

Performance and Globalization



Space Invader (Customs House, Cape town), Dan Halter 2008

Tufts University, Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies
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Spring 2021 | Tuesdays 1:30 – 4:30pm | Office hours by appointment

“Globalization” names the conditions that control cross-border flows and interdependence of capital, labor, media, ideology, and the desires that incite and impede them. These conditions are often set into motion by projects of empire building and the mission to occupy, extract, and exploit land, labor, resources, and culture. But sometimes the elements are unruly, subjects ungovernable, and culture too opaque to appropriate. Sometimes the itineraries initiated by global projects create strange encounters in the ocean or shadow economies at the border that were not the intention of the institutional effort. Performance can be a useful method to trace the complicated itineraries of globalization, to capture ongoing and multidirectional movements. Further, performance repertoires travel with globalization: languages, rituals, taste, recipes, etc. Performance is also a tool of empire-building, securing power through embodied pedagogy, and by stripping subjugated people of communication and culture. This graduate seminar offers students an opportunity to follow a performance practice, form, or genre across borders, and to consider how performance and culture are transformed by shifting migrations, attachments, and

proximities. Readings and assignments are designed to assist students in applying a variety of analytics to their area of focus.

GOALS:

To introduce students to key terms in the study of globalization
To connect globalization to the study of performance and aesthetics
To develop facility in political economic critique

BY THE END OF THE SEMESTER, STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

Understand key terms related to the study of globalization
Demonstrate expertise on the histories and geographies of a particular genre/form/style of performance
Identify analytics offered in a critical text, and apply them to their own research
Distill original research into a research essay, as well as other creative forms

COMMUNICATION

If you have any problems concerning the course, if there are particular topics you are excited by and want to talk more about, if you want to better prepare for assignments, or for any other issues related to this class, please don't hesitate to schedule an appointment. I want to make sure you get the most out of this class.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All our texts are available as PDFs or links via modules.

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, TECHNOLOGY

Attendance is mandatory at all classes; please let me know in advance if you plan to be absent otherwise your recurring un-excused absence will affect your overall grade. This is a discussion-based class, and so I expect active participation from all of you. Given the challenges of the Zoom environment, I'll regularly use breakout sessions to provide opportunities for you all to spend some time talking with each other.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The classroom is a place for dialogue across intellectual and identitarian difference; I am committed to making sure that all students can pursue their interests and engage with materials in an environment that is supportive. I ask us to respect each other, and grant each other grace to make mistakes. I also ask us to be aware of how we take up space and time in the class; be sure to share airtime and to direct your comments and questions to your peers and not just to me.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Your writing should consist of *your* own ideas, words, and information you have collated. When you are quoting or referencing a resource other than your own work, please make sure this is evident using citations. You are expected to be familiar with the **Tufts University academic integrity guidelines**: <https://students.tufts.edu/student-affairs/student-life-policies/academic-integrity-policy>

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

If the reading or writing assignments prove to be challenging (and they should be!) I want to encourage you to seek help. There's always room to grow and skills to be learned, and there should be no stigma attached to getting support. You're always welcome to talk to me about these things, and also know that there is an Academic Resource Center available to you: <https://students.tufts.edu/staar-center>

ACCOMMODATIONS

We each arrive to the classroom with different learning needs and it is my intention to create as supportive an environment as possible. If you do need accommodations based on disability, please meet with me as soon as possible. You can also look to the StAAR website for further support: <https://students.tufts.edu/staar-center/accessibility-services>

ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are designed to help you follow a cultural practice, style, genre, form as it moves and mutates across geographies, temporalities, and other politicized borders. On the first day of class, you'll introduce your research topic, and if it needs some narrowing or refining we can do that together as a class. You do not need to develop a significant research question around this topic yet. Over the semester, you are expected to continue to follow this topic through primary and secondary resources: who else has written about it and what frameworks do they examine it through? What does it look like? What are the philosophies behind it and who gets to name them? How do practitioners describe it on their websites vs. on news media vs. on documentaries? Who is allowed to practice it? Supposed to practice it? The quick dips below are opportunities to help direct your research a little bit, and the shallow dives are opportunities to approach your topic through the analytics provided by the class readings.

QUICK DIPS (5 min presentations in class, sign up slots, spread through the semester, sign up *here*. You only need to do 5 of these seven; you can choose which ones and in what order).

What's in a name?

How does the performance style you are studying get its name? What does the name signify, how does it circulate, how is it renamed?

Where in the world...?

Create and narrate a map of how something has moved, across urban terrain, global borders, ocean ports. This could be a merchant, a community, a vehicle, a product, a practice relevant to your research topic.

Follow the money

Tell us about the monetary transactions associated with this performance style. How much do costumes cost, who finances festivals, where is money kept?

120 years in 120 seconds

Choose a geographic region (a neighborhood, a city, a country, a border) relevant to your project and follow its history since 1900 to the present (you can choose a different approximately 100 year history). Summarize this in a 2-min video.

Laying down the law

Identify how laws, rules, policies, regulations have impinged on your performance style. Maybe they don't necessarily bear on the performance itself, but how do they circulate around it and come to matter? How makes them, when has there been controversy around them?

Conflict(ing) Narratives

Identify a political conflict relevant to your research project. It can be ongoing, it can be sustained, or momentary. It need not be about your performance style, but has bearing on the regions it appears in / the people who practice it.

Keyword

Research and explain the value of one of these keywords. What are its histories and how do it continue to matter? Doesn't have to be relevant to your own research project: NAFTA; Bandung Conference; Cold War; GATT & WTO; Silk Road; British East India Company; Panama Canal; Apartheid; World Bank and IMF; Chinese Exclusion Act; Human Rights; World Music / World Dance; Patriot Act; Austerity; BRICS; The Olympic Games

SHALLOW DIVES (15 – 20mins, three times in the semester)

As part of your ongoing engagement with a specific cultural genre, style, or practice, you will offer 15 to 20-min in-class presentations about your project. These presentations should: 1) introduce us to your ongoing discoveries, 2) mark the aesthetics of interest (i.e., describe and interpret), 3) detail the political economic relevance of your research, 4) connect the aesthetic and political-economic, 5) demonstrate how your research and analysis has been informed by the previous week's readings.

DEEP DIVE (May 12, 11:59pm)

At the end of the semester, you will synthesize your findings into a 3500 word (approx. 15 pages) research paper. In this paper I am most interested in seeing 1)

how you synthesize the in-class texts so that they provide a strong analytic framework for your project, 2) how you connect political economy with the aesthetic nature of the cultural practice you're studying, 3) clear but economical explanation of the style you are studying: its history, its importance, its nature. Please use Chicago-Style Notes and Bibliography; the word count above is for content only and does not include notes and bib.

CALENDAR

Week 1 : Feb 2
ORIENTATIONS

Short essays

Javier Santiso and Jeff Dayton-Johnson: Introduction to the Handbook on Latin American Political Economy
Vijay Prashad: Orientalism
David F. Ruccio: Capitalism
Lisa Lowe: Globalization

Articles/chapters:

Arjun Appadurai: Disjuncture and Difference in a Global Economy
Lisa Lowe: Metaphors of Globalization, Dilemmas of Excess
Sara Ahmed: The Orient and Other Others

Week 2 : Feb 9
PERFORMANCE AND EMPIRE

Short essays:

Shelly Streeby: Empire
David Kazanjian: Colonial
Junaid Rana: Terror

Articles/chapters:

Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns: Introduction + Splendid Dancing
Lorenzo Perillo: Zombies & Prisoner Rehabilitation (Chapter 1)
Adria Imada: Introduction + Modern Desires & Colonial Counter-Tactics (Chapter 2)
Mariko Okada: Masking Japanese Materialism
Natalia Duong: Agent Orange Bodies

Week 3 : Feb 16
NO CLASS

Week 4 : Feb 23
SHALLOW DIVES

Week 5 : Mar 2
NATION / BORDER / TRANSNATIONAL

Short essays:

Lauren Berlant: Citizenship

Lisa Duggan: Neoliberalism

Mary Pat Brady: Border

Articles/chapters:

Audra Simpson: Borders, Cigarettes, and Sovereignty

Deborah Parédez – Introduction to *Selenidad*

Clare Croft: Introduction + Chapter 1 – Dancers as Diplomats

Priya Srinivasan – Introduction + Archival Her-stories

Week 6 : Mar 9

SHALLOW DIVES

Week 7 : Mar 16

DIASPORA / MIGRATION / MOBILITY

Short essays:

Eithne Luibhéid: Immigration

Brend Hayes Edwards: Diaspora

Alyshia Galvez: Migration

Articles/chapters:

Mimi Thi Nguyen: Introduction to *The Gift of Freedom* + The Refugee Condition

Gayatri Gopinath: Introduction

Anusha Kedhar: Introduction + Breaking Point (Chapter 4)

Krista Thompson: Introduction

Week 8 : Mar 23

SHALLOW DIVES

Week 9 : Mar 30

PROXIMITY / INTIMACY

Short essays:

Kareem Khubchandani: Intimacy

Articles/chapters:

Ara Wilson: Introduction + MBK (Chapter 3)

Vanita Reddy: Afro-Asian Intimacies

Tao Leigh Goffe: Chop Suey Surplus

Mingwei Huang: The Year of China in South Africa

Mingwei Huang: The foreign and the familiar

Week 10 : Apr 6

SHALLOW DIVES

Week 11 : Apr 13

FRICITION / SCALE / REGION

Short essays:

Micaela Di Leonardo: City
Helma Lutz: Domestic Workers and Migration

Articles/chapters:

Anna Tsing: Introduction to *Friction* + Let a New Asia and a new Africa be born +
Natural Universals and the Global Scale
Keguro Macharia: Introduction to *Frottage*
Gayatri Gopinath: Crossed Eyes
Espiritu, Lowe, Yoneyama: Transpacific Entanglements
Brenda Yeoh & Shirlena Huang: Transnational Domestic Workers

Week 12 : Apr 20

SHALLOW DIVES

3:30pm – talk by Joseph Pierce

Week 13 : Apr 27

LAND / OCEAN / AIR

Short essays:

Moon Ho Jung: Coolie
Zalasiwicz et. al: Anthropocene

Articles/Chapters:

Maria Firmino Castillo: Dancing the Pluriverse
Anna Tsing et al: Introduction to *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*
Scott Magelssen: Introduction + The Space Tourist
Jake Kosek: Ecologies of Empire
Sean Metzger: Seascapes
Nidhi Mahajan: Dhow Itineraries

Week 14 : May 4

SHALLOW DIVES

Final essay: May 12, 11:59pm