

# ADVANCED THEATRE TWO YEAR PLAN

## THEMES & CONTENT

### **Theatre in the Making**

Students investigate the processes necessary to create a production

### **Theatre in Performance**

Students participate in actual performance on stage and in class

### **Theatre in the World**

Students investigate theatrical practices from around the world

## IB ASSESSMENT

### **External assessment 50%**

#### **Research investigation 25%**

Students are required to produce a research investigation of 2,000–2,500 words with supporting visual materials.

#### **Practical performance proposal 25%**

Students are required to produce a proposal of 250 words with supporting visual materials and a report of 1,000–1,250 words.

### **Internal assessment 50%**

#### **Theatre performance and production presentation 25%**

Students are required to do an oral presentation lasting 30 minutes with 7–10 images.

#### **Independent project portfolio 25%**

Students are required to produce a portfolio of 3,000 words on their independent project and its connection to their experiences in the core syllabus.

## CLASS ASSESSMENT

### **IB Assessed Items**

#### **Play Reviews**

#### **Auditioning Practice**

#### **Representative Play Analysis**

#### **Classroom Participation**

#### **In Class Projects**

#### **Class Portfolio**

# Theatre in the making

## Introduction

This area of the course allows students to explore the different processes involved in making theatre, to develop the skills required to make theatre and to observe and reflect on different theatre practices. By working in this area, students should be encouraged to uncover a pathway to performance by investigating theory and practice. Students are required to explore this area from the perspective of dramaturg, director, performer, group ensemble, production team and spectator.

## Focus

The syllabus should be flexible enough to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills and practical knowledge to be used in performance. This applies directly to the performance, design and technological aspects of theatre making. Students should develop both breadth and depth in their skills and understanding. This involves the following **essential elements** of the performance and production processes.

### Preparing for performance

- The dramaturg: an appreciation of the work of major theorists and theatre practitioners and a critical understanding of how different theories and production elements function and interact.
- The director: a knowledge and appreciation of the director's role in realizing a text and/or concept upon a stage. This can include evaluating the similarities and differences in directorial techniques from diverse theatrical traditions and cultural backgrounds, and experience of defining a vision of performance through words and drawings.
- The performer: personal planning, communication skills, voice, body, movement, focus, relaxation.
- The group ensemble: cooperative organization, building an ensemble, complicité, group unity, choral speaking, dance chorus.
- The spectator: responding to external productions and reflecting on the impact of these on the student's own work.

### Creating the performance

- Varieties of approaches to performance.
- Rehearsal techniques/systems.
- Practical knowledge and skills specific to theatrical practices from around the world and/or from different historical periods.
- Performance analysis.
- Post-performance analysis: the impact the performance leaves on spectators.

### The production process

- Design and technical skills.
- An awareness of creative processes, conventions and techniques relating to theatrical practices from around the world and/or from different historical periods.
- The aesthetic and symbolic choices made in production: the impact these have on a performance.

## Content

During the course students must participate in and observe a range of practical work, which may take different forms. Students should explore **two** different stimuli and, from these, develop plans for a variety of performances. Teachers should ensure that the opportunity exists for students to work in at least one area of each of the performance and production processes described above.

Students should record their experiences and learning, together with impressions, reflections, critical responses to performances and any relevant research, in the Class Portfolio. The work they undertake can be recorded as a collection of drawings, models, scenarios or blocking plots that contribute to the shaping of the original stimulus into a piece of theatre. The pieces of theatre envisaged need not be fully performed, but practical involvement of some form should be undertaken and recorded in the journal.

## Syllabus requirements

Teachers have a free choice in selecting source materials, workshop topics, activities and performance skills. However, they should ensure that students gain experience in the following areas.

- **Researching:** locating, selecting and applying theatre knowledge from different cultures and historical periods that is of direct, practical use in performance.
- **Doing:** experiencing and understanding the different ways of acquiring performance skills through a variety of approaches—by rote, from generation to generation, by direct application, by trial and error in workshops and/or rehearsal, by experimentation, by a variety of teaching approaches.
- **Observing:** viewing and reflecting on their own work and the work of others.
- **Recording:** reflecting on the practical and theoretical processes involved in making theatre.

# Theatre in performance

## Introduction

This area of the course involves students in presenting theatre performances, where their practical theatre skills can be applied, either solely or collaboratively, in a wide range of theatre practices. Theatre performance can take many forms and allows students to experience the many different roles that are necessary to present theatre works to spectators. Students are required to explore this area from the perspective of dramaturg, director, performer, group ensemble, production team and spectator.

## Focus

The syllabus should be flexible enough to ensure that students can participate in a wide range of performance and production tasks. Students should also experience a variety of performance styles and approaches to theatre making. An integral part of this experience is the process of self-reflection and an awareness of how spectators engage with a performance.

This area of the course requires that students develop the following skills.

- Understanding, application of and experience in different types of performance skills
- Knowledge and appreciation of different technical skills used in performance
- Understanding and appreciation of the collaborative nature of performance
- An appreciation of the commitment and dedication necessary to realize a performance

## Content

Throughout the course students should participate in at least **three** performances, working from a different perspective in each one. Teachers should ensure that students experience a diverse range of performances in terms of the number of participants, cultural source and historical period.

Students should record their experiences and learning, together with impressions, reflections and any relevant research, in the journal.

## Syllabus requirements

Teachers have a free choice in the selection of material for performance. The material chosen should stimulate students to research and explore the phases of preparation, rehearsal, performance and post-production. Students should also experience the responsibilities, demands and challenges of a specific duty or assignment involved in realizing a theatre performance. These may include the following.

- Acting a role in a performance or a performance extract
- Devising with others an original piece of theatre from a variety of stimuli
- Engaging in aspects of production: scenography, sound and light design, technical management and coordination
- Writing an original piece of theatre (fragment or full-length script)
- Directing, creating or contributing to a production
- Performing the role of the dramaturg

# Theatre in the world

## Introduction

This area of the course allows students to explore theatre traditions and practices from a range of cultures around the world. The primary aim of this area is to encourage students to investigate theatre in its historical and cultural context. It is expected that students will acquire a knowledge and understanding of the theatrical traditions of their own culture, as well as of those cultures that are unfamiliar to them. The major objective of this component is to enrich students' development throughout the course by ensuring they experience theatre from a variety of performance traditions, both in theory and practice. Students are required to explore this area from the perspective of dramaturg, director, performer, group ensemble, production team and spectator.

## Focus

The syllabus should be flexible enough to ensure that both independent inquiry and group work take place. Students should be encouraged to balance an investigation and appreciation of the theatre traditions and practices of their own culture with the discovery and understanding of theatre traditions and practices of other cultures. To achieve this, students should be guided towards theatre traditions with which they are unfamiliar, and which represent distinct differences in practice from theatre in their own cultures. Students are required to develop the following skills.

- Performance skills in theatre from a variety of cultures, either through workshops or an exploration of text and/or performance conventions.
- The ability to research and analyse performance traditions from a variety of cultures and historical periods, and to compare them with the performance traditions of their own culture/historical period.
- The ability to appreciate critically theatre performances from a diverse range of practices from different cultures and historical periods, and to discern the relationship between performance and any theory that may underpin it.
- An appreciation of the political, social, aesthetic and intellectual context from which theatre evolves and to which it contributes.
- The skills to argue and debate the significance of theatre practice to the lives of particular communities within a specific historical and cultural context.

## Content

Students should study **at least two** contrasting theatrical practices from more than one culture/historical period, one of which should be a non-text-based theatre tradition.

Students should record their experiences and learning, together with impressions, reflections and any relevant research in the journal.

## Syllabus requirements

Teachers have a free choice in the selection of plays, playwrights, theatre traditions and practices, theatrical forms, movements, styles, genres and theorists for study.

Students may approach their study of theatre in the world in a number of ways. The following represent some examples of possible approaches.

- Independent research of a theatre practice, and performance of an aspect of that tradition to the class
- Group work on a short extract of text
- A short presentation to the class, based on the student's research and performance
- Group workshopping of a theatre piece from an unfamiliar theatre practice

# Independent project

The independent project allows students to pursue an independent interest in theatre, which may have arisen during the course. The project should be practical in nature and may involve the student working alone, with a class group, or with other people from outside the theatre course. Students are required to produce an independent project that explores theatre practice, which should be underpinned by theoretical research into performance. The project should be largely self-motivated and directed. It should be undertaken in the second year of study, when it will be informed by students' increased maturity and experience in theatre. The work undertaken by students for the independent project must **not** be a duplication of work undertaken in other areas of the course.

## Introduction

Students will work in the role of a director/theatre-maker to explore in depth the devising and actualization of a performance. Using their knowledge gained in the core syllabus, students are required to investigate the processes through which ideas are effectively translated into a theatre performance.

## Focus

Students should work towards transforming the stimuli or concepts into an actual performance. A knowledge and understanding of different theatre practices around the world, and the various ways in which these are developed, should inform this process. The study of this option may include the following.

- Exploring in depth concepts or stimuli for the potential they offer for performance
- Acquiring knowledge, experience and understanding of alternative ways of developing an idea from stimuli or concepts into a theatre performance
- Demonstrating a clear and thorough understanding of the nature, function and interaction of the various production elements that are necessary to create a theatre performance.

## Content

Students should create and present an original dramatic work. The concept for this work should be inspired by **any** source of the student's choice, which can be of **any** origin. (SEE BELOW FOR IB STUDENTS)

## Syllabus requirements

Students have a free choice in selecting materials to help them understand the role of the director/theatre-maker in creating a theatre performance. To help them identify their particular strengths and interests, students should discuss the nature of the project with the teacher before starting work on it.

## Research Investigation

### Introduction

Students must undertake personal dramaturgical research into an unfamiliar theatrical practice for the production of a play or theatre piece. Students should select a specific aspect of a play or theatre piece from the chosen theatrical practice to research, and then formulate a research question to answer. Students should collect, edit and present their research to contribute to a realization of the play/theatre piece from the chosen theatrical practice.

Students are also required to write a critique of the sources used in the research investigation. For the critique to be effective, these sources must be relevant to the specifics of the research undertaken. This critique should form a **separate section** at the end of the research investigation. It should clearly demonstrate the student's understanding of the sources used and their relevance to the investigation.

### Content and Format

The findings of the research investigation should be presented in an essay format with supporting visual and/or textual material. For Second Year students, the requirement is 2,000–2,500 words plus visual documentation and/or textual references. For First Year Students (or non IB) the requirement is 1,500–1,750 words plus visual documentation and/or textual references. The work should be formal in nature, and the work should be clearly set out as a research investigation (that is, titled, sourced and attributed). Students should use MLA Citation style.

While working on the investigation, students should consult a range of sources. The bibliography accompanying the investigation must reflect the range and depth of the student's research and his or her understanding of what is useful to a theatre practitioner.

As part of the learning process, teachers can give advice to students on a first draft of the research investigation. Advice on improving the work can be given, but this first draft must not be heavily annotated or edited by the teacher. Constant drafting and redrafting is not allowed, and the next version handed to the teacher after the first draft must be the final one.

### Requirements

- MLA Style
- 1<sup>st</sup> year (non-IB)                      1500-1750 words  
  2<sup>nd</sup> year                                      2000-2500 words
- Source Critique section
- Topic: An unfamiliar theatre practice for the production of a play

### Topic Considerations

- 1. The student identifies a theatre practice that is unfamiliar to them. This may be:**
  - a theatrical tradition from a particular culture and/or time, for example, Kathakali
  - a theatrical style originating from a particular time, movement, culture, practitioner, for example, Restoration comedy
  - a theatrical movement originating from a particular time, culture, practitioner, for example, Butoh
  - a theatrical form developed by a practitioner, theorist, playwright, for example, Brecht's Epic Theatre.
- 2. Choose a play/piece of theatre appropriate to or chosen from the selected theatre practice**
- 3. Examine the play/piece of theatre**
- 4. Formulate a research question**

A question requires an answer or a solution. The point of a question is to narrow down and concentrate the research so that the student has a focus and can demonstrate relevance. At this point the student might also think about which member of the production team (designer, director, performer, choreographer, music director) might find the information most useful. The question should emerge from the relationship between the unfamiliar practice selected and the play/piece of theatre from that practice.

### **Example:**

How would the puppets, puppeteers, narrator, and musicians interrelate to create a Bunraku performance of the "Love Suicides at Sonezaki" created by Chikamatsu Monzaemon?

## Some Potential Topics for IB Theatre Research Investigation

Arabian Shadow Puppets  
Korean Mask Dance  
Kuttiyattam  
French Farce  
Legong Kraton  
Commedia dell' arte  
Butoh  
Kabuki  
Bunraku Puppetry  
Vaudeville  
Cantonese Opera  
Yiddish Theater  
English Music Hall  
Victorian Melodrama  
Carnivale  
Kathakali  
Naturalism/Realism  
Noh Theater  
Austrian Marionette theatre  
Butoh  
Comedy of Manners  
Vietnamese Water Puppets  
Grosso Criollo  
Resoration Comedy  
Karagoz (Turkish Shadow Puppetry)  
Roman Theater  
Kuttiyattam  
Spanish Farce  
Legong Kraton  
Roman Comedy  
Indonesian Tari  
American Burlesque  
French Farce  
Medieval Theatre: mystery, morality, passion  
Rakugo Japanese "sit down" theatre plays  
Thai Nang Yai  
Sanskrit theatre  
African Folk and Popular Theatre  
South African Apartheid theatre  
Romanian Marionettes  
Irish theatre  
Simcheongga Korean Storytelling  
Brecht's Epic Theatre  
Sri Lankan folk ritual and dance drama  
German Expressionism  
Thai Nang Yai  
Greek Comedy  
Balinese dance drama  
Greek Tragedy  
Beijing Opera/Peking Opera  
Elizabethan theatre  
Botswana Mask Theatre  
German romanticism  
Pantomime  
Absurdism  
Native American Storytelling  
Theatre of Cruelty  
Karagoz (Turkish Shadow Puppetry)

## Practical performance proposal (25% HL and SL)

### Introduction

Students at HL and SL must adopt a directorial perspective and write a rationale, outline and detailed description of a proposal for staging a performance. This proposal should originate from one of the IBO prescribed performance stimuli. It should include written work, scenarios, images, storyboards and any other materials that convey the essence of the proposed performance, and the practical preparations necessary to realize it. Students should ensure that the proposal contains appropriate visual materials and does not depend solely on written descriptions.

Students at HL should also include a report on the wider theoretical context of the proposed performance, based on the research they have done and the experience and personal perspective they have developed during the preparation period.

Assessment

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2007 27

### Prescribed performance stimuli

The IBO provides schools with a list of prescribed performance stimuli in November of the year before both the May and November examination sessions. The list includes both text-based sources (for example, playtext, poetry, prose) and non-text-based sources (for example: a ritual, a CD of a poetry recitation, orally presented story or a song, a cartoon, a series of photographs, a tale or myth originally written in a non-Western language—for example, Arabic, kanji, Sanskrit—or a DVD of images taken from different cultures or historical periods).

Schools will receive the list of prescribed performance stimuli in the November edition of *Diploma Programme coordinator notes*. This gives schools the opportunity to acquire copies of the stimuli in time for the students' preparation period. A new list will be produced each year.

Students at both HL and SL should choose **one** stimulus and be given **four weeks** to prepare the proposal. The stimuli must not be explored in class and students must not have any prior knowledge about the nature of them. Students must prepare for this assessment alone and without teacher assistance. Assistance must only be provided in the form of preparing students throughout the course for this type of activity, but not for the final activity itself on which they will be assessed, and no discussion on the stimuli should be entered into.

### Content and format

The proposal at both HL and SL should contain the following aspects.

- A clear description of the performance concept (themes, interrelationships, actions and so on)
- How the concept can be developed for performance (origins, explored sources, inspirations, influences and so on)
- How the concept can inform and inspire the appropriate performance and production elements
- How the performance and production elements will interact to convey the performance concept
- Any other relevant details the student thinks are necessary to convey the artistic and dramatic impact of the proposed performance

**Note:** the contents of the proposal should contain appropriate visual materials and should not depend solely on written descriptions.

Work on the practical performance proposal should begin in the second year of study, when it will be informed by students' increased maturity and experience in theatre. The format of the proposal should consist of three sections at HL or two sections at SL.

- **Section 1 (HL and SL):** a concise summary of the proposal in the style of a "pitch" that presents the proposal in a dynamic manner. This section should contain a maximum of 250 words.
- **Section 2 (HL and SL):** explanatory, visual materials to illustrate the student's understanding of the intended process of realization. This section may consist of a storyboard (incorporating words and images), photographs, sketches, diagrams, collages, a DVD, a CD-Rom and so on. This section **must not** be written in a formal essay style.

28 © International Baccalaureate Organization 2007

Assessment details

- **Section 3 (HL only):** in addition to the above, students at HL should write a report of 1,000–1,250

words, which should comprise a commentary on any of the following aspects of the proposed performance.

- Philosophical rationale
- Socio-historical influences
- Traditional/cultural influences
- Possible impacts and resonances

# Internal assessment

## Theatre performance and production presentation (25% HL and SL)

### Introduction

Students must give an oral presentation on their involvement in the performance and production aspects of all areas of the core syllabus. The presentation should be made to the teacher and the class, accompanied by a set of images to illustrate or counterpoint the spoken word. The presentation must be recorded on CD or audio cassette and the set of images (each not exceeding A4 size) should be arranged to accompany the presentation in any way of the student's choosing. This may take the form of a slide show presentation but is equally valid as a set of A4 photocopies.

The oral presentation should be made in the second year of study, when it will be informed by students' increased maturity and experience in theatre. It should be focused on one or two performances in which the student has been involved.

### Content and format

During the presentation students should reflect critically on the skills they have acquired and developed during the course, both as practitioners and spectators. The presentation should include reviews and analysis of productions the student has witnessed or participated in, and may include an account of their ideas in relation to the production of theatre. In this way, it should also draw upon the insights and concerns chronicled in their journal. Images may be used to emphasize various points, or may function as an abstract or symbolic parallel narrative to the oral content of the presentation.

Students at HL should speak for 30 minutes and select between 7 and 10 images. Students at SL should speak for 20 minutes and select between 5 and 7 images. Given these restraints, an exhaustive analysis of the selected topic is not expected and students should be encouraged to focus on one or two experiences/productions from the course that enable them to reflect on the course in its entirety.

The presentation must not simply be a reading from, or repetition from memory of, the notes prepared beforehand. However, students should be encouraged to regard the presentation as a performance, to communicate passionately and convincingly and to speak from personal commitment.

### Preparation

In preparing for the presentation, students should be encouraged to consider the following integrated aspects.

#### At both HL and SL

- Understanding how the areas of the core syllabus connect with their own practice

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2007 29

#### Assessment details

- The processes involved in realizing a performance, including the devising and rehearsal techniques and the technical elements of production
- The technical skills developed throughout the course and the abilities and aptitude they have gained
- The critical response to their own work and the work of others
- The effect of the performance on the spectators and the context in which it was received

#### At HL only

- The research and planning processes involved in realizing the performance
- Making and justifying aesthetic and practical choices
- Analysing how effectively their concept(s) were realized on stage
- Understanding how theories, research and practical exploration can be used in performance
- Investigating source materials
- Analysing different genres, theorists or practitioners

### Role of the teacher

Throughout the preparation period the student should work independently. During the presentation itself the teacher and class should not interrupt. However, if the student panics or falters, support and encouragement may be necessary. In such situations, the teacher should try to draw the student out and give him or her the confidence to continue. The teacher may, at this stage, engage the student in a discussion of significant points raised and encourage the student to:

- improve or expand on statements that seem doubtful or inadequate
- illustrate general statements with specific examples
- communicate clearly an imaginative and practical interpretation of productions.

## **Independent project portfolio (25% HL and SL)**

### **Introduction**

Students at HL and SL must prepare an independent project portfolio that shows the development of their independent project and its connection to their experiences in the core syllabus. The portfolio could include an amalgam of carefully selected and edited insights from their journal, showing how their explorations in theatre have influenced their independent project.

### **Content and format**

The portfolio may contain a variety of materials in different formats depending on the nature of the independent project and the type of reflection it inspires. It should demonstrate the dynamic stages of a creative process consisting of the following.

- Preparation: this can include stimuli, observation, research, brainstorming, experimentation, improvisation, rationale, setting objectives.
- Action: the shaping of material into a chosen theatrical form.
- Reflection: evaluation and analysis of whether set objectives have been met, leading to an understanding of how coherence is achieved.

30 © International Baccalaureate Organization 2007

### **Assessment details**

The word limit for the independent project portfolio is 3,000 words at HL and 2,000 words at SL. The portfolio for both HL and SL should consist of:

- a table of contents
- an introduction
- clearly marked sections
- a conclusion
- all visual material, which must be sourced and attributed.

### **Role of the teacher**

While the teacher may offer guidance and advice on the journal, the compilation of the independent project portfolio **must** be the student's own work.