METHODS AND PRACTICE: REPORTING THE ARTS

Class code V54.9202.001

Instructor Details

MATT WOLF
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Office hours by appointment
Phone number to be provided in class

Class Details

Spring 2011
Mondays, 1 45 – 4 30 pm, 4 Bedford Sq. Room G04
N.B.: Make-up class, Friday 8 April, details to be confirmed

Prerequisites

An enthusiasm for attending and thinking critically about live performance, starting, inevitably given the instructor’s own critical employment, with the theater and moving on to classical music/opera and both classical and contemporary dance. Also, where possible, film, television, and the visual arts as the common cultural parlance of our time.

Class Description

The course aims to provide the student with a full awareness of critical discourse across the spectrum, as it is practiced in the British press. Students will become acquainted with the full array of British arts journalism – reviews, interviews, features, blogs – and will get to do similar writing exercises themselves.

Lectures coupled with discussions, guest speakers, and multiple trips to live performance.

Various Thursday night performances have been booked for the entire class, encompassing theater, dance (both classical and modern), and classical music/opera. Additional group outings may well be added, but they will occur unless absolutely necessary on a Thursday.

Scheduled outings:

Thurs 27 Jan, End of the Rainbow, 7 30 pm, Trafalgar Studios, Whitehall
Thurs 10 Feb, Clybourne Park, 7 30 pm, Wyndham’s Theatre
Thurs 17 Feb, Anna Nicole, 7 30 pm, Royal Opera House / Covent Garden
Thurs 24 Feb, The Heretic, 7 30 pm, Royal Court Theatre
Thurs 3 March, Lucrezia Borgia, 7 30 pm, ENO/Coliseum
Thurs 10 March, Frankenstein, 7 30 pm, National Theatre/Olivier (+backstage tour tbc)
Thurs 24 March, The Most Incredible Thing, 7 30 pm, Sadler’s Wells (+ talk)
Thurs 31 March, Philharmonia Orchestra, 7 30 pm, Royal Festival Hall
Desired Outcomes

1. To broaden students’ exposure to live performance.
2. To broaden students’ exposure to writing on live performance.
3. To help develop a critical sensibility and voice.
4. To learn about writing on cultural issues and reportage, as well as reviews, interviews, and think pieces.

Assessment Components

Written work exclusive of final paper 50%, exam(s) 25%, class participation 15%, final paper/project 10%

There will be weekly writing assignments as well as various in-class quizzes/exams pertaining either to the week’s reading or to what has been discussed/covered to that point.

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: All assignments handed in on time and to a near-publishable standard. Outstanding work.

Grade B: Solid, reasonable work.

Grade C: Perfunctory work.

Grade D: Slovenly work.

Grade F: Non-compliance with the requirements of the course.

Attendance Policy

NYU-L has a strict policy about course attendance. No unexcused absences are permitted. Students should contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work but should NOT approach them for excused absences. Absences due to illness must be discussed with the Assistant Director for Student Life within one week of your return to class. Absence requests for non-illness purposes must be discussed with the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs prior to the date(s) in question. Unexcused absences will be penalized by deducting 3% from the student’s final course mark. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from examination (with authorisation, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

NYU-L also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. If timely attendance becomes a problem it is the prerogative of each instructor to deduct a mark or marks from the final grade of each late arrival and each early departure.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Late Submission of Work

(1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor;

(2) Late work should be submitted in person to the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs in office hours (Mon – Fri, 10:30 – 17:30), who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of
submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff can accept the work, in person, in the absence of the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

(3) Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

(4) Written work submitted after 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

(5) Please note end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism: the presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

All students must submit an electronic copy of each piece of their written work to www.turnitin.com and hand in a printed copy with the digital receipt to their professor. Late submission of work rules apply to both the paper and electronic submission (see section 12 below) and failure to submit either copy of your work will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class.

Electronic Submission

All students must submit an electronic copy of their written work to www.turnitin.com. This database will be searched for the purpose of comparison with other students’ work or with other pre-existing writing or publications, and other academic institutions may also search it. The database is managed by JISC (Joint Information Systems Council) and has been established with the support of the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

In order for you to be able to submit your work onto the Turnitin website, you will need to set up an account:

1) Go onto the Turnitin website http://www.turnitin.com
2) Click ‘New Users’ in the top right hand corner
3) Select user type of ‘student’
4) Enter your class ID & Turnitin class enrollment password (these will be e-mailed to you after the drop/add period, or contact academics@nyu.ac.uk if you have misplaced these.
5) Follow the online instructions to create your profile.

To submit your work for class, you will then need to:

1) Log in to the Turnitin website
2) Enter your class by clicking on the class name
3) Next to the piece of work you are submitting (please confirm the due date), click on the ‘submit’ icon
4) Enter the title of your piece of work
5) Browse for the file to upload from wherever you have saved it (USB drive, etc.), please ensure your work is in Word or PDF format, and click ‘submit’
6) Click ‘yes, submit’ to confirm you have selected the correct paper (or ‘no, go back’ to retry)
7) You will then have submitted your essay onto the Turnitin website.
8) Please print your digital receipt and attach this to the hard copy of your paper before you submit it to your professor (this digital receipt appears on the web site, immediately after you submit your paper and is also sent to your e-mail address). Please also note that when a paper is submitted to Turnitin all formatting, images, graphics, graphs, charts, and drawings are removed from the paper so that the program can read it accurately. Please do not print the paper in this form to submit to your lecturers, as it is obviously pretty difficult to read! You can still access the exact file you uploaded by clicking on the ‘file’ icon in the ‘content’ column.
Please also see the Late Submission of Work policy, above.

Students must retain an electronic copy of their work for one month after their grades are posted online on Albert and must supply an electronic copy of their work if requested to do so by NYU in London. **Not submitting a copy of a piece of work upon request will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class.** NYU in London may submit in an electronic form the work of any student to a database for use in the detection of plagiarism, without further prior notification to the student.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are set out in the Student Handbook.

**Required Text(s)**

As this is a journalism course, your basic texts will be the British press and relevant portions of the blogosphere. You should expect to buy various newspapers and/or magazines throughout the term, and students will be expected to follow two critics’ writings throughout the semester.

**CLYBOURNE PARK,** Bruce Norris

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**Session 1**

Jan 24

Introduction to London’s cultural and journalistic scene. Overview.

Assignment: interviews, choosing a critic.

n.b: **Theater outings begin Thursday with End of the Rainbow,** see above for details.

**Session 2**

Jan 31

(The precise order may change depending on availability of speakers etc. but these session headings cover the various disciplines that will be included.)

Theater: assessing the event 1

**Session 3**

Feb 7

Critiquing the critics

Guest speaker tbc

Assignment: from this week onwards, there will be critical pieces and/or analyses due every week, details to follow

**Session 4**

Feb 14

Classical music/opera/podcasts (Edward Seckerson)

**Session 5**

Feb 21

Reviews editor/dance (Debra Craine)
| Session 6 | Assessing the event 2 |
| Feb 28 | |
| Session 7 | Writing workshops/tutorials  
*Midterm quiz* |
| March 7 | |
| Session 8 | Assessing the event 3 |
| March 14 | |
| Session 9 | Television (Alkarim Jivani)/film (Angie Errigo) |
| March 21 | |
| Session 10 | The blogosphere (Mark Shenton) |
| March 28 | |
| Session 11 | Keeping it fresh/the future |
| April 4 | |
| Session 12 | n.b.: Friday make-up class  
*class outing tbc* |
| April 8 | |
| Session 13 | The editor (Helen Hawkins) |
| April 11 | |
| Session 14 | Wrap-up/overview |
| May 9 | |
| Session 15 | Exam week: project/essay submission |
| May 16 | |

**Classroom Etiquette**

Eating is not permitted in any classrooms. Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

**Required Co-curricular Activities**

Students will be required to attend *at least one live performance every week*, and Thursday nights have been set aside for that purpose. Starting with week three, students must bring to class a considered written response to what they have seen. There will also be numerous assignments requiring students to circulate for general discussion review/s and/or feature/s pertinent to that week’s discipline and also asking students to function as editors and redactors of their colleagues’ work.

**Suggested Co-curricular Activities**

London has numerous special platform performances, culture-related talks etc that are worth attending, but they are generally announced much nearer the time. Given the flexible nature of the live arts, students should be prepared for more last-minute suggestions/arrangements than might normally be the case.