A production of Antigone is taking place somewhere in the world every day—right now, as you are reading this. What was Antigone? What is Antigone? What might Antigone yet be? Our course—a collaboration between a stage director and a classicist—begins with an immersion in Sophocles' prize-winning play (441 BCE), with close attention to the history, politics, aesthetics, performance conditions, and production features of ancient Athenian drama more generally. The second half of our course turns to contemporary renditions of Antigone and will consider the dramatic and cultural configurations each new production activates. Antigone's exploration of the complexities of gender, kinship, citizenship, law, resistance to authority, family vs. the state, and religion (among other issues) has been compelling for modern thought, and especially galvanizing to theaters of resistance and dissent. Our classes will combine critical inquiry into the plays and surrounding discourse as well as experiments in interpretation—including acting workshops and staging exercises. Students need no background in acting, theater, or ancient literature, but do need critical energy and discipline. Among the modern plays we will address, in the second half of the semester, are reimaginings of Antigone by Brecht, Fugard, Miyagawa, Gambaro, Pongstaphone, and Silverman.

Course Assignments

Week 1 September 6
Introduction: aims and methods of the course; background to Sophocles’ Antigone.

Week 2 September 13
Sophocles, Antigone. Please read Antigone in its entirety (both Blondell and Carson translations); in class we will focus on lines 1-375.

Week 3 September 20
Antigone, lines 376-625. (and corresponding Carson passages)
4, “Relations and Relationships”, 79-106

In class group scene readings.

Week 4
Antigone, lines 626-800. (and corresponding Carson passages)

Week 5
Antigone, lines 801-1154. (and corresponding Carson passages)

Week 6
Antigone, lines 1155-1352. (and corresponding Carson passages)

Week 7
In-Class Midterm

Week 8

Week 9
Fugard, A. The Island. A useful website for The Island: http://www.devon.gov.uk/dcs/crossings/lit/island.htm

Week 10
Miyagawa, C. Antigone Project.

Week 11
Pongstaphone, R. with May Thet Zaw. Antigone…Antagonist?

Week 12
Gambaro, G. Antígona Furiosa.

Week 13
Silverman, Jen. Bones at the Gate.

Week 14
Final Class Presentations
December 6

Final Week

Final Class Presentations/Wrap-Up

December 11

Communication: This is a team-taught course, so please copy both professors on all e-mail communication relevant to the course.

Readings: You must complete all course readings. Just reading the selections once is not enough. We suggest you read them through, and consult with any introductions and notes then read them again. For play excerpts, it is recommended that you read them aloud. Do not leave the readings to the last minute.

Devices: We are sympathetic to the utility of smartphones, tablets, laptops, etc., but given the nature of our seminar and the kind of work we’ll be reading and parsing, such devices create barriers to full participation. This means that when class begins, your phones should be silenced and your computers put away. You will also need to print out any assignments or papers needed for class ahead of time.

Attendance: As this class only meets once a week, it is vital that you attend all classes. If you miss more than one class (for any reason other than documented medical or other emergency), this will be negatively reflected in your final participation grade. If you do have to miss a class, please inform your professors and make sure you catch up with any work you missed by consulting with your classmates.

Mitigating Circumstances: If you are aware of any conditions or circumstances that will affect your course work in any way (such as learning disabilities, medical problems etc.) it is your responsibility to make your professors fully aware of them at the earliest opportunity either in person after class, by scheduling an appointment, via telephone, e-mail or in writing. If a student fails to make due notification the professors will be unable to take any such circumstances into consideration when setting work or calculating grades

Office Hours: As posted above, or by appointment; appointments can be made via e-mail. This is a small seminar, so meeting with your professors is strongly urged.

Dress: Please dress comfortably for movement. You may have to remove your shoes in the dance studio so you do not scuff the floor. We will be moving!

Rehearsal Room Etiquette: No food or drinks (except portable water) allowed.

Requirements (in addition to assigned readings):
NYU Classes postings
For the weeks noted below, by 9 p.m. on the Sunday before class, please post on the NYU Classes discussion board two (2) clearly formulated, substantive questions about the week’s readings (primary or secondary) that you think will stimulate or enrich class discussion. Everyone will be responsible for reading all the postings each week and for being prepared to discuss them in class. These postings will NOT be individually graded but considered part of your participation in the course. Please post on the Sunday before Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8-13.

Midterm 20%
An in-class written midterm will be administered Tuesday, October 18.

Final Presentation & Paper 25%
Students will give a final 10-minute presentation, either alone or in a group (the presentation time will be adjusted). The presentation can be an illustrated lecture, a workshop, a movie, a reading of a self-written scene, direction of a scene, etc. The object of the presentation is to illustrate a facet of the course material in an engaging, content rich and creative way. A 1500-word reflection will accompany the final presentation.

Take home final 25%
Analysis of selected passages from the plays we have read this semester.

Participation 30%
Participation is this class is essential. This grade will be calculated based on enthusiasm and active contribution to the class, attendance, discussion, and postings to the Discussion Board.

Texts
All primary texts are available (under the course number and instructors’ names) at the NYU Bookstore, (right across the street from Gallatin).

1) Sophocles: The Theban Plays (Focus Classical Library: 2002, 2004), translated by Ruby Blondell
2) Sophokles Antigone (Oberon: 2016), translated by Anne Carson

Plays available on NYU Classes:

8) Silverman, Jen, Bones at the Gate (2012).

All secondary readings are posted on NYU Classes.
Play Attendance
Students are required to attend a performance of the Gallatin production of Antigone in the Labowitz Theatre for the Performing Arts, Nov. 3-13 (performances on Nov. 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12) time, tba. Information regarding the reservation of tickets will be provided in October. Tickets are free.

Recommended
Onassis Festival NY: Antigone Now
October 13-16, 2016
www.onassisfestivalny.org
A four-day free festival of contemporary interpretations of the Antigone story through visual and performing arts, humanities, family activities, and digital media.