

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

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Tuesdays 2:30-4:00pm, March 23 - May 18
Fairlington Community Center
3308 S. Stafford Street, Arlington

Class aides:

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Do you enjoy "an evening at the theatre" but want to know more about what you're seeing? Have you ever wondered if knowing about 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 timed series of readings and guided discussions, we'll educate ourselves as audience members for four local theatre productions put on by four different companies.

The first session of the course will be a general introduction. Then one week we'll read a play or the source material and explore it from a literary, dramatic, and historical point of view. You'll see the production, and the following week we'll come back together to 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.

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

Required:

The Light in the Piazza (*paperback script of the musical*) by Craig Lucas and Adam Guettel

The Metamorphosis (*novella*) by Franz Kafka

Lady Windermere's Fan (*play*) by Oscar Wilde

American Buffalo (*play*) by David Mamet

Recommended:

The Light in the Piazza (*novella, probably in an anthology*) by Elizabeth Spencer

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.

The Light in the Piazza at Arena Stage – see between 3/30 and 4/5

website: <<http://www.arenastage.org/season/calendar/>>, **box office:** (202) 488-3300

Metamorphosis at Synetic Theatre – see between 4/13 and 4/19

website: <<http://www.synetictheater.org/>>, **box office:** (800) 494-8497

Lady Windermere's Fan at the Little Theatre of Alexandria – see between 4/27 and 5/3

website: <<http://www.thelittletheatre.com/onstage.htm>>, **box office:** (703) 683-0496

American Buffalo at Studio Theatre – see between 5/11 and 5/17

website: <<http://www.studiotheatre.org/plays/>>, **box office:** (202) 332-3300

Overview of the Class Schedule:

March 23: general orientation to the class and the subject

March 30: *The Light in the Piazza* on the page – musical theatre; Broadway

✧ come to class having read *The Light in the Piazza* "book" of the musical (and Spencer's novella, if you want) – *now see the musical at Arena Stage before the next class!*

April 6: *The Light in the Piazza* on the stage – Arena Stage; the dramaturg's job

✧ come to class having seen the musical *Light in the Piazza* at Arena Stage

April 13: *The Metamorphosis* on the page – adapting books, etc. for the stage; existentialism in drama and Theatre of the Absurd

✧ come to class having read *The Metamorphosis*, the novella by Franz Kafka – *now see the show at Synetic Theatre before the next class!*

April 20: *The Metamorphosis* on the stage – Synetic Theatre; physical theatre; the actor's job

✧ come to class having seen the show *The Metamorphosis* at Synetic Theatre

April 27: *Lady Windemere's Fan* on the page – modern drama; comedy of manners

✧ come to class having read Oscar Wilde's play *Lady Windemere's Fan* – *now see the play at the Little Theatre of Alexandria before the next class!*

May 4: *Lady Windemere's Fan* on the stage – Little Theatre of Alexandria; the designer's job

✧ come to class having seen the play *Lady Windemere's Fan* at the Little Theatre of Alexandria

May 11: *American Buffalo* on the page – contemporary drama; changing ideas of "realism"

✧ come to class having read David Mamet's play *American Buffalo* – *now see the play at Studio Theatre before the next class!*

May 18: *American Buffalo* on the stage – Studio Theatre; the actor's job (revisited); the director's job

✧ come to class having seen the play *American Buffalo* at Studio Theatre