

Department of English & Writing Studies  
Theatre Studies Program

**Theatre Studies 3900G**  
**Destination Theatre**  
Winter 2024

**Instructor:** Dr M. J. Kidnie  
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**Course Location:** UC 1225

**Course Day/Time:** W 4:30-6:20

Office hours: Thursdays 1:30pm, and by  
appointment (Zoom)

**Prerequisites**

At least 60% in 1.0 of any 1000-level or above “E” or combination of two 1000- level or above “F/G” courses from any department in the following Faculties: Arts and Humanities, School of Humanities (Brescia), Information and Media Studies (FIMS), or Music; or from any of the following additional Departments: Anthropology, English (King’s), English and Cultural Studies (Huron), History (Main and Affiliates), Philosophy (Affiliates), Political Science (Main and Affiliates), the Religious Studies (Affiliates), or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Land Acknowledgement**

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

Course Description

We’re going to London! One of the Anglophone world’s greatest theatre cities, and one of global capitalism’s most important “world” cities. Post-Brexit and post-COVID, London is grappling to define and understand its global place. London is a world city in flux – but it remains a city powered by cultural as well as economic capital. What work does theatre and performance do in London in 2024? How do the performing arts touch and affect its many different spaces, cultures, and citizens?

These are just a few of the questions we’ll explore as we prepare to travel to, and immerse ourselves in, performing London.

### *Outcomes*

Students who commit seriously to our shared labour in TS3900G can expect to:

- Discover and practice a number of different approaches to reading theatre and performance as engaged, public art;
- Explore connections between theatre and performance studies and their own areas of study and interest;
- Develop strong teamwork skills;
- Develop skills necessary to communicating with a public audience;
- Build personal resilience and self-reliance, alongside like-minded others;
- Take risks, make mistakes, and have a mountain of fun.

### *Objectives*

In order to achieve the above outcomes, students should expect to:

- Read a wide variety of introductory theatre studies material, with the option to dig deeper into some of it during independent study;
- Attend approximately nine live performances, both in London, ON and in London, UK, and debrief these performances in class;
- Work regularly in small pairs and teams;
- Reflect on their experience of live performance through journal entries;
- Create one major research project (format of your choosing), based on the exploration of connections between your own areas of interest and those focused on in our course;
- Spend substantial time both before and after departure thinking about how to practice self-care, group care, and take responsibility while in a new and challenging environment.

### Fees Schedule

Fees of \$2700 are due this term. The first instalment (\$1200) is due NO LATER THAN Monday, January 15. The second instalment is due NO LATER THAN Monday, February 5, 2024. Please take your cheque or money order (no cash, please) to Beth McIntosh in UC 2401. Her hours are 8:30am to 4pm, with a half hour for lunch at 12:30-1pm. Cheques should be made payable to The University of Western Ontario and please include your NAME and STUDENT NUMBER somewhere on the cheque.

Please make sure to meet these deadlines. We can't plan our trip without your funding in hand and failure to pay your fees will result in your exclusion from the course (which would be awful!).

### Course Materials (all texts are required)

You will not be asked to purchase books for this course. Instead, in order to practice and develop our theatre-reading skills, we will see two live productions together at the Grand Theatre here in London and watch one recorded-as-live production. Each of these productions will be discussed in class (see teaching schedule below):

- Catalyst Theatre's *The Invisible: Agents of Ungentlemanly Warfare* (a musical about the hidden history of female SOEs – Special Operative Executives – in WW2)
- Cliff Cardinal's one-man show, *Huff*. *Huff* has toured internationally and the UK's *Guardian* reviewer gave this show five stars, calling it "a hard hitting tour de force".
- *Much Ado about Nothing*, starring David Tennant (available through Digital Theatre Plus)

We have a block of tickets reserved to see *The Invisible* on Wednesday, January 24 (7:30pm) and *Huff* on Tuesday, February 13 (7:30pm). The ticket price for each show is \$25 (the Grand has generously given us a steep discount).

In order to book your tickets to *The Invisible*, phone the Box Office at the Grand (519-672-8800) and **quote order number 1208362, or tickets booked under Western English Department.**

In order to book your tickets to *Huff*, phone the Box Office at the Grand (519-672-8800) and **quote order number 1208974, or tickets booked under Western English Department.**

Please note that you need a credit card to book over the phone (alternatively, you could visit the theatre in person) and you'll collect your ticket from the Box Office on the night.

If you can't attend the scheduled performance date, please see the show at a time that works for you, but *before* we're due to discuss the production in class. **If this is you, speak to me about pricing before you buy your ticket.**

*Much Ado about Nothing* is available free through Digital Theatre Plus (access it through the Weldon database).

We will also study the following four essays together in class. They're posted in OWL Resources; please have them read in advance of the relevant class (see teaching schedule).

Marvin Carlson, "How Do Theatres Mean?", in *Places of Performance* (Cornell UP, 1989), pp. 1-13

Peggy Phelan, "The Ontology of Performance," in *Unmarked* (Routledge, 1993), pp. 146-66

Kirsty Sedgman, "Audience Experience in an Anti-Expert Age," *Theatre Research International* 42:3 (2018): 307-22

Ayanna Thompson, Farah Karim-Cooper, David Sterling Brown, "Unicorns and Fairy Dust: Talking Shakespeare, Performance, and Social (In)Justice," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 39:4 (2021): 537-58

### Methods of Evaluation

Your grade in TS3900G will consist of the following parts:

- Two journal entries (10% each; 20% total)
- Two short reflection papers, based on your theatre/performance viewing (15% each; 30% total)
- Final project (30%)
- Participation (20%)
- Pre-departure online modules (mandatory)

**PLEASE NOTE:** if you are in fourth year, AND you wish to graduate in June 2018, I will need to receive all of your course work by Wednesday 3 April, including your final project. You will of course be free to continue contributing to our class blog and participating actively throughout our June experience in London, but your final mark for the class will need to be submitted to the registrar before we leave.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website.

## **The Specifics**

### **1. TWO JOURNAL ENTRIES**

**Length:** 500 words each

**Value:** 10% per entry; 20% of final grade

**Due:** first entry due February 28; final entry during our June experience in London, unless you plan to graduate in June

**Method of submission:** via OWL

Destination Theatre is an opportunity for you to indulge your love of live performance, to expand your world as we travel to a major global city together, and to discover aspects of yourself that you may never have considered before. Using theatre as our touchstone, we will together become fledgling global citizens. What will this experience mean, to each of us? What will it teach us?

Twice over the course of DT you'll reflect on these and related questions.

**In your first post**, you'll reflect on what brought you to Destination Theatre, what you hope to get from it, and what you perhaps fear, or are perhaps unsure about, as we begin our journey together. This post will be personal, but should still incorporate proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. It should read a bit like a "comment" piece for the *Gazette*; imagine you are writing for your friends, peers, maybe some teachers and parents. Imagine an audience for your writing, then address that audience.

**In your second post**, you will reflect on one of the experiences we will share together in London: a theatre visit, a city walk or away trip, or perhaps a presentation from one of our guest experts. Here, you should emphasize how your chosen experience has encouraged you to think in a new, fresh way about something we discussed in class during winter term. You should incorporate some secondary material into this post - maybe one of our readings, something from your final project research, reviews of the performance you're discussing, etc. Think of this as the more "academic" of the two posts, but note that you are still addressing a public audience; it's not as formal, nor as argument-based, as an essay would be, but it has a strong critical dimension.

**Images are welcome**, for both posts. Be creative! Remember to think about copyright.

**If you wish, you may complete one of these posts in pairs.** If you choose to do so your post should be approximately 800-1000 words long, and should demonstrate a shared voice and shared reflections. Both members of a pair will receive the same grade.

### **2. TWO SHORT REFLECTION PAPERS**

**Length:** 750 words

**Value:** 15% per paper; 30% of final grade

**Due:** paper one is due Wednesday 27 March; paper two is due either Wednesday 3 April (if you are graduating in June) or Friday 12 July (everyone else)

**Method of Submission:** via OWL

For each of these papers you will analyze a work of live theatre using a critical lens borrowed from one of our course readings. (So, for example: you might see *Huff* at the Grand, and then use one aspect of "Unicorns and Fairy Dust" to talk about how it politicizes marginalized youth experience in Canada. [This is just an example.]

You must use a different reading for each of your reflections.

If you are graduating in June, you should base both reflection papers on theatre you've seen in the winter term.

If you are not graduating in June, one of these reflections should be based on your winter-term theatre viewing, and the other should be based on a piece of live theatre you see during our experience in London (with the class, or not, as you prefer).

### 3. FINAL PROJECT

**Length:** 2000 words, or 6-8 minutes of audio/video (your choice of format)

**Value:** 30% of final grade

**Due:** Wednesday 3 April (if you are in fourth year and wish to graduate in June); Friday 12 July (everybody else)

**Method of Submission:** via OWL

Your final project will combine your own interests/areas of study with some aspect of the work we will have done in class / will do during our experience in London. It will be conceived and shaped by you, in consultation with me.

Your interests (what do *you* want to do? What are *you* curious about exploring further?) will shape the direction your project takes; I will help you determine what form your project might evolve into (an essay? A performance pitch/proposal? A report? A video? Something else?) as well as what research areas you might want to consider as you develop it.

For those of you completing your final project after our London experience, you should plan to use our time in London to inform your project and influence its path. After seeing theatre in and experiencing the city, your project may take a fresh turn – and that's just fine.

Every project will look and feel different. You should begin speaking to me about possible avenues of investigation after reading week, and no later than mid-March.

### 4. PARTICIPATION

**Length:** ongoing

**Value:** 20% of final grade

This class is about having an experience unlike that an everyday classroom affords. It's a chance for us to work together to expand our horizons, test our boundaries, and shift our comfort zones. In order to do that safely we will work toward becoming a community during winter term, and we will act as an ad-hoc family during our time in London.

All this means that participation is crucial: you need to come to every winter term meeting, on time and prepared; you need to take part in the exercises and workshops we do in class; you need to visit me regularly in order to talk about your blog posts, readings, papers, and/or final project – anything you aren't sure about or need to think in more detail about. I'm available to support your work, but you also need to be *engaged* and *involved*.

In London, you'll need to take care of and support each other. You will need to keep each other safe and help each other make smart choices. You will need to take responsibility for one another. You'll need to help each other have fun!

**Note the one incontrovertible rule regarding participation:** if you miss more than THREE sessions (during winter term and/or during our London intensive, **combined**) without accommodation, you will forfeit your participation mark.

## 5. PRE-DEPARTURE ONLINE MODULE

Western International's Pre-departure Training is an online module that is delivered through OWL. You can link to it from here:

[https://international.uwo.ca/learning//safety\\_abroad/faq\\_for\\_students.html](https://international.uwo.ca/learning//safety_abroad/faq_for_students.html). It's engaging, interactive, and fun, and it's filled with case studies, information, and quizzes. You access it in your own time and you can refer back to it at any time. There are nine modules, and each module will take between about ten and thirty minutes to complete ("Cyber Security" is a bit longer at 45 minutes).

Please note that although there isn't a grade for this module, its completion is compulsory for each student. You are asked to complete it at least one month before departure (Western International tracks through OWL your successful completion of each module), and you won't be allowed to join the course in London until it's done, despite having paid your fees, as you'll be in breach of contract. Western International is really quite serious about this. On the upside, you'll be provided with plenty of useful and even essential information, which will help make our trip a huge success!

## 6. THE FINE PRINT

Late assignments are penalized at 2% per day.

Submissions more than seven days late will be eligible for a grade of no more than 50%.

### Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism, which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

### Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

### Additional Information

#### **Late Paper Policy:**

If you submit a paper after the due date, the paper will be counted as late. The grade will be reduced by a penalty of two marks (2%) for each calendar day that it is late.

Extensions will only be considered if supported by a request for accommodation sent by students' Academic Counsellors in their home faculty (see below, "Accommodation").

#### Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

The full policy is set out here:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

#### **Religious Accommodation:**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

#### Academic Integrity Tutorial

All students are required to enroll in and complete the Centre for Teaching and Learning's Academic Integrity Tutorial. To access the tutorial, please use the link provided in the Resource tab in the course OWL site. Once the tutorial has been completed, you will receive a downloadable certificate. You must upload the certificate and submit it through the course Assignments tab in order to complete this assignment. The tutorial must be completed by Friday in the second week of term. This tutorial is mandatory in order for you to complete and pass the course. If you have completed the tutorial already for another course, you may upload the same certificate for this course; you do not need to repeat the tutorial.

#### Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of AI tools such as ChatGPT to create content that is submitted as one's own. In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. Students must however critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, however students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work.

**Plagiarism Checking:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support & Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Timetable

Week 1 | January 10  
Introduction

Week 2 | January 24  
Trip to the Grand: *The Invisible: Agents of Ungentlemanly Warfare*. Show time is 7:30pm. Please plan to stay after the show for the actor Q&A upstairs in the Drewlo Lounge.

Week 3 | January 31  
Post-performance discussion of *The Invisible* with special reference to Marvin Carlson, "How Do Theatres Mean?"

Week 4 | February 14

Post-performance discussion of *Huff* with special reference to David Sterling Brown, Ayanna Thompson, and Farah Karim-Cooper's "Unicorns and Fairy Dust".

**February 17-25 – READING WEEK**

Week 5 | February 28

Post-performance discussion of *Much Ado* (starring David Tennent, available through Digital Theatre Plus) with special reference to Kirsty Sedgman, "Audience Experience in an Anti-expert Age".

Week 6 | March 13

Mandatory training with Pin Sun, from Western International (in our usual classroom).

Week 7 | March 27

Discussion of Peggy Phelan's "The Ontology of Performance" and the performance event.