



Syllabus

Course Title: The City as Stage: Theatre, Art, and Culture in London

Program and Date: London Signature, May 30th – June 17th, 2026

Academic Department: Theatre, Humanities/Interdisciplinary, Art History

Instructor Name: Dr. Carol Stewart

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Get to Know Your Professor

A quick introduction: I'm a lecturer at both the University of Louisville and Bellarmine University in Louisville, KY, where I teach courses in Theatre, Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Studies. One of the things that I love about working across different disciplines in the arts is the opportunity it gives me – and my students! – to explore the dynamic connections between creative works and big ideas, and ask questions about what they tell us about ourselves and our culture

That's the same energy I'm bringing to London, where we'll use it as a springboard for everything we'll see, talk about, and experience together. I also want to hear what excites you about the arts and about London, so I can weave that into the course! This will be my eighth year teaching in London with CCSA, and I'm excited to share everything I know about a city that I love!

Course Description

One of the most dynamic cities in the world, London is a cultural powerhouse where history, creativity, and imagination collide — and in this course, the city itself is your classroom. You'll dive into London's vibrant theatre scene by attending everything from Shakespearean classics to cutting-edge new plays, using those performances as jumping-off points to experience the city's rich artistic heartbeat. From world-famous museums to underground galleries, iconic landmarks to hidden gems, classical concerts to indie music venues, every experience will help you see how theatre and the arts shape London, and how London shapes them right back. You'll meet local artists, try traditional British food and exciting new flavors, and wander neighborhoods where the past and future converge. You won't just study culture—you'll live the arts on the streets of London!

Course Level and Credit Hours

This course can be taken for credit hours as an undergraduate Gen Ed Fine Arts course, Introduction to Theatre, Special Topics in Art History, or Introduction to Humanities/Interdisciplinary Studies/Liberal Arts. It can be taken as either a lower-or upper-division course, or for Honors credit. (*Note: The assignments listed below will be adapted for those different types and levels of academic credit.)

Note: This course can be taken with Photography in London, for full credit for both courses

Prerequisite(s)

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of all coursework with a passing grade and full participation in course activities, students shall be able to:

- *identify* elements and dynamics of creative works and the cultural and historical contexts in which they appear;
- *evaluate* different types of experiences of and engagements with the arts and the impact that location/environment has on those experiences;
- *collaborate* with other people on research and creative projects;
- *demonstrate* your understanding of the impact of culture and the role of arts in shaping and enhancing the lives of human beings;
- *reflect critically* on new insights and multiple perspectives on the arts and culture through formal and informal writing.

Here are the most important things about this class: I want you to return home having experienced theatre and art that you never would have come into contact with otherwise; I want you to find your own ways of connecting with the wide world of the arts; I want you to seriously consider the kinds of things that art can do in its expression of human culture, and I want you to find at least one thing (but hopefully more than one!) that is so engaging that you're going to seek out more of the same once you return home. Of course, I also want to help you make your time in London one of the most memorable and exciting times in your life!

Required Readings and Materials

For this course, you must have:

- A laptop
- A small sketchbook or some kind of notebook with unlined paper
- A pen or pencil (or some other drawing medium you're familiar with/comfortable with, or interested in, like charcoal, pastels, etc.)
- A way to write down notes (you can use the blank pages, or you may want a small lined notebook for this)
- A file storage system, like Google Drive or Dropbox) to move files from your phone to your laptop;
- A no-cost app on your phone that allows you to record sound and export the file to your computer in some fashion (via that file storage system);
- No-cost sound/video editing software for your laptop;
- A no-cost individual account for the learning platform Canvas (this will be different than a Canvas account that might be associated with your home university. I will help you set up that account).



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There are no assigned textbooks for this course. Instead, the events we'll attend and the hands-on work we do – what we'll call the “artifacts” of the course – will serve as your primary texts.

Any other material you need – essays, videos, articles, tutorials – will all be made available to you electronically via our Canvas site.

Assignments and Grades

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| • Class Participation: | 100 pts |
| • Getting started with your blog, introductions, pre-departure assignments: | 100 pts |
| • Responses and reflective engagement: | 300 pts |
| • Creative Projects: | 300 pts |
| • Final and post-departure assignments: | 200 pts |

Some of the specific descriptions of/rubrics for these assignments will be adapted for upper-level and Honors credits.

Grading Scale

The following scale will be used to compute your grade.

A+	100+	A	94-100	A-	90-94
B+	87-89	B	84-86	B-	80-83
C+	77-79	C	74-76	C-	70-73
D+	67-69	D	64-66	D-	60-63
F	0-59				

Onsite Learning Experiences and Activities

Onsite learning experiences in this class will likely include the following site visits. This is a tentative list, which will be replaced with a detailed daily itinerary of class meetings and field trips prior to the departure date.

Theatre performances

- West End (productions like *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *War Horse*, or *Hadestown*)
- National Theatre of Great Britain
- Shakespeare's Globe Theatre
- Young Vic Theatre
- Almeida Theatre
- Bridge Theatre

Museums, galleries, special exhibits

- British Museum
- Victoria and Albert Museum
- British Library
- Tate Modern
- National Portrait Gallery

Presentations, conversations, and hands-on experiences with artists and experts

- Victoria and Albert Museum's Theatre and Performance collection
- Street Art in Shoreditch
- House of Dreams Museum
- London Stereographic Company
- National Theatre Production Archives

Field trip/s

- Brighton (Royal Pavilion, Museum of Creativity)
- Kew Gardens

Tours, guided walks, and markets

- Soho and Covent Garden
- London from the River Thames
- South Bank
- London Eye
- Spitalfields Market
- Borough Market
- Chinatown
- Brixton

And don't forget food and drink (ranging from the expected to the quirky)! You'll have opportunities to try:

- Dinner in a traditional British pub
- Fish and chips
- Afternoon tea
- Pasties, pies, bangers, and mash
- Cakes, puddings, crumbles, tarts, macarons, and scones
- Gelato flowers, bubble waffles, freakshakes, taiyaki, bilog, halo halo, and ice cream crones



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Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled activities and class meetings, as well as field trip excursions. This includes any virtual meetings before and after the onsite experience. Repeated absences, including for ill health, will require documentation to be excused.

An *unexcused* absence may result in an F for the course. Whether or not an absence is excused will be determined through a conversation with me regarding the circumstances.

Academic Integrity Policy

Just don't. This course is a tough one for plagiarism, even if you're using AI – you really have to make an effort. Save that effort for actually doing the work. Please feel free to discuss your projects and your ideas with me and/or your colleagues, and then turn that energy back into fulfilling the assignment. If someone shares a good idea that you want to run with, simply (and properly) acknowledge that. Any good artist will tell you that they build work based on the work of others; just let us know whose work you're paying attention to.

If you manage to find a way to plagiarize, you will fail the course, and we will contact your home university.

Course Content and Content Warnings

The arts are designed to challenge our thinking about ourselves, about others, and about the world. As a result, sometimes the art we will see, hear, observe, or somehow engage with will contain content that might be considered offensive (or, as a part of the goals of the artist, is deliberately offensive): profanity, depictions of violence, sexual terms and situations, challenges to concepts of race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender; etc. **Please see me promptly if this is a problem for you. I cannot guarantee that you won't be seeing or reading things that might make you uncomfortable, that are outside of your experience, or that challenge your personal convictions. You will not be excused from work if you are unhappy with the content.** Interacting with the arts means that we must know where our opinions and feelings stop and aesthetic criticism begins, and accepting the notion that we will sometimes be challenged in ways that are outside of our comfort zone.

There is very little that we'll be doing and seeing in this course that I've done or seen before: almost all of the art exhibits and all of the theatre productions will be new to me as well (even though I might know a Shakespeare play we'll be seeing, I don't know anything about the way in which it is staged). **As a result, I won't be able to provide content warnings in advance.**

Physical Expectations

The program requires walking 3-5 miles per day on uneven pavement in all kinds of weather and long periods of standing. Students must be able to carry their own bags and belongings.



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Disability Accommodation

CCSA is committed to providing access to education abroad to the extent possible in a study abroad setting. The earlier CCSA and the faculty know the needs, the more likely we can accommodate them. At a minimum, students seeking accommodations are to contact both the CCSA office and the faculty one month in advance of the program's beginning. Students seeking such accommodation must provide CCSA with a copy of the letter on file with their own Office of Disability Services outlining what services they receive on their home campus.

Title IX Policy

Sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any nonconsensual behavior of a sexual nature) and sexual discrimination violate CCSA policies. Students experiencing such behavior may obtain support from the Onsite Program Director or the CCSA Executive Director. To report sexual misconduct or sex discrimination, contact either of these two officers. Disclosure to faculty instructors or CCSA officers of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or sex discrimination occurring on the program or involving a visitor, student, or employee is not confidential under Title IX. Faculty and other CCSA employees are required to forward such reports, including names and circumstances, to the CCSA Executive Director.

Statement about Final Syllabus

Please note that all CCSA syllabi are subject to change, but every effort will be made to ensure participants receive notice of such changes in a timely manner.