Fall 2014 Courses

**THTREMUS 222 Introduction to Global Theatre and Ethnic Studies**  
*Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 to 12:30 pm*  
Students learn about performance histories and practices of culturally diverse communities in the United States, study performance aesthetics emerging from Asian American, African American, Latin American and Native American communities, and learn how to read and analyze diverse plays by United States authors in cultural context.

**THTREMUS 325 Contemporary American Theatre and Drama**  
*Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 to 3:00 pm*  
Examines works and developments in American theatre and drama from the past twenty years, especially the diverse and multicultural drama of this period. Looks at elements of class and ethnicity, urbanization, family and community, war and technology, commercialism and consumerism, gender, race, and sexuality.  
Students learn to analyze themes, structures, characters, and language of contemporary American plays through the lens of cultural studies

**THTREMUS 326 Intercultural Drama**  
*Monday and Wednesday 3:00 to 4:30 pm*  
Examines how international dramatic literature in translation comments on global lives and lifestyles.  
Class reads, analyzes and discusses intercultural plays in cultural context. Written assignments and in-class presentations investigate the political, social, and cultural impact meaning of intercultural dramatic works.  
Students learn to analyze themes, structures, characters, and language of intercultural/international plays through the lens of cultural studies

**ASIAN 255 Bhangra to Butoh: Dance in Contemporary Asia**  
From Chinese martial arts films to South Asian Bollywood cinema to Korea’s KPop phenomenon, dance has become a central part of popular culture in contemporary Asia. In addition to these mass media representations, Asian dance also serves as a form of high art, which has had a tremendous impact on
global dance culture. Forms such as Japanese butoh, Chinese classical dance, and South Asian bharatanatyam are recognized as part of national and international dance art scenes, with their own conservatories, performance festivals, and transnational competitions. Asian dance is also part of many college curriculums in the United States; Indonesian dance, for example, has often been taught at the University of Michigan, and Chinese folk dance is now taught at a number of schools across the US. Dance serves not only as a form of creative expression but also a way to form communities and establish a personal identity. Contemporary Asians in Asia and around the world use dance to connect with and celebrate their cultural heritage, as well as a means by which to define their own national and ethnic identities and to transmit and share their culture with others. In this class, we explore dance in contemporary Asia from all of these perspectives and more. Students will participate in workshops and performance viewings and will conduct an independent research project on a contemporary Asian dance form or phenomenon of their choice. Students with a background in Asian dance are especially encouraged to apply, although no experience is necessary.

Winter 2015 Courses

**THTREMUS 233 – Studio: Modern Rituals/Traditional Practices**
Trains students in performance techniques grounded in various cultural traditions: choral singing, masking, poetry, vocal call and responses, dance, martial arts, and mimicry. Embodied studio practice emphasizes aesthetics of diverse cultural communities. Guest artists and instructors interact with students in the instructional space. Students learn how practice emerges from culturally specific contexts, how to embody culturally specific aesthetics and practices, and they train in the vocal, physical and theatrical expression skills.

**THTREMUS 332 – Performing Archives and Oral Histories**
Students use ethnographic or archival sources to create new performance works. Building on histories introduced in 222, they create individual or small group projects. Interpretative text and character work helps to improve individual student performance skills.

**THTREMUS 340 – Devising Theatre**
The course is a laboratory course for play development. The class creates collaborative theatrical works from text, visual art, movement, stories and/or contemporary events. The class develops performances through improvisation, then organizes and evaluates their work using principles of dramatic structure, and play analysis. Dramaturgy and directing skills are introduced through studio practice and critique.

**ASIAN 356: Contemporary Chinese Performance Culture**
This course examines twenty-first century Chinese culture through the lens of performance. Starting with the 2008 Beijing Olympic Opening Ceremonies, the course uses significant works
as case studies to examine a range of genres in 21st-century Chinese performance culture, including global mass mediated performance, avant-garde theater, modern dance, tourism productions, popular music concerts, and intercultural Chinese opera. Students will learn to examine these works as cultural texts embedded in local, national, and global histories; significant attention will be paid to the ways in which nation, ethnicity, and identity are mediated and constructed through performance. The course places a strong emphasis on connections between performance and popular culture, as well as on introducing students to major artists, organizations, and ideas in Chinese performance culture. Through a series of supporting theoretical readings and analytical writing assignments about performance videos, students will be introduced to and asked to apply thematic and theoretical approaches in Chinese performance and cultural studies.

*this class may have an optional GCC study abroad component in summer 2015.

**RC HUM 273/ASIAN 373 - Performing Arts of South and Southeast Asia**

Introduces aspects of performance in South and Southeast Asia through focusing on the epic, *The Ramayana*, which for the past two millennia has been among the most important literary and oral texts of the world. Centering our study on India, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, we will examine performances of the epic in dance drama, masks, puppet theater, film and television. As background, we will look at depictions of this story in ancient South and Southeast Asian sculpture, temple murals and bas-reliefs, and we will examine an ancient Indian aesthetic theory (in the *Natyasastra*). Beginning with the earliest written version of this epic, we move forward in time to examine other less ancient and even contemporary performance versions. The course explores three important dimensions of performance: sound, image and event, with a special emphasis on theories of performance studies and orality. Our aim is to better understand South and Southeast Asian performance conventions and how these conventions relate to the way people understand and enjoy performances. This course provides an understanding of ways that performers and spectators in this part of the world create, approach and understand performance, and it challenges students to reassess their own notions about performance.