

ENG 327 SHAKESPEARE AFTER SHAKESPEARE: PERFORMANCE AND CULTURAL CRITICISM

“My Shakespeares always have traces of my cultural home.”
Calixto Bieito

Instructor: Katy Stavreva

Office Hours: M, W 11:30-12:30 and by appointment

Office: 200 South Hall

Phone: x4255 (office); 319 930 1687 (mobile)

E-mail: kstavreva@cornellcollege.edu

Class meets 9:30—11:30 and 1-3 p.m., unless otherwise indicated on the schedule.

Required Texts

Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Arden Shakespeare IV), eds. Vaughan and Vaughan

— — —, *King Lear* (Arden Shakespeare III), ed. Foakes

— — —, *The Merchant of Venice* (Arden Shakespeare III), ed. Drakakis

Course Description

The focus of this course will be the analysis of three of Shakespeare's most frequently staged plays—*The Tempest*, *King Lear*, and *The Merchant of Venice*—and their diverse incarnations in performance. All three are plays about banishment: Prospero, the magician who sets into motion the events in *The Tempest* has been exiled from Milan where he used to rule, Lear finds himself banished on the heath after banishing those most faithful to him, and *The Merchant's* Shylock, whose money keeps Venetian merchandise circulating, has never been accepted by the Christian merchants. We will do several rondos around the plays, starting with an exploration of the challenges and opportunities that their texts offer to performers, then re-visiting them through discussion of the interpretations offered in English and foreign-language theatre and film productions.

Our texts include Shakespeare's play-texts, filmed productions of the plays, essays about their performances, documentary evidence from various stages and playhouses. On occasion, I will avail myself of the opportunity to deliver mini-lectures, but this is a class in which your insights will form a major part of the work and the basis for class discussion.

The main goal of this course is honing your analytical skills of Shakespeare's rich playtexts and of their global performances. We approach Shakespeare's plays with the assumption that they were written as blueprints for performance, and hence attend to the semantics, acoustics, and rhetorical use of language. We also assume that every performance constitutes an interpretation that itself can be the object of critical analysis, and that performance choices are informed by, and in turn influence cultural, social, and economic contexts. In class discussion and through written work, we will focus on the following interrelated questions: 1) how (through what means) do performers make

meaning out of the play-texts, 2) what are the meanings privileged in specific performances, and 3) how do the “local” meanings specific to individual performances, reflect and affect the cultural context in which they are created.

A related goal for the class is to acquire some basic skills in film-making, and to use educational technology for creative expression, analytical discovery, and shaping the public memory of local sites. This goal will be achieved through your creative cinematic interpretation of a Shakespeare play scene, enhanced by short public humanities essays composed for our class blog site.

The course supports the Educational Priorities and Outcomes of Cornell College with emphases on knowledge, inquiry, multi-media communication, intercultural literacy, and citizenship.

Assignments and Evaluation

Active class participation is central to your success and the success of this course. To get full participation credit, you need to attend *all* class sessions, ready to articulate, examine, and negotiate your responses to the assigned readings for the day, both literary and critical. This involves:

- sharing insights gained through the reading or screening;
- completing in-class involvement opportunities: offering illustrations of the discussion concepts, participating in scene workshops, sharing in-class writing;
- thoughtful, respectful, and productive engagement with discussion questions and interpretive solutions proposed by class members;

Shakespearean language is both rich and difficult, and you will be surprised at the new discoveries that each re-reading brings to you. Start out by reading the assigned sections of the plays, then read the critical materials assigned for the day, then re-read the Shakespearean text. Make a habit of reading the assigned play sections out loud and even on your feet, attending to sound- and rhythm patterns.

I'll assess your participation toward the end of week two and again at the end of the course. Feel free to approach me about your participation grade anytime, outside of class.

Rhythm and Rhetoric Paper (4-6 pages). This is a close analysis of the rhetorical and emotional content of a scene from *The Tempest*, as signaled by language choices, sound, and rhythm. Detailed instructions on Moodle.

The Shakespeare Imprint: The Film. In pairs (covering the responsibilities of director and cinematographer), you will develop a shooting script, then film and edit a 4-5 min film of a scene from one of the plays we're reading in this class. This should be a different scene from the one you chose for the Rhythm and Rhetoric paper. Your film should offer a clear and engaging creative interpretation of the scene. Please note that though short, the film should have a beginning, middle, and end. Shakespeare's dialogue is only part of the story; music, sound, location, props, camera work are important elements of cinematic storytelling, too, hence the need for a well-developed shooting

script. Choose a location that would tell your viewer something about your take on the scene.

Note that you will also act in the film of another team. Line memorization is not strictly required, as film can use voice over. It's up to your director to ask you to memorize your lines; don't argue with their artistic vision. You may make suggestions, but remember that the director is always right.

Each director-and-cinematographer team is responsible for providing credits for the actors and the film team for the blog on which the film appears.

The Shakespeare Imprint: Site History and Scene Analysis. On the class blog, each film will be geo-coded on a map. With your partner, you will develop two more contributions to the blog for readers interested in local history and in Shakespeare:

- a short essay (about 250 words) on the history of the location of your film shoot. You should use credible published sources, which you may enhance by credible oral histories. If serendipitous connections to themes or characters from your scene emerge, make sure to note them.
- a careful analysis of, the scene's main themes and conflicts, its language (word play, allusions, divulgence or constriction of expression, rhythm and musical elements, if any), its function in the play.

Both of these essays should be scrupulously documented.

A final exam on major concepts discussed and the plays' performances.

Class participation	10%
Rhythm and Rhetoric Paper	20%
The Shakespeare Imprint: The Film	30%
The Shakespeare Imprint: Site History and Scene Analysis	20%
Final Exam	20%

Policies

Out-of-class communication. You must check your **e-mail** at least once a day and respond promptly to your colleagues, including your professor. E-mail is my preferred mode of contact during the day. If you need to get in touch with me in the evening, or during weekends, please text my mobile number.

Cell phones and food: Turn them all electronic devices and put them away before class. Please do not bring food to class. During class discussion and workshops, we all need your undivided attention and thoughtful contributions.

Late work is not acceptable. We depend on each other's professionalism for the success of the class. **All late assignments (including drafts) will get a grade of F.** If you cannot meet a deadline, I may consider re-scheduling it only if the reason constitutes a true emergency and we had negotiated an extension at least **36 hours in advance**.

Attendance: Class attendance is assumed; you're expected to come prepared and participate fully in all activities. If you miss class, you are still responsible for missed topics, including technological instruction, as well as for assignments due that day.

Academic integrity. You've heard this before: plagiarism, also known as intellectual theft, and cheating will result in a failing grade for the course. Proper research hygiene is crucial for our work, especially since some of it is for the public realm.

Cornell College has the following policy on academic integrity:

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Catalogue, under the heading "Academic Honesty."

For examples on incorporating and documenting film citations, consult the "Checklist for Formal Written Assignments on Theatre and Film" on the class Moodle site. If you're ever in doubt about how to credit a source, don't hesitate to ask me.

Accommodation: Shakespeare's language is not the easiest. Don't hesitate to talk to me if you're struggling with a reading or a deadline for written assignment. Also, if you have a documented disability that requires accommodation, please notify me during the first two days of classes.

Schedule

This schedule is not written in stone. Necessary changes will be announced in class and subsequently updated on the course's Moodle website.

	Writing Assignments Due/ Prep Work	Reading Assignments for the Day; Lecture and Discussion Topics
1 st Mon		12:30-2:30 Introduction to the course; Shakespeare's prose, verse, song, and sound. A reading of <i>Tempest</i> 1.1.
1 st Tue		Read <i>Tempest</i> 1.2-3.1 and "The Play" from Vaughan's and Vaughan's introduction, 3-36. AM topics: genre, conflicts, implied stage directions, physiological punctuation. PM: Discussion continues. Rhythm and rhetoric exercises.

1st Wed		Read <i>Tempest</i> 3.2-end; “Masque” (67-73), “Perspectives on Imperialism” (98-108), “Re-enter Miranda” (108-110) from Vaughan’s and Vaughan’s introduction. AM topics: performing otherness and gender/sexuality, sound, meter, silence/silencing. PM: Discussion continues. Introduce Rhythm and Rhetoric Paper.
1st Thur	Start drafting your paper.	Read <i>Lear</i> 1.1-2.1; Foakes’s introduction 3-33 (“Reading and Staging <i>King Lear</i> ,” “Every inch a king,” “What wouldst thou do, old man?”). AM topics: two texts, the play-within-the-play, properties (map, crown, coronet), costume, the king’s two bodies, genre of the play (history, tragedy, morality play?). PM: <i>no class</i> .
1st Fri	Keep working on your paper.	Read <i>Lear</i> 2.2-3.7; Foakes’s introduction 34-49 (“Thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter,” “I had a son.”) <i>AM class meets till noon!</i> From screenplay to shooting script: a workshop with Brooke Bergantzel and Jennifer Haigh. PM topics: women’s characters (stock or psychologically complex), madness, violence. 18-28.
1st Sat	Paper due by noon (Moodle).	Start working on the screenplay.

	Writing Assignments/ Performances	Reading Assignments for the Day; Lecture and Discussion Topics
2nd Mon	With your partner, finalize the shooting script.	Read <i>Lear</i> acts 4 & 5; Foakes’s introduction, 50-58 (“Thou wouldst make a good fool”), 59- 80). AM topics: role(s) of the fool (how/when does he exit), Edmund and audience engagement, functions of the subplot, the ending and the dramatic structure of the play. PM <i>No class</i> . Meet at 2:15 in Cole, in front of Brooke’s office to check out video equipment and get an introduction to its use.
2nd Tue	Start shooting and audio recording your film.	Read <i>Merchant of Venice</i> 1-3.1 and section from Drakakis’s introduction TBA. AM topics: the play’s comic genre (rom com, commedia dell’ arte, ironic comedy); Belmont vs/and Venice, “the Jew.” PM <i>No class</i> .
2nd Wed	Film shooting.	Read <i>MV</i> 3.2-5.1 and Marianne Novy, <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> and its Pressured Conversions” (on Moodle). AM topics: conversions and outsiders Shylock, Antonio, the women).

		PM Workshop on researching local history with Meghan Yamanishi (<i>short class</i>).
2nd Thur	Last day for film shooting and audio recording. Work on site history essay.	AM Screen Taymor's <i>Tempest</i> (110 min). PM Discussion of film. Focus on race, gender, power. Sign up for Adobe Premiere workshop on Friday morning.
2nd Fri		AM 9-10 and 10-11. Small group workshop on Adobe Premiere with Brooke Bergantzel. <i>Groups meet in the Instructional Technology Studio</i> . PM What gender, spirit? Screening of excerpts from Italian, British, Russian, and Bulgarian productions of <i>The Tempest</i> with a focus on Ariel. Site history essay due by 8 p.m. (Moodle) .

	Writing Assignments/ Performances	Reading Assignments for the Day; Lecture and Discussion Topics
3rd Mon		AM Screening of <i>King Lear</i> , dir. Trevor Nunn (155 min). Screening will finish in PM class, then edit films.
3rd Tue	Edit films.	Read section from Foakes's introduction to <i>Lear on the Fool</i> (133-37). AM Discussion of Nunn's production: a modern <i>Lear</i> ? Screening and discussion of scenes from Mabou Mines' experimental theater production of the play.
3rd Wed		AM <i>No class</i> . Finish editing films. PM Peer review session on finished films with Brooke and Katy.
3rd Thur		Read Kathy Howlett, "Are You Trying to Make Me Commit Suicide? Gender, Identity, and Spatial Arrangement in Kurosawa's <i>Ran</i> " (on Moodle). AM Screening of <i>Ran</i> , dir. Akira Kurosawa. PM Finish screening the film and discussion.
3rd Fri	Final drafts of films due by 6 p.m Upload to Google drive and share with Brooke and Katy.	AM (class until 11:15) Screen <i>Merchant of Venice</i> , dir. Michael Radford. PM Film discussion. Topics TBA. Turn in your shooting script with notes made during the shooting, if any.

	Writing Assignments/ Performances	Reading Assignments for the Day; Lecture and Discussion Topics
4th Mon	Work on analytical paper.	AM (class until 11: 20) Screen <i>Merchant of Venice</i> , dir. Robert Sturua. PM Discuss the production and its (post-) modernization.

		Geo-code films on blog. Analytical paper due by 6 p.m.
4th Tue		Public unveiling of class blog and screening of complete sequences starts at 12:30 in Zamora's. Submit feedback on film-making process.
4th Wed		Final due by noon (take home).