

Theatre Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination (Revised 2009)

1. Dissertation Prospectus
2. Core Knowledge: This general reading list of plays, historical and theoretical works is the core of what we teach (representative but certainly not exhaustive), also what we as a division have as common ground with which to explore various theories, issues, and ideas (plays, scholarly works, and recordings to which we can refer when examining issues, theories or trends in history and practice, such as post-colonialism or gender issues). From this list we will generate short essay questions for a one-day 6 hour examination. This will be taken approximately four weeks before the student's oral defense.
3. Take-home essay: Species of Performance in Context (melodrama in early American theatre, Theatre for Social Change in Latin America, Ancient Greek Tragedy, Chinese shadow puppet theatre, for example) chosen by the student based on your area of interest and expertise. The following prompts and questions are meant to guide your writing. Aim for an engaging style of writing that flows logically from one section to the next.
 - a. Briefly introduce and describe this form
 - b. Why did this form emerge and from what influences?
 - c. What audience wanted to see this?
 - d. Describe the cultural/political/social/religious context for this form.
 - e. What influence(s) did this form have both on the arts and society?This take-home essay should be 12-14 pages in length with a bibliography (minimum of 15 sources). Endnotes and bibliography are not included in the 12-14 pages.
4. Take-home essay: Comparative Topic (such as violence against women, theatre architecture, disability studies, depictions of homosexuality on the stage, or political comedy, for example). Again, the following prompts and questions are meant to guide your writing. Aim for an engaging style of writing that flows logically from one section to the next.
 - a. Characterize this topic and place it in at least two epochs and geographic locations.
 - b. Compare and contrast this topic as it is represented or treated in these two different epochs and locations
 - c. What are the most useful theoretical constructs for this topic?

This take-home essay should be 12-14 pages in length with a bibliography (minimum of 15 sources). Endnotes and bibliography are not included in the 12-14 pages.

5. Oral Exam: two hour oral exam where your five committee members will ask you follow-up questions concerning your Core Knowledge exam, your two take-

home essays, and your dissertation prospectus. You are responsible for finding the time for your committee to meet and reserving a room.

Notes:

1. This revision in the comprehensive examination represents an evolution in our departmental philosophy. Our scope has expanded to be more global in focus and more inclusive of various voices and perspectives. Our goal with this new design is for students to more fully step into the role of scholar by demonstrating their core knowledge of theatre through the examination, their ability to effectively communicate on a given species of performance through their writing, and to be able to examine a comparative topic in at least two epochs and geographic locations. Finally, the dissertation prospectus represents each student's entry into truly original research that makes a significant contribution to the general understanding of theatre in our world. The oral defense gives each student the opportunity for an invigorating conversation about all of this with a community of scholars.
2. The two take-home essays and the dissertation prospectus are to be delivered to your advisor and the Chair's Assistant / Graduate Program Assistant Wendy Franz two days before you take the 6-hour written examination.
3. Students who entered the Ph.D. program before 2008 have the option of taking the comprehensive examination in the former format if they choose.

Reading List for the Core Knowledge Examination:

Ancient and Classical to Medieval

Historical / Theoretical Works:

The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre, edited by Marianne McDonald and J. Michael Walton

The Cambridge Guide to Asian Theatre, James Brandon
Indian Theatre, edited by Richmond, Swann and Zarrelli
(chapters on Sanskrit Drama and *Kathakali*)

The Islamic Drama, Jamshid Malekpour

Pre-Colonial and Post-Colonial Drama and Theatre in Africa, by Lokangaka Losambe and Devi Sarinjeive

Poetics, Aristotle

The Theatre of Medieval Europe: New Research in Early Drama, Eckehard Siman

Dramatic Works:

Aeschylus. *Oresteia*

Aeschylus. *Prometheus Bound*

Aeschylus. *The Persians*

Aristophanes. *The Frogs*

de la Cruz, Juana Ines. *Divine Narcissus*
Euripides. *Medea*
Euripides. *Trojan Woman*
Everyman
Hrosvitha. *Dulcitius*
Kalidasa. *Shakuntala*
Kan'ami. *Matsukaze*
Mahabharata (recommended version: R.K. Narayan's shortened modern prose version,
(Univ. of Chicago Press)
Plautus. *The Menaechmi*
Rabinal Achi
Seneca. *Phaedra*
Sophocles. *Oedipus Rex*
Terence. *The Brothers*
The Wakefield Second Shepherd's Pageant
Zeami. *Hanjo*

Renaissance to Modern

Historical / Theoretical Works:

Chinese Theatre, Colin Mackerras (Chapters 5-7)
Kabuki: Five Classic Plays, James Brandon (Introduction)
My Life in Art, Konstantin Stanislavsky
Shakespeare's Theatre, Peter Thomson
*Theatre / Theory / Theatre: The Major Critical Texts from Aristotle and Zeami to Soyinka
and Havel*, Daniel Gerould (selections by Lope de Vega, Dryden, Corneille,
Li Yu, Diderot, Schiller, Hugo, Nietzsche, Zola, Strindberg, Maeterlinck,
Meyerhold, Marinetti)
Theory of the Modern Stage, Eric Bentley

Dramatic Works:

Engle, Gary, ed. *This Grotesque Essence* (choose a least one Minstrel Show script)
Aiken, George. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
Behn, Aphra. *Rover*
Boucicault, Dion. *Octoroon*
Brecht, Bertolt. *Mother Courage*
Buchner, Georg. *Woyzeck*
Calderon de la Barca, Pedro. *Life is a Dream*
Chekhov, Anton. *Cherry Orchard*
Chikamatsu, Monzaemon. *Courier to Hell*
Corneille, Pierre. *The Cid*
Glaspell, Susan. *Trifles*

Hellman, Lillian. *The Children's Hour*
 Ibsen, Henrik. *Hedda Gabler*
 Jihei, Tsu'uchi. *Sukeroku, Flower of Edo* (*Sukeroku Yukari no Edo Zakura*)
 Kaiser, Georg. *From Morn to Midnight*
 Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. *Nathan the Wise*
 Lillo, George. *London Merchant*
 Lorca, Federico Garcia. *Blood Wedding*
 Maeterlinck, Maurice. *The Intruder*
 Marlowe, Christopher. *Doctor Faustus*
 Moliere. *Tartuffe*
 Mowatt, Anna Cora. *Fashion*
 O'Neill, Eugene. *Emperor Jones*
 O'Neill, Eugene. *Long Day's Journey Into Night*
 Odets, Clifford. *Waiting for Lefty*
 Pirandello, Luigi. *Six Characters in Search of an Author*
 Racine, Jean. *Phaedra*
 Shakespeare, William. *Comedy of Errors*
 Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*
 Shakespeare, William. *Henry V*
 Shakespeare, William. *Tempest*
 Shaw, George Bernard. *Major Barbara*
 Strindberg, August. *Ghost Sonata*
 Tagore, Rabindrinath. *Chitra*
 Vega Carpio, Lope Felix de. *Fuente Ovejuna*
 Wedekind, Frank. *Spring Awakening*
 Wilde, Oscar. *The Importance of Being Earnest*
 Wilder, Thornton. *Our Town*
 Williams, Tennessee. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*
 Williams, Tennessee. *Glass Menagerie*
 Yeats, William Butler. *At the Hawk's Well*
 Yu Cao. *Sunrise*

1945 to the Present

Historical / Theoretical Works:

Beginning Theory, Peter Barry
Century of Innovation, Brockett and Finley
Decolonizing the Mind, Ngugi wa Thiong'o
Performance: A Critical Introduction, Marvin Carlson
Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present, Roselee Goldberg
Radical Acts: Theatre and Feminist Pedagogies of Change, eds. Armstrong and Juhl
Theatre of the Oppressed, Augusto Boal

Dramatic Works:

Aidoo, Ama Ata. *Anowa*
Albee, Edward. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*
Albee, Edward. *Zoo Story*
Barka, Imamu Amiri. (Leroy Jones), *Dutchman*
Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*
Churchill, Caryl. *Cloud Nine*
Fo, Dario. *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*
Gambaro, Griselda. *Information for Foreigners*
Goa, Xingjian. *Bus Stop*
Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*
Havel, Vaclav. *Temptation*
Kushner, Tony. *Angels in America, Parts I and II*
Lori-Parks, Susan. *Venus*
McDonagh, Martin. *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*
Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*
Mishima, Yukio. *Hanzo*
Mtwana, Percy, Mbongeni Ngema, Barney Simon. *Woza Albert!*
Paz, Octavio. *Rappaccini's Daughter*
Pinter, Harold. *The Homecoming*
Simon, Neil Simon. *Lost in Yonkers*
Soyinka, Wole. *Death and the King's Horseman*
Stoppard, Tom. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*
Vogel, Paula. *How I Learned to Drive*
Weiss, Peter. *Marat/Sade*
Wilson, August. *Fences*

Required Videos:

(numbers refer to Norlin AV catalog)

Beijing Opera, videocass 94-335
Cambodia: The People and the Performing Arts, videocass 04-164
Death of King Daksha, video reserves (Coleman)
Einstein on the Beach, Robert Wilson, videocass 91-31
Fires in the Mirror, Anna Deavere Smith, videocass 95-29
Grotowski's *Akropolis*, videocass 90-46
Into the Woods, Stephen Sondheim & James Lapine, DVD 154
Living Theatre's *Paradise Now*, videocass 89-95
The Mysteries, National Theatre of Britain, videocass 96-125

(Pt.1,v.1, see *Abraham and Isaac* and *Second Shepherd's Play* on the "Nativity"
videotape)

Oklahoma!, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein, DVD 95, DVD 99-67

The Peony Pavilion (performed at the Lincoln Center, DVD 2000), *on order*

Samuel Beckett: Silence to Silence, videocass 94-217

Show Boat, Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein, videodisc 90-12

Sita, A Girl from Jambu, Kathleen Mann, DVD: PN1995.9.C39 S58

Sizwe Bansi is Dead, by Athol Fugard, videocass 92-53

Titus, Julie Taymor, videocass 02-10

The Tradition of Performing Arts in Japan, videocass 92-54

West Side Story, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Arthur Laurents, DVD 115