

Shakespeare in Performance

Summer 2026
Stratford, Ontario

Instructor: Mr. Nicholas A. Krizanic (call me Mr. K)

Email: nkrizani@uoguelph.ca

Course Location: University of Waterloo, Stratford School of Interaction Design
(SSID room 1004), 125 Patrick Street, Stratford

Dates: Monday June 1 – Saturday June 13 [excluding Sunday, June 7, and performance days]
Time: 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Territorial Acknowledgement: Stratford, Ontario, is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, the Attawandaron and Ojibway/Chippewa peoples. This territory is covered by the Huron Tract Treaty of 1827.

Course Description: This course is a historical, theoretical and critical introduction to William Shakespeare's plays within the context of early modern performance and contemporary interpretations on stage. As part of the course, students are required to attend three performances: *The Tempest*, *Othello* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will gain a critical understanding of Shakespeare's plays in both their textual and performative contexts, as well as acquire the vocabulary and tools necessary for effective close reading and analysis of these texts.
2. Students will gain familiarity and confidence with Shakespeare's language and the rhetorical figures he regularly employs in his plays.
3. And finally, students will gain an appreciation for the intertextual and multi-media relationship between Shakespeare's plays in text and performance, and the sources that inspired them.

Class Readings: Any scholarly edition with critical apparatus (Oxford, Arden, RSC, etc.) is acceptable. It is not strictly necessary to read the secondary source articles prior to class, but it will make things easier for the final essay summative.

Performance and Ticket Information:

First Play: *The Tempest* – Wednesday, June 3, 2:00 PM

Second Play: *Othello* – Saturday, June 6, 2:00 PM

Third Play: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – Tuesday, June 9, 2:00 PM

Please use promo code **119552** for discounted tickets to the following performances from the Stratford Festival website: <https://www.stratfordfestival.ca/>

- Students can also use the discount promo code provided to book the following performances if they miss one of the class performance dates and/or wish to see a production a second time:
 - Sun, Jun 7 at 2pm – *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
 - Wed, Jun 10 at 8pm – *Othello*
 - Sat, June 13 at 8pm – *The Tempest*

Assignments:

- Essay 1: Performance Analysis (25%) **[Due: Friday, June 5]**
- Essay 2: Performance Analysis (25%) **[Due: Wednesday, June 10]**
- Essay 3: Final Summative Essay (50%) **[Due: Saturday, June 13]**

Assignment Descriptions:

Essay 1: Performance Analysis

- Write a 750-word analysis of *The Tempest*, focusing on one performance element and one literary element demonstrating their significance. Use standard MLA formatting.

Essay 2: Performance Analysis

- Write a 750-word analysis of *Othello*, focusing on one performance element and one literary element demonstrating their significance. Use standard MLA formatting.

Essay 3: Final Summative Essay

- Write a 1500-word essay presenting an argument that considers at least TWO articles we read in class (or from a reputable source) AND ONE performance we have seen. Use standard MLA format.

Assignments can be submitted to instructor email: nkrizani@uoguelph.ca

Course Schedule

Week 1
<p>Monday, June 1: Introduction to Shakespeare in Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: Wymer, Rowland. "Shakespeare and the Mystery Cycles." <i>English Literary Renaissance</i> 34, no. 3 (2004): 265-85.
<p>Tuesday, June 2: <i>The Tempest</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: Barzilai, Reut. "'In My Power': <i>The Tempest</i> as Shakespeare's Antitheatrical Vision." <i>Shakespeare</i> 15, no. 4 (January 2019): 379-97. - Article: Krause, Peter. "'Subject to a tyrant, sorcerer': "A Hyper-Intuitive Reading of <i>The Tempest</i>." <i>Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England</i> 35 (January 2022): 143-60.
<p>Wednesday, June 3: <i>The Tempest</i> performance at Festival Theatre, 2:00 PM</p>
<p>Thursday, June 4: <i>Othello</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: Pan, Caterina. "Converging Polarities in Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i> – A Generic Approach to Othello and Iago." <i>Journal of the Wooden O Symposium</i> 23 (January 2023): 33-55.
<p>Friday, June 5: <i>Othello</i> [Performance Analysis 1 Due]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: McManus, Clare. "'Sing it Like Poor Barbary': <i>Othello</i> and Early Modern Women's Performance." <i>Shakespeare Bulletin</i> 33, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 99-120.
<p>Saturday, June 6: <i>Othello</i> performance at Tom Patterson Theatre, 2:00 PM</p>
<p>Sunday, June 7: No class</p>
Week 2
<p>Monday, June 8: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: Sokol, B.J. "Euripides' <i>Bacchae</i> and Shakespeare's Theseus in <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>." <i>Notes and Queries</i> 70, no. 3 (September 2023): 166-70. - In-Class Presentation: Archives Presentation with Christine Schindler, Archivist at 1:00-1:30 PM. - In-Class Presentation: <i>Othello</i> Presentation with Alex Rizkallah, Assistant Director of <i>Othello</i> at 3:00-3:30 PM.
<p>Tuesday, June 9: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> at Tom Patterson Theatre, 2:00 PM</p>
<p>Wednesday, June 10: <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> [Performance Analysis 2 Due]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: Shell, Alison. "Delusion in <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>" in <i>Shakespeare and Early Modern Religion</i>. Edited by David Loewenstein and Michael Witmore. Cambridge University Press, 2015.
<p>Thursday, June 11: Shakespeare and Controversies of Performance I: Text and Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Article: Worthen, William B. "Authority and Performance" in <i>Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance</i>. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
<p>Friday, June 12: Shakespeare and Controversies of Performance II: Race, Gender and Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dadabhoy, Ambereen. "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being (in) Shakespeare." <i>Postmedieval</i> 11, no. 2-3 (August 2020): 228-35.
<p>Saturday, June 13: Final Class [Final Summative Essay Due]</p>

AI and Plagiarism:

- Use of AI to generate essays and other written material for assignment submission is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. For more information regarding AI and plagiarism, please refer to the following link, as well as the official guidelines and policies of your respective academic institutions: <https://www.academicintegrity.org/>

Mental Health Supports:

- Brock - <https://brocku.ca/health-wellness-accessibility/>
- UGuelph - <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/services/counselling/mental-health-support-resources>
- St. Jerome's/UWaterloo - <https://uwaterloo.ca/students/health-and-well-being#mental-health>
- UWindsor - <https://www.uwindsor.ca/wellness/398/help>
- Western - <https://www.uwo.ca/health//psych/index.html>
- Additional resources:
 - <https://211ontario.ca/>
 - <https://cmha.ca>
 - <https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-mental-health-support>
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/mental-health-services/mental-health-get-help.html>
 - 9-8-8: Suicide Crisis Helpline - <https://988.ca/>
 - Huron Perth Helpline and Crisis Response Team at 1-888-829-7484
 - Good2Talk Helpline: 1-866-925-5454