



Instructor: Sasha Kovacs

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Course Number: DRE200H5F

Course Title: Canadian Theatre History

Course description: In this survey course students will engage with the abundant and evolving performance traditions in Canada – from “first” production in New France (and the contestation this claim provokes), towards Confederation, and into the present. Through our encounters with plays, events, reports, web resources, cultural institutions, people, our own experiences, and documents of criticism we will evaluate trends and relationships to consider how the development of dramaturgical strategies and performance customs in a ‘national’ theatre interacts with the economic, political, and social contexts that such activity emerges from within.

In DRE200, students will gain familiarity with important events in Canadian theatre history, read and critically engage with formative texts from the Canadian theatre canon, explore “ex-centric” reconstructions or adaptations of historical events, consider interactions between theatrical production and material circumstance, analyze and contrast research findings in historical and contemporary performances, develop and implement various research strategies, and acquire an understanding of the complex relationship between performance and historiography. By the end of this course, students should cultivate an understanding of the historical contexts that immediately shape our own training and practice methodologies today.

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Required Reading: A course pack will be assembled by the instructor. Students should also consult blackboard at regular intervals to find updates on the required reading materials. Students will be required to analyze and interpret Canadian plays, web research resources (such as Theatre Museum Canada/various theatre blogs), critical readings, scholarly articles, and primary and secondary sources. Students should also expect to find and consult alternate web and print materials while working on their independent and group research projects.

First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied:

-Praxis Theatre Blog (“An Open Letter to the Newer Generation of Toronto Theatre Artists From One of the Old Farts” by David Ferry and the response “An Open Letter to Some of the Old Farts” by Aislinn Rose. Students should browse comments as well)

-Filewod, A. “Named in Passing: Deregimenting Canadian Theatre History” in *Writing and Rewriting National Theatre Histories*. Ed. S.E. Wilmer. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2004. 106-126.

-Knowles, R. “Just the High Points: A Canadian Theatre Chronology” in *Theatre Memoirs: On the Occasion of the Canadian Theatre Conference, 1998*. Toronto: PUC Press, 1998. 74-89. Print.

Method of Instruction: Lecture/Discussion/Creative Response

Method of Evaluation: Web Posting/Group Research Project and Presentation/ Essay or Performative Research/Exam