Courses Offered

- **Mexican Theater and Performance**  
  Theater 185MX

- **Musics in Mexico**  
  Music 175X/293X

- **Performance/Memory/History:**  
  Creating and Analyzing Music, Theater and Dance  
  Theater  TD 187MU & Mu 168P  
  (listed concurrently in two departments)

- **Worlds of Music**  
  Music 17 – General Education

- **Performance Studies**  
  Music 262Q

- **Ethnomusicology Forum**  
  Music 188/288

Course Descriptions

**Mexican Theater and Performance**  
**Theater 185MX**

In this course you will engage with drama, theater, and performance in Mexico, covering a diversity of genres, styles, and works that have been significant in the last five centuries, up to and including the present day. Through play-readings, video screenings, and
reconstructions you will explore and critically evaluate these plays, performances and dramas.

Each play/performance will be studied in terms of:

1. aesthetic and dramaturgical elements; and
2. contextual elements (historical, political, ideological, cultural, religious, and social).

Throughout the course you will undertake contextual and theoretical readings that will enable you to consider the contextual issues. In each class you will be expected to participate fully in discussions, presentations, play-readings, and performative responses to video-screenings.

**Course material will cover:**

**Colonial theater and performance (16th – 19th Centuries), including:**

- Nahua (Aztec) theater (16th century);
- Plays by playwright Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (17th century)
- Socio-religious and large scale dramas (16th century to the present)

**20th Century**

- Carpa (tent shows) (1920s – 1940s)
- Teatro folklórico, sintético and cuadros costumbristas (1920s – 1930s)
- Poesia en Voz Alta (Poetry Outloud) and playwright Octavio Paz (1950s)
- Playwright Sabina Berman (1970s onward)
- Playwright Carmen Boullosa (1980s onward)
- Mayan theater and playwright Petrona de la Cruz Cruz (1990s onward)
- Performance art and cabaret (1960s to present), including Tito Vasconcelos, Astrid Hadad, and Jesusa Rodriguez.

**21st century**

- Experimental contemporary theater - La Maquina del Teatro

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. demonstrate understanding of the role of theater, drama and performance in various historical, political, ideological, cultural, and social contexts;
2. demonstrate understanding of aesthetic and dramaturgical elements and practices, through performative responses, and written and live discursive formats;
3. engage in complex and rigorous discussions about Mexican theater and performance.
Musics in Mexico

This course encompasses an exploration of a range of musics in the twentieth and twentyfirst centuries in Mexico, contextualized in their political, ideological, and social milieu. This course is titled Musics IN Mexico (rather than Musics of Mexico, or Mexican Music), because the focus is on music within the territorial boundary of Mexico, rather than Mexican musics in the USA.

The approach of the study we do in this class is called ethnomusicology. We focus on music as a part of society, which involves studying people-making-music, and music making people (i.e. construction of identities/ nations/ societies). The overall objective of this course is to enable you to engage with, critically evaluate, and take pleasure in a range of musics in their cultural contexts.

Within Mexico there is a huge range and diversity of music. In this course, we will be focusing on just a few of these, with a particular emphasis on P’urhépecha music in the twentieth and twentyfirst centuries.

Areas for study:

- P’urhépecha (Michoacán)
- national art music after the revolution (1920-1940)
- corridos and narco-corridos
- banda
- norteña
- rocnrol and rock en español
- mariachi
- jarocho

Concepts and theoretical contextualization will include: nationalism, tourism, revolution, populism, cross-border relations, ethnicity, identity, and gender.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. demonstrate understanding of a range of musics in Mexico in the twentieth and twentyfirst centuries;
2. demonstrate understanding of the principles of ethnomusicology (the study of music as culture, people making music, and music making people) as an approach to music-cultures in Mexico;
3. demonstrate skills in recognizing and describing elements of music performances in context;
4. critically consider and discuss issues of politics, ideology, identity, geography, representation, and value in relation to a range of different musics in Mexico.
**Weekly Class**
Classes will involve: discussions, presentations, and video-showings. You will be expected to participate fully in all activities in class.

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**Performance/Memory/History:**

**Creating and Analyzing Music, Theater and Dance**

| Music 168P | Theater TD 187MU (listed concurrently in two departments) |

Engaging with music, theater and dance, students create interdisciplinary contemporary performance work, examining how memory and history are useful in creating performances and how performances create memories, histories, and herstories. Includes workshops, discussions, and readings, live performances and presentations.

**Course Description and Philosophy**

In this course we examine how memory and history are used to create performances and how performances create memories and histories (and herstories). Engaging with theater, music, dance, film, performance art, and new media, within an interdisciplinary framework, we use a method of praxis to explore these ideas.

Praxis is the process by which a theory, lesson, or skill is enacted or practiced, embodied and/or realized. This is a model of an artist/theorist, who integrates practice and theory in a fluid and ever-changing manner, in order to develop embodied understanding, through making new art work.

This course is about exploring network of ideas about performances and is designed to provoke you into considering many aspects of performance in relation to memory and history.

We explore the role of the past in the present: our own past and collective pasts. We particularly focus on creative processes, examining how major events, famous people and fragments of memories are transformed into artistic practice. We engage with a range of performances – music, theater, dance, film, ritual, visual art, design, performance art – as examples for study and analysis.
As this course deals with an interdisciplinary framework, we explore key issues with particular reference to performance studies, theater studies, dance studies, and ethnomusicology. In this course the model is for engagement with ideas, concepts, and creative processes rather than “getting knowledge.” It is more about the questions than answers: It is not what you know but what you DO with what you know. We encourage complexities and contradictions, rather than trying to simplify.

Throughout the course we engage with practice-based workshops, discussions, readings (theoretical texts and narrative performance texts) and on-going research, leading to performances, presentations, and an essay. In each class will be integrate ideas from the theoretical readings, from performance analysis, and from creative work, using these ideas to push forward collective and individual performance-practice.

**Weekly Class**

Each week the class will combine a range of learning activities and approaches, so it is important to be aware of, and engage with all of them in order to get the most out of this course.

The classroom is a more-or-less empty studio space, which allows for creative embodied workshops.

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**Worlds of Music**

**Music 17 – General Education**

**Course Description and Philosophy**

The subject of this course is people making music and music making people, in various regions of the world. The objective of this course is to enable you to engage with, critically evaluate, and take pleasure in a range of musics in their cultural contexts. Course material will cover aspects of music-cultures from various geographic areas or culture groups including: Hawaii, Indonesia, Mexico, USA, Africa, Latin America, Europe, Poland, and Arab musics.

The approach of the study we do in this class is called ethnomusicology. We focus on music as a part of society. The principles we use when studying people-making-music, or “music-cultures,” can be applied to any music making activity and any style and genre of music, including one's favorite music and music of people living in, for example, Santa Barbara.

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course you should be able to:
1. understand and demonstrate the principles of ethnomusicology (the study of music as culture, people making music, and music making people) as an approach to music-cultures in the world;
2. demonstrate skills in recognizing and describing elements of music performances in context;
3. critically consider and discuss issues of politics, ideology, identity, geography, representation, and value in relation to a range of different musics;
4. apply the principles of this course to any and all genres of music.

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**GRADUATE COURSE**

**Performance Studies**

Performance Studies has a varied and interdisciplinary trajectory of many decades, and in the twenty-first century Performance Studies as a field and discipline continues to been taken up by many fields for differing agendas. Over the past decades, performance has developed as an umbrella term for scholarly as well as artistic research engaged with a wide variety of topics. The research conducted under this umbrella term is interdisciplinary and is strongly rooted in the interaction between theory and practice. It is a dynamic field of encounters rather than a discipline grounded in one particular methodology or tradition. It encompasses artists, thinkers, activists and academics working in the field of performance.

In this course we deal with a range of readings, topics, and themes drawn from the field of Performance Studies. These theories, methods, and frameworks can be applied to your own specific area of research and study.

If you are interested in challenging perceptions, thinking outside the box, discussing notions of politics and performance, carving a path for yourself in the fast-moving and complex globalized future, and working in an interdisciplinary framework, then this course will stand you in good stead for potential endeavors.

**A quotation from the Introduction to The Performance Studies Reader by Henry Bial (Routledge 2007):**

"There are people who already know, or think they know, what performance studies is. This book is not for them. This book is for the people who like not knowing, who find the uncertainty of unmapped terrain exhilarating. This is also true of the field itself. What makes performance studies unique is that it shares the characteristics of its object: performance. Just as performance is contingent, contested, hard to pin down, so too is its study. For the most part, those of use who consider ourselves ‘performance studies people' like it that way."

“I have mentioned elsewhere that my main concern lies with musicology’s ostensible inability to engage and contribute to the intellectual dialogues and concerns of the rest of the humanities and social sciences. (Corona & Madrid 2007: 5-8) The intersection of music and the contemporary field of performance studies could be the site that would allow musicologists to ask questions that might be relevant to and would enter into larger intellectual dialogues. By allowing music scholars to think about the performativity of music beyond the realm of performance and its performatic aspects, performance studies might offer ways for musicologists to contribute their expertise on sound to answer questions relevant to a larger intellectual community. I am not suggesting we should disregard the performatic or the performance locus; instead, I argue that we should incorporate the performative lens into the study of this and other loci of the music process. But not only that, I propose that we reevaluate what that music process is in relation to new understandings of music production or composition, consumption or reception, and distribution or regulation, as well as in relation to the bodies and senses of those who experience music, the geographies and virtualities that allow for these experiences to take place, the technologies that allow for the magnification of these experiences, etc”.

The website of Performance Studies International (PSi) may also be useful: http://psi-web.org/

Ethnomusicology Forum  MUSIC 188/288

Everyone is invited to participate in Ethnomusicology Forum, which is a space and place for supportive, rigorous and interesting discussion of issues concerning music (all genres, eras, and contexts) and for music-making.

If you would like to be added to the Ethnomusicology Forum database, please let Ruth know.