

ELIZABETH MCKINNEY PHILLIPS
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HARVARD UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
BARKER CENTER, 12 QUINCY STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

EDUCATION

Harvard University

PhD in English, 2019

AM in English, 2015

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

BA English (with Highest Honors) and Dramatic Art, 2010

Summa Cum Laude

Honors Thesis: *The Garden of Pure Sensation: Color Theory and Synesthesia in Virginia Woolf*

Fordham University at Lincoln Center

Theater Performance student 2008-2009

RESEARCH AND INTERESTS

Doctoral Dissertation

“Theaters of Boredom”

Abstract

“Theaters of Boredom” examines the ways in which boredom has been used, paradoxically, to galvanize audiences towards action, revolution, and empathy. Feeling bored in the theater breaches the contract of attention drawn up by Aristotle and enforced by conventional entertainments, and, in so doing, creates new forms of free play and aesthetic satiety. Key studies on Maeterlinck, Chekhov, and Beckett illuminate the phenomenological process of emotion transference using the language of catharsis native to drama.

Committee

Martin Puchner (chair), Elaine Scarry, Philip Fisher, Derek Miller

Research Fields

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century European drama; British, American, and Anglophone literature of the twentieth century; global Modernism; affect theory; cognitive science and neuroaesthetics; phenomenology; performance studies; contemporary experimental, devised, and site-specific theater practices.

SELECTED HONORS AND AWARDS

Mellon Fellow, Council for European Studies at Columbia University, 2018-2019.

Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Harvard University, 2017-2018.

Harvard University Bok Center Teaching Award for quantitative scores of 4.5 in end-of-term evaluations, received in every semester I have taught (Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017).

Dexter Traveling Fellowship for research at Trinity College Dublin and the University of Reading, Harvard University, Summer 2017.

Term Time Fellowship, Harvard University, Fall 2016.

Helen Choate-Bell Award for best graduate essay on American literature, Harvard University Department of English, 2014.

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Fellowship, Harvard University, 2012-2017.

ACLA Horst-Frenz Prize Nominee for best graduate paper, 2014.

Marshall Scholarship Finalist, 2011.

Rhodes Scholar Nominee, University of North Carolina, 2011.
Whitfield Award for the top undergraduate thesis for the University of North Carolina Department of English and Comparative Literature, 2009-2010.
Phi Beta Kappa, 2009.
Class of 1938 Fellow, for academic merit and ambassadorial potential, University of North Carolina, 2009.
Josef Adler Award for excellence in Dramatic Art, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009.

PUBLICATIONS

“Chekhov, Boredom, and Diagnosis as Dramatic Genre.” Forthcoming in *Modern Drama*, vol. 63, no. 1 (March 2020).
“The Paradox of Boredom,” in *From The Wood Demon to Uncle Vanya*, edited collection for Bakrushnin State Central Theater Museum (Chekhov Institute: Moscow 2019).
“‘The mood is of no importance:’ Beckett’s Phenomenology of Boredom.” Under review at *Philosophy and Literature*.
“Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.” (Performance review.) *Theatre Journal*, vol. 68, no. 4 (Dec 2016), pp. 670-72.

UNIVERSITY EMPLOYMENT

Executive Director, Mellon School of Performance Research at Harvard University, 2016-2019.
Summer Institute 2019, “Migrations.”
Summer Institute 2018, “Public Humanities.”
Summer Institute 2017, “Activism, Research, Pedagogy.”
Assistant Director, Mellon School of Performance Research at Harvard University, 2013-2014.
Summer Institute 2014, “Locations of Theater.”
Mellon-CES Editorial Fellow in English, *EuropeNow: Journal of Research and Art* (Columbia University).
Coordinator, Harvard University Theater and Performance Colloquium, 2014-2015 (as co-coordinator), 2015-2017.
Organizer and moderator of graduate colloquium meeting six times per semester for faculty and artist lectures and dissertation workshops.
Graduate coordinator, Mahindra Humanities Center Interdisciplinary Workshop in World Theater, 2015-2016.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING

As Instructor of Record

Theater, Dance, Media 98R (Junior Tutorial): Carceral Drama and the Making of Justice, Harvard University, Spring 2017.
English 98R (Junior Tutorial): The Book Was Better: Film, Theater, and the Novel, Harvard University, Spring 2016.
Course received the Paul John Balson II Enrichment Award.
Bok Center Certificate of Excellence in Teaching
Comparative Literature 472: Modern Drama, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Spring 2012.
With Diane Leonard. Lectures on Henrik Ibsen, Konstantin Stanislavski, Samuel Beckett, Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, Athol Fugard.

As Preceptor of Expository Writing

Humanities 10A: The Humanities Colloquium, Harvard University, Fall 2015.

Bok Center Certificate of Excellence in Teaching

As Teaching Fellow

English 192: Political Theater and the Structure of Drama, Harvard University, Spring 2017.

Instructor: Elaine Scarry

Bok Center Certificate of Excellence in Teaching

Humanities 10A: The Humanities Colloquium, Harvard University, Fall 2014.

Instructors: Amanda Claybaugh, Louis Menand

In addition to discussion section, organized a reading group to lead students through Joyce's *Ulysses* throughout the course of the semester, directed students acting in scenework from course texts *Oedipus Rex* and *Hamlet*.

Bok Center Certificate of Excellence in Teaching

AIU 55: Shakespeare's Early Plays, Harvard University, Spring 2015.

Instructor: Marjorie Garber

Bok Center Certificate of Excellence in Teaching

As Course Assistant

English 320: Chaucer, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Spring 2009.

Instructor: Theodore Leinbaugh

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Symbolist Glitter," Modernist Studies Association, Columbus, OH, November 2018.

"How to Lose a Prize in Ten Days: Maeterlinck's Post-Nobel Turn to Oblivion," American Society for Theatre Research, San Diego, CA, November 2018.

"Caged Dynamics: Beckett and the Treatment Era of the American Correctional Association," American Comparative Literature Association, Los Angeles, CA, March 2018.

"To affect and be affected: Heideggerian Beckett," Annual Conference of the Samuel Beckett Summer School, Trinity College Dublin, August 2017.

"All this time changing: Beckett, Time, and Boredom," American Society for Theater Research, Minneapolis, MN, November 2016.

"The Chekhovian Bourgeoisie," American Comparative Literature Association, New York, NY, March 2014.

**Presentation nominated for the Horst-Frenz Award for Best Graduate Student Paper*

"Affect Theory Papier Mâché," Harvard University Department of English Graduate Symposium, Cambridge, MA, November 2016.

"The Commonplace and the Exception: Randall Jarrell and *Three Sisters*," Meeting of the Randall Jarrell Society, American Literature Association, Boston, MA, May 2015.

"Understand How Bad and Boring Your Lives Are! Chekhov and the Paradox of Attention," Harvard University Theater and Performance Colloquium, Cambridge, MA, March 2014.

PANELS ORGANIZED

"Queer Arts, Unified and Diverse," Modernist Studies Association, Columbus, OH, November 2018.

“Queering Panaesthetics,” Seminar with Teresa Trout, Modernist Studies Association, Columbus, OH, November 2018.

“Affect/Activism,” Harvard University/Brown University Performance Studies Symposium, April 2016.

“The Future of Theater at Harvard,” Moderated forum, Harvard University Department of Theater, Dance, and Media, April 2015.

“Theater and the Image,” Moderated panel, Harvard University Drama Colloquium, March 2015.

THEATER

With Cacolet Collective, New York, NY. Company member.

Miss Julie Four Ways: A Villanelle (dir. Alisa Zhulina)

The Cherry Orchard Garage Sale: Everything Must Go (durational gallery performance, dir. Alisa Zhulina)

With Delta Boys Theater Company, Chapel Hill, NC. Founding company member.

The Morbid Quartet Quartet (as co-director, devised work in development)

Metamorphoses (as director)

Happy New Year's From Hell (after the Grand Guignol) (as co-director)

Wise Blood (workshop, as director)

Cymbeline (company devised work)

Titus Andronicus (company devised work)

Julius Caesar (company devised work)

Orlando (company devised work)

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf (dir. Gregory Kable)

The Torture Garden (dir. Lucius Robinson)

Troilus and Cressida (dir. Jaki Bradley)

The Beast with Two Backs (workshop, dir. Lucius Robinson)

With Little Green Pig Theatrical Concern, Durham, NC.

Goin' a Buffalo (dir. Jay O'Berski)

Fistful of Love (dir. Jay O'Berski)

Top Girls (workshop, dir. Jay O'Berski)

At Harvard University

Replace (as playwright, dir. Robert Kropf)

In '89 (production supervisor for Sarah Grammar)

Where is Best Townies (devised work in Carceral Drama, TDM 98R)

University dramaturgy:

Tales of the Lost Formicans (dir. Nigel Smith, Fordham University)

AFFILIATIONS AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Graduate Representative, Theater and Performance Hiring Committee, Harvard Department of English, 2016.

Harvard University Department of English Graduate Committee on Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity, 2016-2017.

University of North Carolina Class of 1938 Fellowship Selection Committee, 2010, 2012.

MLA, ACLA, MSA, ASTR, ATHE, IFTR

LANGUAGES

French (reading, writing, some speaking); Spanish (reading)

REFERENCES

Martin Puchner

Byron and Anita Wien Professor of
Drama and of English and Comparative Literature
Harvard University
Barker Center
12 Quincy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
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Philip Fisher

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Lawrence Switzky

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University of Toronto Department of English
St. George Campus, Jackson Humanities Building
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Elaine Scarry

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Aesthetics and General Theory of Value
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