

ALRI Course 133
THE EDUCATED AUDIENCE: Informed Appreciation of Local Theatre Productions
Fall 2010

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Mondays 9:30-11:00, October 4 - November 18
George Mason University, Arlington campus
Room 268

Class aides:

Do you enjoy evenings at the theatre but want to know more about what you are seeing? Have you ever wondered if knowing about the historical context of a play, a theatre company, or a style would help you better enjoy a production you see? If so, this is the class for you! Through a series of readings and guided discussions, we'll educate ourselves as audience members for three productions put on by three different local theater companies.

One week we'll read a play or the source material and explore it from a literary, dramatic, and historical point of view. We then will see the production on our own, and in the following week's class session we will explore what we saw, considering performance style, technique and production values. Discussions of the plays and the productions will be facilitated by an instructor trained in theatre history and dramatic theory, and experienced as a director and dramaturg. There will also be an "extra" week to discuss theatre history or production in general.

TEXTS– *Please acquire the following texts through your favorite bookstore or library.*

REQUIRED:

All's Well That Ends Well (any edition) by William Shakespeare

Three Sisters by Anton Chekhov

AND, DEPENDING ON WHAT WE DECIDE, EITHER:

Oklahoma! (book and lyrics of the musical – available from Applause Books) by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein

Superior Donuts by Tracy Letts

PERFORMANCES– *Please make sure you have reserved your tickets to see these performances. You'll get more out of the class discussions if you can see the shows on the recommended dates.*

All's Well That Ends Well at Shakespeare Theatre – see between 10/5 and 10/10

box office: (202) 547-1122

website: <<http://www.shakespearetheatre.org/plays/index2.aspx>>

(con't on next page)

Three Sisters at the Kennedy Center – see on 10/19 or 10/20

(NOTE: These are the only two performances of this show!)

box office: (800) 494-8497

website: <<http://www.kennedy-center.org/calendar/index.cfm?fuseaction=showEvent&event=XLFRB>>

and, depending on what we decide, either:

Oklahoma! at Arena Stage – see between 11/9 and 11/14

box office: (202) 488-3300

website: <<http://www.arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/>>

Superior Donuts at Studio Theatre – see between 11/9 and 11/14

box office: (202) 332-3300

website: <<http://www.studiotheatre.org/plays/>>

Overview of the Class Schedule:

October 4: *All's Well That Ends Well* on the page – Shakespeare, classical theater

✧ come to class having read *All's Well That Ends Well* by William Shakespeare– *now see the show at Shakespeare Theater before the next class!*

October 11: *All's Well That Ends Well* on the stage – Shakespeare Theatre; the director's job

✧ come to class having seen the *All's Well That Ends Well* at Shakespeare Theater

October 18: *Three Sisters* on the page (and in English)– the rise of modern drama, Realism & Naturalism; translation

✧ come to class having read *Three Sisters*, the play by Anton Chekhov (any translation) – *now see the show at the Kennedy Center before the next class!*

October 25: *Three Sisters* on the stage – touring productions; Stanislavski's acting technique and the actor's job

✧ come to class having seen the show *Three Sisters* at the Kennedy Center (in Russian, with subtitles)

November 1: *open class - we will choose between 1) a general discussion of theater history and practice, 2) not meeting today, or 3) moving the next two classes up a week and not meeting on November 17.*

November 8: *Oklahoma!* OR *Superior Donuts* on the page – American musicals OR contemporary drama and new play development

✧ come to class having read the play that we chose on the first day

November 17: *Oklahoma!* OR *Superior Donuts* on the stage – Arena Stage OR Studio Theater; the dramaturg's job

✧ come to class having seen the play that we chose on the first day