

## Preliminary Web Course Description

\*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

### School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: THST 3140	Course Title: Performance and the Past	Date of Offering: Winter 2023
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Course Instructor: J. Schacker	Course Format: seminar
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#### Brief Course Synopsis:

A “canon” of fairy-tales pervades contemporary popular culture, including film, animation, video games, and children’s literature. In this course we will explore the important place fairy-tale material has had in theatre history — focusing on the British tradition of the Christmas pantomime, from its roots in Italian commedia dell’arte to its development in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century, when many of the modern conventions for the form — spectacular stagecraft and scenography, cross-dressed roles, slapstick comedy, topical humour, meta-theatricality, as well as the dominant use of fairy-tale plots and figures — were codified.

We will use a couple of case studies to examine how specific fairy tales have played out on stages in Britain, but then expand our study to the ways that European fairy tales have continued to resonate in the work of BIPOC fiction writers and in Jamaica’s 20<sup>th</sup>-century tradition of pantomime.

Critical readings will survey the very recent work of scholars in the fields of theatre studies, Folklore, and fairy-tale studies. In-class discussions will frequently include excerpts from additional critical and historical texts. The overarching objective is to gain a nuanced understanding of the genre of the fairy tale -- and of pantomime as a form of fairy-tale theatre. Final projects will have a research component but will move beyond the traditional “research paper.” What creative inspiration can you draw from our exploration of performance and the past?

**This course will be taught in conjunction (shared content) with Professor Troy Hourie’s THST 3500 Performance and Praxis I. It is recommended that students enrol in both courses, if possible -- but not required for either.**

#### Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

Preliminary plan (check course outline at beginning of W23 semester for finalized descriptions of assignments)

**Wordpress blog posts 20%**

\*weekly posts and responses

\*includes a final reflection that is written at the end of the semester

**Periodicals project 15%**

\*research that engages with coverage of theatre in 19<sup>th</sup>-century newspapers and magazines

**Scrapbook project 15%**

\*research that focuses on one specific pantomime and integrates visual materials

**Seminar participation 10%**

**Final project 40%**

\*grade includes a presentation of work-in-progress

\*all projects will have a research component that engages primary and secondary materials

\*options for creative work accompanied by a written rationale

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Assigned readings will be linked through the course website, available either as e-texts or through the U of G's library's electronic reserves.

Students in the course will need reliable internet access and a computer with built-in or external camera and mic. Reliable access to a printer and scanner is recommended.

*Prerequisite(s):*

7.50 credits, including THST\*1040

Information about mode of delivery (synchronous/asynchronous/other details):

**This course is planned for a “blended” format, with the majority of our meetings face-to-face and some class sessions combining video content created by Prof. Schacker (allowing for content to be available to students in this course as well as those in THST 3500), followed by online discussion.**