First Year Reading List

Congratulations on gaining a place at Royal Holloway! We are looking forward to meeting you in the new term.

Please find below the details of readings for you to do in advance of your start with us. The list is organised by course so that you can be clear which course the readings relate to. There are also a couple of recommendations for reading that might be useful more generally.

Required reading for first year courses

Please note that:

- Single honours BA Drama & Theatre students take DT1100, DT1200, DT1300 and DT1400.
- Single honours BA Dance students take DT1910, DT1920, DT1930 and DT1940.
- Students studying BA Drama and Dance take DT1100, DT1200, DT1910 and DT1920.
- Students taking joint honours degrees with other departments take DT1100 and DT1200.
- Students taking Drama with Philosophy (where Philosophy is the minor subject) take DT1100 and DT1200, and a choice between DT1300 OR DT1400.

DT1100 Theatre & Performance Making (both terms)

Theatre and Performance Making is about working in collaboration with others and devising an original performance. Most of your undergraduate work will involve group work. To that end, please read Malcolm Gladwell's essay "Group Think" from the US magazine The New Yorker. In it, he describes what it was like to work as a cast on the popular American television show Saturday Night Live. The second item is a journal article that features contextual notes, ideas and information about Tim Etchells' (Forced Entertainment) production of Instructions for Forgetting. The text of the performance is also included in the article. Please notice how they write about their process, devising ideas and how that helps frame how you engage with the text of the performance.

Malcolm Gladwell, ‘Group Think’, The New Yorker
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/12/02/group-think

Tim Etchells, Instructions for Forgetting
https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/dramaandtheatre/documents/pdf/50.3etchells.pdf
DT1200 Theatre & Text (both terms)

This course is designed to equip you with critical and creative skills for engaging with theatrical texts of various kinds. We will consider multiple relationships between page and stage, looking at the evolution and diversity of the performance text, as well as various methods and principles developed to generate performance texts across a broad historical, cultural and stylistic range. We’ll explore the wide variety of choices available to all theatre makers – actors, directors, performers, designers, and more – in working on staging performance texts, asking questions about how meaning is produced on the page and in performance, the possibilities and limits of interpretation, and the dynamics of working with text. The course will also consider how performance can generate text: considering, for example, the archive of performance (in reviews and other documents), and the different stylistic methods that students and others can use – and have used – to engage with performance, critically and creatively. In the autumn term we will look at four play texts. The first text will be: Henrik Ibsen's 'A Doll's House'. This will be available free from Drama Online which you will be able to access with your university username and password once you join us in September. However, if you would like to familiarise yourself with the play beforehand any translation is acceptable.

You are required to book tickets for Saint George and the Dragon at the National Theatre. You can book https://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/shows/saint-george-and-the-dragon at the Royal Court. This is required viewing for your first formative assessment, a performance analysis of this production. Information for the production is here: http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/fathercomeshome

DT1300 Theatre & Culture (autumn term)

In this course, we consider how theatre might establish ideas of nation, community and national culture. Many countries (including Britain) have a National theatre, but what does this actually represent? Can you ever represent an entire nation and its culture through theatre? The course will provide you with a critical vocabulary to unpick some of the complexities that make culture such a vibrant and integral part of our identities. Theatre & Culture 1 is a full unit course delivered across the Autumn term. This means you should expect to devote around 50% of your self-study time to reading and re-reading the material for this course. All readings will be provided for you, but you might want to take a look at the following short book to get a sense of the issues we will be investigating:


DT1400 Theatre & Ideas (spring term)

Theatre & Ideas is an interdisciplinary course. That means that we will explore how ideas from other disciplines can illuminate our critical and creative engagement with theatre and performance and how, in turn, theatre and performance can inform and interrogate other areas of life. Theatre & Ideas will take you beyond the vocabulary of theatre and into the terrain of philosophy, critical theory, economic theory, cultural and literary studies, politics, science, and so on, but always with a view to probing how these offer a toolbox of ideas to equip you for the study and practice of theatre. We will explore a range of ideas, grouped under four broad themes: (1) Ethics and Actions; (2) Capitalism and Commodification; (3) The Body and Society; and (4) The Mind and Memory. We’ll spend two weeks on each, the first
week being oriented toward discussion of critical readings, and the second being concerned with exploration of a play or performance text. Before classes start please read:


**DT1910 Moving Bodies (both terms)**

Please read the first two chapters of:


**DT1920 World Dance Histories (both terms)**

You should aim to see as much dance as possible over the summer, either live or on screen, and make notes about what you have seen. It is suggested that you purchase a copy of the Susan Au book, as you will find this useful throughout the year.


**DT1930 Writing Dance (spring term)**

Please read:

2. Sontag, Susan (1966)"Against Interpretation" in *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*. New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux

**DT1940 Choreographic Practices (autumn term)**

Please read:


**General Recommended Reading**

There is no obligation for you to buy or read any one of these suggested readings at this point. We offer them due to past requests from incoming students who were keen to undertake wider reading in preparation for the course.