheatres
- Theatre companies
- Elizabethan audience

Unit 2: Shakespeare on Stage

- Analysis of select theatrical Productions (extracts)
 - Romeo and Juliet* (dir. Dominic Dromgoole, 2010)
 - Midsummer Night's Dream* (dir. Dominic Dromgoole, 2014)
 - Macbeth* (dir. Eve Best, 2015)
 - As You Like It* (dir. Thea Sharrock, 2009)

Unit 3: Shakespeare on Film

- Overview of the history of Shakespeare on film
- Analysis of select filmic adaptations of Shakespeare's plays (extracts)
 - Romeo and Juliet* (dir. Baz Luhrmann, 1996)
 - A Midsummer Night's Dream* (dir. Michael Hoffman, 1999)

Othello (dir. Oliver Parker, 1995)
As You Like It (dir. Kenneth Branagh, 2006)

Learning Outcomes:

Having completed this course, students will

- gain a better understanding of early modern theatre culture and its impact on Shakespeare's drama.
- be alert to the interpretative possibilities of a theatre or movie production.
- have a broad understanding of the techniques of analysis for both film and theatre (for their visual, aural, performative and literary elements), and the interconnections between the two forms.
- be able to transfer their skills to the interpretation of other dramatic texts as well as theatrical and film productions.

Bibliography:

Brown, John Russell, *Shakespeare and the Theatrical Event*. Houndsmills, Basingstoke and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Coursen, Herbert R., *Shakespearean Performance as Interpretation*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992.

Dustagheer, Sarah. *Shakespeare's Two Playhouses: Repertory and Theatre Space at the Globe and the Blackfriars 1599-1613*. Cambridge Univ Press, 2018.

Fischlin, Daniel, and Mark Fortier. *Adaptations of Shakespeare: a Critical Anthology of Plays from the Seventeenth Century to the Present*. Routledge, 2000.

Gurr, Andrew. *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004.

Hodgdon, Barbara and Worthen, W.B. (ed.), *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.

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Shaughnessy, Robert (ed.), *Shakespeare in Performance*. Houndsmills, Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 2000.