

MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION 2023/24

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# **KEY INFORMATION**

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| **Award Title** | Advanced Theatre Practice  |
| **Award Aim** | Master of Arts (180 credits)Master of Fine Art (240 credits) |
| **Possible Exit Awards** | A PG Dip may be awarded on the basis of 120 credits to a student who has not passed the 60 credit MA Sustained Independent Project.A Postgraduate Certificate may be awarded on the basis of at least 60 credits, but less than 120 credits.  |
| **Awarding Body**  | University of London |
| **Mode(s) of Study**  | Full-time Only |
| **Full Length of Study**  | MA – one year full-timeMFA – two years full-time |
| **Admissions Requirements** | You will normally have good knowledge and experience of at least one of theatre-making discipline (i.e. performance, directing, writing, design, dramaturgy, puppetry, music, visual art), together with a strong desire to bring this expertise to an experimental theatre-making environment. Alternatively, you may be an outstanding individual from another discipline, with an evident desire to explore interdisciplinary practice. You should normally have an undergraduate degree in a relevant field, (drama, theatre or performance studies) though applications from students of other disciplines are welcome. Applications for the accreditation of prior experience in lieu of academic qualification will also be considered where appropriate. An offer will normally only be made after interview.Applicants for whom English is not their first language are required to prove their English language proficiency by gaining an overall score of 7.0 in an IELTS test, or equivalent. Applicants are advised to gain this certification as early as possible and more information can be found through the English Language Requirements page. |
| **Location of Study** | London |
| **Professional Accreditation** | None |

# **PROGRAMME OVERVIEW**

## Educational Aims

These programmes give you the opportunity to:

* examine critically, develop and renew your own practice in the company of other theatre-makers and performance specialists;
* develop a clearer and more articulated vision of the work you would like to make with others – choosing from a wide variety of theatre and performance contexts – informed by knowledge at the forefront of your academic and professional discipline;
* develop your thinking and analytical skills, so that you are able to be more articulate about your vision for practice, understanding its place within the broader field of theatre and performance making – and recognise how the boundaries of your specialism are advanced through research;
* be part of the formation of a new company or partnership, showing originality in tackling and solving problems, dealing systematically and creatively with performance-related issues, and arriving at a considered encounter with an audience;
* contribute to and co-architect your course and its output - sharing learning with students on other programmes – understanding the relation between the manner in which the work is made and the work which is achieved;
* become part of a growing international group of theatre and performance makers, conscious of your ability to make new links and vitalise networks worldwide

In addition to the above, the MFA programme will:

* extend your experience and outputs through a prolonged engagement with a relevant professional practice.

## Programme Structure

Term 4

Term 3

Term 2

Term 1

**Unit 5**: Practices **20**

**Unit 2**: Practitioner study – Advanced Theatre Practice

**20**

**Unit 4**: Cultural landscapes

**20**

**Unit 3**: Performing Research

**20**

**Unit 6**: Option

**20**

**Unit 7**: Sustained Independent Project

**60**

MA Course Diagram

**Unit 1: Contemporary Disciplines 20**

**Unit 4**: Cultural landscapes

**20**

 Term 3

Term 2

Term 1

**Unit 5**: Practices **20**

**Unit 2**: Practitioner study – Advanced Theatre Practice

**20**

**Unit 3**: Performing Research

**20**

**Unit 6**: Option

**20**

MFA Year One

**Unit 1: Contemporary Disciplines 20**

Term 3

Term 2

Term 1

**Unit 3**: Sustained Independent Project

**120**

MFA Year Two

\**You will undertake either ‘Directing’ or ‘Performing’ Text in Contemporary Theatre*

*\*\*Options units available to Advanced Theatre Practice students in the past have included: Aurality, Puppetry and Object Theatre, Archiving Practices/Practicing Archives, Introduction to Musical Theatre, Festival Project, Introduction to Writing for Interactive Media*

## Learning and Teaching

Practical skills are developed mainly through tutor and practitioner-led workshop experience – and through working with colleagues towards the achievement of designated tasks. Thinking skills are developed through reflection on your own practice and that of others in relation to literature of the field – as well as lectures and workshops designed to give you an understanding of research, and its possible application within your field.

A feature of these programmes are their emphasis on your working alongside tutors and practitioners – in an exploratory and supportive laboratory atmosphere designed to enable you to discover your potential within company situations. The courses embody a research-led teaching approach, in which each participant contributes to a growing body of knowledge and understanding through their positive commitment to the project in hand.

The programmes seek to be innovatory in learning, teaching and assessment methods – for example, through requiring the keeping of a journal, throughout the course. This will take the form primarily of a documentary record of your work and experience, and may include technical, personal and anecdotal registers. You will be encouraged to make full use of the journal as you analyse and reflect upon your work. The journal also helps to inform the course team of the nature of your working process and the extent of your consideration, investigation and analysis of processes, library research, experimental work and development of original ideas.

*Options*

This MA/MFA offers student choice for a unit. The list of option units available will be published annually. Students requiring advice on the choice of option should consult with their Course Leader. The Unit Outlines of option units will be published in the ‘MA/MFA Options’ booklet’.

The programme also offers two options specific only to Advanced Theatre Practice, Directing Text in Contemporary Theatre and Performing Text in Contemporary Theatre.

*Placements*

Placement learning is not an integral part of these programmes, although professional attachments are considered as part of an agreed approach to achieving the learning objectives of MFA students during their second year.

## Assessment

**Assessment Tasks**

The programmes will continually assess and review their learning, teaching and assessment methods with you – maintaining a responsive approach and flexibility to your needs. Each unit within these degrees have approximately four or five learning outcomes which are directly drawn from the overall degree learning outcomes. Each unit has formal assessment tasks - with a ‘magnitude’ (i.e. amount or size of task) - which will give you the opportunity to demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcomes of the degree. Assessment criteria show what you will need to demonstrate – or do - to achieve the learning outcomes and in the assessment tasks (e.g. effective use of research). Assessment (or level) descriptors are directly linked to the assessment criteria and indicate the level you have reached and therefore the level to which you have achieved the learning outcomes (and the mark awarded to the unit therefore).

**Assessment Criteria**

Not all the assessment criteria apply to each unit although all will be incorporated *across* each Masters degree. (The compulsory units include all these criteria already.) The assessment criteria to be considered will be clear in each unit outline. Tutors will give feedback relevant to these criteria with references to specific examples from your work.

Work is assessed on evidence of the extent to which you have met the learning outcomes demonstrated through:

* sustained, independent argument;
* progress in relevant practice-based techniques;
* taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately;
* originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit;
* analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues;
* intellectual engagement;
* understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship;
* recognising practice that is at the boundaries of the specialism;
* successful collaborative processes;
* tackling and solving problems and dealing with complex situations in professionally related environments.

**Assessment Descriptors**

Work that is marked near a borderline is likely to have characteristics of work in the next closest bracket, but these are outweighed by characteristics described in the bracket in which the work is placed. The languages of these descriptors will be used by staff in feedback to make clear the level the student has reached. In addition, tutors will make reference to the learning outcomes and whether these have therefore been achieved.

80% and over (distinction)

Your written work demonstrates a fluent, lucid and advanced argument of a near-publishable level. You show exceptional evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated a highly impressive exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas with acuity. There is clear and sustained evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated excellent qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues throughout the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are exceptional; you have developed original knowledge making use of extensive and highly complex research. You display strikingly effective practice, demonstrating an advanced understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You work at the highest of standards in group situations (if relevant), exercising most effective collaborative strategies. There is evidence of exceptional ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is characterised by its sustained excellence and is of equivalent achievement to striking professional practice at the forefront of its field.

70% and over (distinction)

Your written work demonstrates sustained, advanced argument at an academically high level. You show outstanding evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated an impressive exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas with acuity. There is clear evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated very good qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are impressive; you have developed areas of original knowledge, making use of extensive and complex research. You display most effective practice, demonstrating an advanced understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You work at high standards in group situations (if relevant), always exercising effective collaborative strategies. There is evidence of clear ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is characterised by excellence and is of equivalent achievement to professional practice at the forefront of its field.

60% and over (merit)

Your written work demonstrates a sustained and clear argument. You show very good evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated an effective exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is clear evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated good qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are good; you have made often made use of detailed research. You display effective practice, demonstrating a good understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You work well in group situations (if relevant), frequently exercising effective collaborative strategies. There is evidence of good ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is of a good standard and, on several occasions, is equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field.

50% and over

Your written work demonstrates a developed argument that is reasonably sustained. You show evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have demonstrated exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated reasonably good qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement are adequate; you have made use of research at times. Your practice is at a reasonable standard, and you have demonstrated an understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You contribute to group situations, adopting reasonably effective collaborative strategies for most of the time. There is evidence of some ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is of a fair or good standard and, on occasion, is equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field. It is likely to be reasonably strong in some areas but less developed in others, and it may be inconsistent.

40-49% (fail)

Your written work demonstrates an argument but one that is only sporadically sustained. You show limited evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have only occasionally demonstrated exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is limited or little evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have demonstrated limited qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement were not always adequate; you have made little use of research. Your practice is not always of a reasonable standard, and you have rarely demonstrated an understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. You contribute to group situations, although you do not often adopt effective collaborative strategies. There is limited evidence of ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is only of a fair standard and is rarely equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field. You have not sufficiently demonstrated that you have met the learning outcomes of the unit, although it is likely that your work shows potential.

Less than 40% (fail)

Your written work does not sufficiently demonstrate an argument. You show insufficient evidence of progress in specific techniques relevant to the practical work of the unit. You have rarely or never demonstrated exploration of creative risks and options and selected and implemented ideas appropriately. There is little or no evidence of originality in your applications of knowledge in practice. You have rarely demonstrated qualities of analysis and critical awareness of contemporary issues in the unit. Your levels of intellectual engagement were inadequate; you have made little or no use of research. Your practice is not of a good enough standard, and you have not demonstrated an understanding of the boundaries of your specialism. Your contribution to group situations is very limited, as are your effective collaborative strategies. There is little or no evidence of ability in tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments. The work is not equivalent to professional practice at the forefront of its field. You have not demonstrated that you have met the learning outcomes of the unit.

## Placements

All MA and MFA students will undertake actor training and coaching observations and/or placements (and attachments in the MFA) that take place after the first term of study. In the first instance placements will be relatively observational in their nature. Many of these first placements will take place in Central. You may be placed on an assignment, however, (e.g. with an individual actor, a public production or at another drama school) if it was thought that the particular opportunity would more appropriately benefit your development as a practitioner. Placement hosts will be contacted initially during Term 1 to establish current availability and suitability. Suitable placement hosts may be able to offer a placement that will normally involve training/coaching/observing for an average of 10 hours in a term.

MFA Attachments are organized by the student, with support from Central. Central do not find hosts or opportunities, although introductions may have been made through the Practices Unit within your first year. It is expected that MFA students will have an attachment plan by the end of their first year and will present this to the Course Leader, MFA tutor and/or supervisor after the Summer break.

## Placements

Placement learning is not an integral part of these programmes, although professional attachments are considered as part of an agreed approach to achieving the learning objectives of MFA students during their second year.

## Learning Outcomes

If you successfully complete the MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice courses at Central:

***You will obtain knowledge and understanding of:***

* (A1) current critical debates, concepts and discourses in advanced theatre practice;
* (A2) relevant theories and research methodologies including those most appropriate for contemporary practices and the creation of new work;
* (A3) contexts, platforms and partners with whom new theatre and performance work may be developed and produced.

***You will develop the thinking skills that will enable you to:***

* (B1) demonstrate your systematic understanding and critical awareness of relevant theoretical knowledge and its impact upon advanced theatre practice;
* (B2) develop intellectual rigour and conceptual understanding enabling you to: undertake advanced scholarship and sustained research; critically evaluate and reflect upon your own and others’ relevant current practice, research and research methodologies;
* (B3) Observe and analyse a range of contemporary theatre and performance and evaluate practice.

***You will develop the practical skills that will enable you to:***

* *(*C1) use and evaluate relevant practices to build and compose new work, experimenting with original approaches and ideas;
* (C2) practice specialist skills in the process of theatre making and/or the techniques of performance practice;
* (C3) develop and apply *documentation to disseminate your practice.*

***You will develop the broader workplace skills that will enable you to:***

* (D1) negotiate the challenges of working in complex and unpredictable situations e.g. making decisions independently or in dialogue with peers and/or external bodies;
* (D2) engage with relevant industries and develop as a collaborator, working skilfully and professionally with others and contributing to effective project management;
* (D3) take creative risks, e.g. originate new work, moving from intention to realisation through agreed stages.

In addition to the above, as an MFA students will also:

* *(B4) critically* reflect on your professional contacts and engagements in an extended form;
* (C4) assimilate from industry *contexts substantial experience of the creation of new work.*

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|  | **A1** | **A2** | **A3** | **B1** | **B2** | **B3** | **B4** | **C1** | **C2** | **C3** | **C4** | **D1** | **D2** | **D3** |
| Contemporary Disciplines |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Practitioner Study | **X** |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Performing Research | **X** | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cultural Landscapes | **X** |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |
| Practices: Advanced Theatre Practice |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Option | **X** |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| ATP Options | **X** |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| SIP | **X** |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  | **X** |
| MFA SIP | **X** |  |  | **X** | **X** |  | **X** |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  | **X** |

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| UNITS |

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| CONTEMPORARY DISCIPLINES |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 hours (90 taught or supervised, 110 student managed activity) |
| Unit Leader | Course tutors |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice | Core |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | This unit should be taken in conjunction with Unit 2. A consolidated practice/knowledge of a discipline(s) (acquired previously to this course) that can be bought to bear on the making of new performance work. |

**Aims**

This unit introduces the disciplines of directing, performing and scenography through the interdisciplinary contexts of theatre making and performance. Each discipline is explored through practice, drawing on collaborative and embodied techniques.  Embracing the concept of per-form - which means ‘through-form’ - each cluster involves performance as a means of learning through doing.

This unit will:

* facilitate your understanding of contemporary disciplines, promoting the evolution of new approaches to the making and structuring of material
* Introduce you to diverse models and techniques for theatre and performance making within various contexts.

**Learning Outcomes**

On the completion of this unit you should be able to:

* (A2) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant theories and research methodologies including those most appropriate for contemporary practices and the creation of new work;
* (C2) practice specialist skills in the process of theatre making and/or the techniques of performance practice;
* (C3) develop and apply documentation to disseminate your practice.

Transferable Skills Developed

Abilities to work collaboratively and independently, to respond creatively and succinctly to a brief, to manage multiple priorities.

Indicative Unit Content

Through a series of practical workshops, demonstrations and reflections, this unit will initially draw on your prior practice, skill and understanding, allowing you to develop fresh approaches to your chosen contemporary discipline in creating and structuring performance material. You will choose a cluster through the unit that reflects your prior experience and your current practical/research interests. Indicatively these clusters include:

* *Scenography*: exploring the dramaturgy of space, light, sound, the body and new technologies.
* *Performer Practices:* skills and techniques of performing, for instance corporeality and object theatre.
* *Directing & Direction*: strategies and techniques of generating, structuring and developing theatre and performance.

**How You Learn**

* You will acquire knowledge through experiential learning in a range of practical workshops.
* Independent research outside of the studio.
* You will develop your understanding and analysis through reading selected key texts and articles and discussing them in staff led presentations.
* Regular presentations of work with discussion and evaluation by tutors and peers

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Continuous assessment of your process, evidenced in your Journal |  | Pass/fail |
| Presentations of your work/practice during its process. | As required | 100% |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| You must pass both elements of assessment to pass the unit. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Intellectual engagement with the learning experience provided.
* Progress in relevant practice-based techniques;
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues;
* Successful collaborative Processes.
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| PRACTITIONER STUDY |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 hours (81-90 taught or supervised, 110-119 student managed activity) |
| Unit Leader | Course tutors |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice | Core |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | N/A |

**Aims**

* To introduce you to the processes and practices of a number of key practitioners in your field.
* To offer opportunities for analytical and critical discourse with regards to models of practice introduced by those practitioners.
* To provide a common language for you to begin to discuss and analyse your own emerging practices.
* To offer opportunities for you to understand the broader context of which those practitioners may be seen as examples.
* To provide you with models and examples of practice from which you may begin to develop your own approaches to making new work.
* To provide you with the opportunity to observe a process of documentation and dissemination, as a model for your own future practice.
* Prepare you to provide evidence of your learning in a variety of formats and forms.

**Learning Outcomes**

*On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:*

* **(**A1) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current critical debates, concepts and discourses in advanced theatre practice;
* *(B2*) Undertake advanced scholarship and sustained research; critically evaluate and reflect upon your own and others’ relevant current practice, research and research methodologies;
* (B3) Observe and analyse a range of contemporary theatre and performance and evaluate practice.

Transferable Skills Developed

* Empathetic understanding through workshop activity.
* Study, research, analytical and critical thinking.
* Ability to create and construct a visual/auditory essay.

Indicative Unit Content

As a foundation for your work on the course, this Unit will involve you in active participation in a number of laboratories, or particular examples of a contemporary theatre or performance maker at work. For each of these exploratory workshops, a contemporary practitioner will be invited to present their work in lecture and participatory form, leading the course through a practical workshop – each of about two week’s duration. For these practical workshops practitioners will be encouraged to undertake a piece of research or investigation around a particular subject with which they are currently engaged. Each of these immersions in the thinking and practice of a particular company or individual will be followed by a period of absorption and reflection, in which the work recently undertaken may be carefully analysed, considered and understood in the wider context of contemporary performance-making and approaches. This reflection on the work of the practitioner under consideration will be assisted by lecture or video material, placing the work in a wider context of contemporary performance-making theories and approaches. Where appropriate this element of contextual and critical analysis may precede as well as follow, the practical activity of practitioner under review.

Indicatively, the choice of practitioners will include:

1. A well-known practitioners in the field.
2. A research-active member of staff.
3. A graduate company of the course.

In this way, a range of practitioner models will be chosen to renew and refresh the ongoing research culture, at the same time building a research culture within and around the course, of which you will be a part - and to which you will be able to contribute.

Each study will be documented – in a variety of ways - this documentation to be placed on a course website, for use within the course and School, as well as a wider audience. As a resource, this detailed account of an encounter with a selection of current practitioners will be a resource for current students, and will additionally accumulate from year to year, providing an ongoing series of reference points for the course, and other contemporary practitioners – as well as an account of the work of the course and its changing nature and responses available *worldwide.*

This process will additionally provide the opportunity to introduce you to the basic skills of documentation, editing, and website posting which will be needed to undertake the assessment task for this Unit, as well as other Units later in the course.

**How You Learn**

You will learn through engaging with the lectures and laboratory workshops of the practitioners under consideration. Analysis of the practitioners may additionally be supported in lectures and seminars led by tutors, through material obtained through appropriate research and bibliographic work, as well as through undertaking the student managed tasks that are set.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Continuous assessment of your active participation in each of the practical laboratory workshops |  | Pass/Fail |
| A visual/auditory or written essay | Equivalent 1500 words | 100% |
| **Assessment Detail** |
| In your visual/auditory essay (or written assignment) you will explore and investigate some of the key principles, relevant debates and ideas encountered during the unit and present a critical reflective commentary that contextualises this practical work within an appropriate theoretical context. |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| You must pass both element of assessment in order to pass the unit. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Work is assessed on evidence of:
* progress in relevant practice-based techniques
* analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues
* intellectual engagement
* understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship
* successful collaborative processes.
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| PERFORMING RESEARCH |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 hours (30-40 taught hours; 160-170 student managed) |
| Unit Leader | Nominated unit leader/s and Course Leaders |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | All MA/MFA courses (except MAs Acting, Music Theatre and Acting for Screen) | *Compulsory* |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | None |

**Aims**

This unit aims to enable you to:

* acquire an understanding of current theoretical and practical debates concerning research within the broad discipline of drama
* investigate relevant research methods
* experience the challenges of presenting at a research conference;
* contribute to a research task, collaborating in an appropriate context.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

* (A1, B2) demonstrate your engagement with critical debates, concepts, and discourses relevant to researching in the broad field of drama, theatre and performance
* (A2) identify and apply appropriate research methodologies
* (B2) critically evaluate and contextualise your understanding of research methodologies and specific methods

Transferable Skills Developed

Study, research, analytical and critical thinking, collaborative practice and presentation.

Indicative Unit Content

The unit takes place over three terms, commencing with introductory sessions and culminating with the Postgraduate Conference. You will be given the opportunity to meet other MA students at Central to discuss your research.

You will be introduced to a range of issues and processes, problems and opportunities, theories and methodologies involved in undertaking research at postgraduate level, and tools and resources appropriate to such work, through a one-and-a-half to two-day intensive introduction in the Spring term shared with other MA/MFA students during the first week.

After the ‘intensive’, you will form a group of between 3 and 6 members under the supervision of a unit tutor to focus on a specific research project. You may be working with students from another course. Your research ideas will be identified according to personal and shared specialisms or interests. You will develop an appropriate body of knowledge and relevant skills of analysis as part of this research project. You will work towards a group presentation which explains, summarises and analyses your research project.

The unit concludes with the Postgraduate Conference, which takes place during the first week of the summer term. It is here that you will deliver your group presentation.

**How You Learn**

You will learn through engaging with the material offered in keynotes, practitioner-researcher seminar sessions, lectures and course-specific guidance sessions. You will learn, also, through undertaking a research project with a group of peers in your field and presenting this at a research conference.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Group conferencepresentation  | Normally 5 minutes each member  | 100% |
| **Assessment Detail** |
| The unit is assessed through one component:* A group conference presentation on a negotiated topic. Each member of the group will be allocated approximately 5 minutes presentation time, so a typical presentation will be between 15-30 minutes in length depending upon the number of people in the group. The presentation may include performance elements and capture e-research methods, as appropriate.
* A single group mark is awarded for the presentation. Where appropriate examiners may choose to viva an individual or group, to help to further clarify the content of the presentation or the contribution of group members. This viva may take place during the conference or up to four weeks after the presentation. The viva provides a means by which the group mark may be moderated - up or down - by up to 10% for individuals.

You must participate in the conference presentation to pass the unit. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately.
* Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit (including, for example, using the presentation as an interesting medium for demonstrating your research focus).
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues (e.g. collecting, considering and using relevant documentation and material within the research into a contemporary issue).
* Intellectual engagement (e.g. articulate the relationship between the concepts investigated and the practical research methods).
* Understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship;
* recognising practice that is at the boundaries of the specialism;
* successful collaborative processes.

(Other assessment criteria from the M Framework may be referred to in your feedback.) |

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| CULTURAL LANDSCAPES |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 (20-40 taught; 160-180 student managed) |
| Unit Leader | MA Programme Leaders |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice MA/MFA Creative Producing MA Theatre Criticism and Dramaturgy | Core |
| **Prerequisite Learning** |  |

**Aims**

* Develop a detailed and critical awareness of landscapes of cultural production, and of the position that theatre and performance occupy inside the current economic, social, and cultural terrain;
* Foster critical understanding of established and emerging models of cultural production and of the contexts in which these operate;
* Develop discipline-specific practical skills relevant to practices in the cultural sector, with a view to the realisation of projects or research in that context;
* Build skills in the analysis of cultural production.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this unit you should possess:

* (A1) knowledge and understanding of current critical debates, concepts, and discourses relevant to theatre development and research;
* (A3) knowledge and understanding of the artistic, institutional, and societal pressures relevant to the cultural landscape in which theatre and performance figure and are produced;
* (B1) systematic understanding and critical awareness of relevant theoretical knowledge and its impact upon theatre scholarship and practice;
* (C3) the capacity to develop an idea and present information in a variety of ways, and in appropriate formats;
* (D2) Manage a project in a group situation and identify how your work might be situated in a wider context.

(The letter/numbering system in this unit includes reference to programme learning outcomes of each of the three MAs for which this unit is devised.)

Transferable Skills Developed

Critical approaches to cultural production, with awareness of the political and ideological issues at stake in this domain. Knowledge of different organisations, venues, and structures, with knowledge of how these interrelate. Planning, organising and managing your presentations and research, and gaining information from external sources. Interpersonal skills in terms of strategic planning and specialist research. Written and verbal communication skills relevant to the cultural sector (for example fundraising, artistic strategy) and critical skills in analysing economic models.

Indicative Unit Content

This unit - available to MA and MFA students concerned with making, producing, studying, and analysing contemporary theatre and performance practice - provides an introduction to the landscape of cultural production. The unit takes as its starting point critical and historical questions around what is today known as the ‘cultural industry’. Towards the end of the unit, you will generate a bid for funding or other support to be presented in groups, in which you will be required to demonstrate your practical as well as your critical knowledge of the sector.

This unit aims to give you an understanding of the forces that underlie cultural production, with a particular focus on theatre and performance. The unit explores the economics of arts practice, from government subsidy to the strategies of small-scale arts organisations. We will consider the roles of participants in the cultural and creative industries (for example, artists, audience members, critics, dramaturgs, or fundraisers).. While the work of the unit is initially focused on cultural landscapes relevant to London and the UK, there is scope to make comparisons with the economies and ecologies operating in other cities and contexts.

The unit aims to develop your awareness of a variety of key ideas, structures and participants shaping the current terrain for contemporary performance making, in order to develop knowledge and critical and practical skills. Indicatively, the work of the unit might include contributions from:

* funders and policy makers;
* representatives from organisations, venues, or performance festivals;
* lecturers offering knowledge and insight into broader cultural and critical contexts.

For your group proposal presentation, you should demonstrate familiarity with the specificities of an example of a cultural landscape, proposing work suited to this context, showing awareness of how this may be produced, for example referring to relevant funding structures and modalities. The group may be required to produce a written document for this assessment. For the Presentation, each group will address critical questions relevant to the concerns of the unit, drawing on academic scholarship and research.

You will receive a detailed brief for the proposal presentation and essay as a part of the Unit.

**How You Learn**

* Lectures and presentations at Central by staff and visiting professionals, including questions and discussion;
* Reading and analysis of selected key texts and articles through seminars with staff or in peer groups;
* External field research and visits;
* Visits from professionals;
* Seminar discussions in which the specific practical knowledge and critical understandings can be shared and developed.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Working in Groups of 5 – 6 Participants , you will create a project Proposal for an artistic project, outlining an idea for a project in order to generate interest and support from a funding body or programmer. This proposal should include a budget (with an appropriate level of detail for the project and the time and space available).*Presentation in week 6* | 5 minutes per individual in the group (i.e. a group of five would present for 25 minutes). | Pass/Fail (group-allocated mark)  |
| Individual Submission - Summative Essay | 2,000 words | 100% |
| **Assessment Detail** |
| The project constitutes an opportunity for students to work in cross-MA/MFA groups. 1. Project proposal demonstration: students work in a group (5-6 members) to develop and present a project proposal. The group should seek to convince the ‘audience’ of the viability of the chosen project, and should draw on appropriate and ‘industry-recognised approaches to this task, showing awareness of relevant questions and concerns (for example, audience development, funding strategies, health and safety, etc.). Written material may be required as part of this pass/fail assessment. The group will identify and articulate critical questions relevant to the unit’s concerns around the place and role of culture in the society and economy, showing awareness of broad issues relevant to the cultural industry. The works should draw on academic scholarship and research, including material from the unit’s taught sessions. Students should draw on material from the unit reading lists and from their own individual academic research, and should where appropriate follow School conventions for referencing and academic writing.
2. Individual Submission - Summative essay: a set of essay questions will be provided, which will focus on analysis of a cultural landscape introduced as a part of the unit. You will need to include independent reading and research as well as drawing on critical ideas introduced as a part of the unit. Short seminars on the essay questions will feature in the unit schedule.
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| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit.
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues.
* Intellectual engagement.
* Tackling and solving problems and addressing complex situations in professionally-related environments.
* Understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship.
* Successful collaborative processes.
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| PRACTICES – ADVANCED THEATRE PRACTICE |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 (80 supervised; 120 student-led)  |
| Unit Leader | Course Leaders |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice | Core |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | Practitioner Study; Contemporary Disciplines |

**Aims**

The unit aims to enable you to:

* understand key practical issues and debates of relevance to your own practice(s)
* develop and apply advanced skills and techniques in relevant contexts
* engage critically and creatively with current and emergent processes in your field.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of the unit, you should be able to:

* (B2): Undertake advanced scholarship and sustained research; critically evaluate and reflect upon your own and others’ relevant current practice, research and research methodologies;
* (C1) use and evaluate relevant practices to build and compose new work, experimenting with original approaches and ideas;
* (D1) negotiate the challenges of working in complex and unpredictable situations e.g. making decisions independently or in dialogue with peers and/or external bodies;
* (D2) engage with relevant industries and develop as a collaborator, working skilfully and professionally with others and contributing to effective project management;
* (D3) take creative risks, e.g. originate new work, moving from intention to realisation through agreed stages.

Transferable Skills Developed

Practice in your field; evaluation of practice (self and others).

Indicative Unit Content

This unit provides you with the opportunity to concentrate on the dynamics and protocols of forming a company, or agreed approach to making new work, with a number of other practitioners and advisers in your field. Taking as a starting point your shared experiences and responses on the course so far, this unit offers you the opportunity to shape and determine the process of building and shaping your company, agree on commonly held ideas and approaches to performance, and move towards an expression of those ideas in some form of manifestation or presentation of those ideas within an appropriate setting.

Indicatively, the Unit will begin with a workshop or workshops designed to facilitate the process of company formation and agreement around a set of principles or ideas. As companies or groupings, you will then be asked to create and produce appropriate agreements and manifestos which lay the foundation for a meaningful process towards the production of a new performance work.

The emphasis at this stage will be on the clarity and integrity of your process. As part of this whole process of learning to create new work with other disciplines you will produce a short new performance or demonstration of your ideas in practice, accompanied by the appropriate articulation of those ideas and principles, and appropriate documentation.

**How You Learn**

You will learn through engaging with practical activities appropriate to the particular practice of the field. You will learn, also, from an experienced professional (tutor, host, director etc.) with whom you will work.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Continuous assessment of your contribution to the rehearsal/development process of your company or grouping leading to performances, showings or other manifestations of your work, informed by Self and Peer Assessment |  | 50% |
| Critical evaluation of your work through visual/auditory essay or written assignment | Equivalent 1500 words | 50% |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| You must pass both elements of assessment in order to pass the unit. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Progress in relevant practice-based techniques.
* Taking creative risks, selecting and implementing from these appropriately.
* Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit.
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues.
* Intellectual engagement.
* Recognising practice that is at the boundaries of the specialism.
* Successful collaborative processes.
* Tackling and solving problems and dealing with complex situations in professionally-related environments.

(Other assessment criteria from the M Framework may be referred to in your feedback.) |

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| PERFORMING TEXT IN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 hours (20 supervised; 180 student-led)  |
| Unit Leader |  |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice | Option for ATP Only |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | Proven Interest in new approaches to realising contemporary texts in the theatre |

**Aims**

This Option aims to explore the dynamic relationship between the actor, director and the written text as an aspect of contemporary performance.

Through study of a number of approaches to working with written text, in new and innovative ways, the Unit aims to provide you with a critical framework in which to consider your own approach, and gain a stronger understanding of how you might approach this dynamic relationship in future:

* The Unit aims to consider the decision-making process of the performer, working with written text and director, through some of the key stages of the production process, such as:
* Approaching the text. What are the qualities of the written text which you wish to bring to the production process? How do we read the play, and other written texts, as springboards for your performance in a postdramatic theatre?
* Viewing the written play as a conundrum, or series of conundrums, rather than a blue-print for production. What are the questions the play asks of the performer and director, and what is the process towards finding approaches and solutions?
* Conceiving the work – working with the text, developing the ideas and principles which will underpin the work, and provide the impetus for its realisation with the director.
* Approaching rehearsals and practical ways of embodying ideas arising from the written text in the workshop and rehearsal room.
* Working on text with the director – enabling each to draw on their abilities and give the strongest possible performance of the written text, in a variety of situations.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit you should be able to:

* **(**A1) demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current critical debates, concepts and discourses in advanced theatre practice;
* (B3) Observe and analyse a range of contemporary theatre and performance and evaluate practice.
* (C2) practice specialist skills in the process of theatre making and/or the techniques of performance practice.

Transferable Skills Developed

Management and collaborative skills

Indicative Unit Content

This Unit will examine the role of the contemporary performer in making new and experimental work based in written text – as a choice - through close examination of a number of practitioners in the field and with reference to some key recent productions.

Analysing the views and voices of theatre-artists making new and innovative text-based work, the Unit will encourage participants to begin to formulate their own approach to creating new work of this kind.

The Unit will culminate in a practical exercise enabling you to practice a number of these skills and insights in a practical context.

**How You Learn**

The Unit will be closely shared with the Directing Text in Contemporary Theatre Option, enabling participants to have the closest possible experience of the dynamic relationship between performer, text and director. Rooted in a close study of a number of recent productions, you will be encouraged to reflect critically on your own practice as a performer - testing your ideas through a number of practical exercises, and gaining a stronger sense of how you might approach this role in the future.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Working Journal |  | Pass/fail |
| Presentations of your work/practices during its process, informed by dissemination of your practice/research and by Self and Peer Feedback (100%) | Groups or solo – indicatively five minutes for each contributor | 100% |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| Both elements must be passed. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Intellectual engagement with the learning experience provided.
* Progress in relevant practice-based techniques.
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues.
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| DIRECTING TEXT IN CONTEMPORARY THEATRE |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 20 | ECTS | 10 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 200 hours (20 supervised; 180 student-led)  |
| Unit Leader |  |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA/MFA Advanced Theatre Practice | Option only for ATP |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | **Proven Interest in new approaches to realising contemporary texts in the theatre** |

**Aims**

This Option aims to explore the dynamic relationship between director, actor and the written text as an aspect of contemporary performance.

Through study of the approaches and work of a number of directors working with written text, in new and innovative ways, the Unit aims to provide you with a critical framework in which to consider your own approach, and gain a stronger understanding of how you might approach this dynamic relationship in the future:

The Unit aims to consider the decision-making process of the director, working with written text and performer, through some of the key stages of the production process, such as:

* Approaching the text. What are the qualities of the written text which you wish to bring to the production process? How do we read the play, and other written texts, as springboards for production within the changing values and approaches of a postdramatic theatre?
* Viewing the written play as a conundrum, or series of conundrums, rather than a blue-print for production. What are the questions the play asks of the director and performer, and what is the process towards finding approaches and solutions?
* Conceiving the work – working with the text, developing the ideas and principles which will underpin the work, and provide the impetus for its realisation with the performer.
* Planning rehearsals and practical ways of embodying ideas arising from the text in the workshop and rehearsal room.
* Working on text with performers – enabling each performer to draw on their abilities and give the strongest possible performance of the written text, in a variety of situations and contexts.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit you should be able to:

* **(**A1) demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current critical debates, concepts and discourses in advanced theatre practice;
* (B3) Observe and analyse a range of contemporary theatre and performance and evaluate practice.
* (C2) practice specialist skills in the process of theatre making and/or the techniques of performance practice;

Transferable Skills Developed

Management and collaborative skills.

Indicative Unit Content

This Unit will examine the role of the contemporary director in making new and experimental work based in written text – as a choice - through close examination of a number of practitioners in the field and with reference to some key recent productions.

Analysing the views and voices of theatre-artists making new and innovative text-based work, the Unit will encourage participants to begin to formulate their own approach to creating new work of this kind.

The Unit will culminate in a practical exercise enabling you to practice a number of these skills and insights in a practical context.

**How You Learn**

The Unit will be closely shared with the Performing Text in Contemporary Theatre Option, enabling participants to have the closest possible experience of the dynamic relationship between director, text and performer. Rooted in a close study of a number of recent productions, you will be encouraged to reflect critically on your own practice as a director - testing your ideas through a number of practical exercises, and gaining a greater understanding of how you might approach this role in the future.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Working Journal. |  | Pass/fail |
| Presentations of your work/practices during its process, informed by - dissemination - of your practice/research and by Self and Peer Feedback (100%) | Groups or solo – indicatively five minutes for each contributor | 100% |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| Both assessment elements must be passed. |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Intellectual engagement with the learning experience provided.
* Progress is relevant practice-based techniques.
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues.
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| MA SUSTAINED INDEPENDENT PROJECT (SIP) |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 60 | ECTS | 30 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | 600 hours (c. 100 taught or supervised, 500 student managed activity)The exact breakdown of study hours will be specified in the unit briefing paper. A minimum of ten hours contact time is expected. Each MA has different requirements for teaching depending upon the assessed outcomes of the unit. It is the norm for supervision to be completed by July, however. |
| Unit Leader | Course Convenors |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MA Advanced Theatre Practice | Core |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | 120 credits on previous units |

**Aims**

* Extend your understanding of critical debates and practices within a specific area of drama/theatre/performance
* Make appropriate, intelligent and informed selections from a wide range of possibilities of approach or research materials
* Engage in a sustained, focused, independent piece of work that constitutes a summative contribution at the end of your course
* Develop as a contributor to the field.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

* (A1) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current critical debates, concepts and discourses in advanced theatre practice;
* (B1) demonstrate your systematic understanding and critical awareness of relevant theoretical knowledge and its impact upon advanced theatre practice;
* (B2) develop intellectual rigour and conceptual understanding enabling you to: undertake advanced scholarship and sustained research; critically evaluate and reflect upon your own and others’ relevant current practice, research and research methodologies;
* (D1) negotiate the challenges of working in complex and unpredictable situations e.g. making decisions independently or in dialogue with peers and/or external bodies;
* (D3) take creative risks, e.g. originate new work, moving from intention to realisation through agreed stages.

Transferable Skills Developed

Independent research, awareness of contemporary and/or historical practice, reflexivity, ability to bring an extended, independent piece of work to completion.

Indicative Unit Content

Drawing together and building on all of your preparation, in this unit you will undertake the creation of a new performance work – carefully monitoring its process from original ideas and the formation of your company, through rehearsal or preparation process, to the manifestation of your ideas in appropriate public forum, interface or arena.

During the first part of this Unit you will have the opportunity to form the group or company with which you will be working, and clarify both its working methods, and the ideas or approach around which your project has gathered. If you decide to work on your own, then this is the point at which you will make that proposal. This part of the Unit will broadly correspond to ‘The Proposal’ stage (below). The requirements of the Proposal will be carefully briefed, and will include a requirement for a clear and consistent working plan for your project – from original idea or concept through to your plans for an encounter with an audience of your choosing.

Once your proposal has been agreed by the Course Team, then you will have opportunity to prepare or rehearse ‘The Work’ in the supportive environment of the School, with regular contact with your Tutors. You will also have the opportunity of undertaking research around your project, ensuring you have a good understanding of the critical context in which you will be making it. Where possible, professional mentors will be found, to offer an outside perspective. The emphasis here will be on pushing you to achieve what you have set out to achieve, and helping you to move forward where difficulties occur. In this way, you will be expected to make substantial progress with your work by the end of the third term, when you will make a presentation of your work to colleagues and tutors – in an informal atmosphere - in the way that is most appropriate for you at this stage.

During the first three weeks of the Summer period, you will have a final opportunity to work within the School, to absorb feedback from your showings or presentations, and make final decisions for your work. Throughout this period you will need to be mindful of the changes that will occur at the end of this preparation period, when you will no longer be able to make use of the School’s resources, or take these outside the School. This separation from the resources of the School will need to be carefully planned and prepared.

During the Summer period, you will take your work to an agreed encounter with an audience, carefully recording and documenting this process. This encounter may take place at a theatre festival (for example, Bialystok, London Bridge, Edinburgh) - though the Course Team will be open to the wide range of possibilities and proposals which you may make. For example, you may decide to encounter your audience in a public situation; within a site-specific environment; or in a new situation entirely planned and designed by you. Your audience may be very large or very small – encountered over a large number of performances, or very few. You may also encounter your audience in different ways – for example, through live and/or virtual means.

Finally, you will produce a commentary on your work, whose form and content will have been agreed with the Course Team at the Proposal Stage.

The object of all of the above will be for you to become involved in making a work in which you have the strongest possible investment, at this stage, undertaking the work with a thorough and well informed approach - ensuring that you are able to achieve significant learning through its first encounter with an audience, and are able to demonstrate this learning – in a useful, rigorous and productive manner.

**How You Learn**

You will learn through engaging with a sustained task.

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| Individual SIP Proposal. |  | Pass/Fail |
| The Work | *Negotiated* | 50%  |
| The Commentary | Written Essay, or negotiated equivalent – equivalent 3,000 words | 50% |
| **Assessment Detail** |
| * The project proposal.

This will be submitted to a relevant tutor and agreed by a selected course-specific date. The company cannot proceed with the Sustained Independent Project (SIP) until the proposal has been accepted by the course team. Significant changes to the proposal must be approved.The project proposal has to be agreed with the Course Team. It is assessed as part of the continuous assessment for ‘The Work.’ * The work.

Working with colleagues, you will prepare a body of work, suitable for eventual presentation or dissemination in a public forum. The work will include all appropriate planning, preparation, research, rehearsal, and testing which will underpin the work (Continuous assessment during Term 3), as well as your documentation which enhances the work, and offers significant insights into its form and content (assessment September) (50% of the mark for the Unit)* The commentary

Working as an individual, you will comment on the origins, formation, development, and public presentation of your work, placing your work in its wider critical context, and demonstrating your personal learning achieved through this process - from origination of an idea through to public manifestation and interaction with an audience.(September deadline, 50% of the mark) |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| All elements must be passed.  |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * Originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit.
* Analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues.
* Intellectual engagement.
* Understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship.
* A sustained, independent study.
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| MFA SUSTAINED INDEPENDENT PROJECT (SIP) |
| **Level** | 7 | Credits | 120 | ECTS | 60 |
| Notional Student Study Hours | Notional student study hours: 1200 Total HoursSupervision: 20-30 hours of supervision (per student, some in live or virtual seminars, spaced out across the year.)Independent study: 1170-1180 hours |
| Unit Leader | TBC |
| Programme(s) for which the unit is mainly intended | MFA Advanced Theatre Practice only | Core |
| **Prerequisite Learning** | Completion of all taught units in MFA Year 1 |

**Aims**

* Extend your understanding of critical debates and practices within a specific area of drama/theatre or performance;
* Make appropriate, intelligent and informed selections from a wide range of possibilities of approach or research materials;
* Engage in a sustained, focused, independent piece of work that constitutes a summative contribution at the end of your programme;
* Develop as a contributor to the field;
* Extend your experience and outputs through a prolonged engagement with relevant practice.

**Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this unit, you should be able to:

* Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current critical debates, concepts and discourses in advanced theatre practice (A1);
* Demonstrate your systematic understanding and critical awareness of relevant theoretical knowledge and its impact upon advanced theatre practice (B1);
* Undertake advanced scholarship and sustained research; critically evaluate and reflect upon your own and others’ relevant current practice, research and research methodologies (B2);
* Critically reflect on your professional contacts and engagements in an extended form (B4);
* Assimilate from industry contexts substantial experience of the creation of new work (C4).
* Negotiate the challenges of working in complex and unpredictable situations e.g. making decisions independently or in dialogue with peers and/or external bodies (D1);
* Take creative risks, e.g. originate new work, moving from intention to realisation through agreed stages (D3).

Transferable Skills Developed

Independent research, awareness of contemporary and/or historical practice, reflexivity, capacity to broker and maintain peer-professional working relationships, ability to bring an extended, independent piece of work to completion.

Indicative Unit Content

Building on your experience of your first year of study at Central, and the many connections and discoveries you will have made, this Unit gives you the opportunity to develop your work and your understanding of advanced theatre practice over an extended period. Choosing from a range of possible approaches, in consultation with your tutors, you will be supported in pursuing specific areas of study, deepening your knowledge and understanding of your subject area, mindful of how you yourself may wish to continue to develop your practice in future. This period of greater immersion in your subject can be through extended practice-based or academic research and will be evidenced by detailed documentation of your work and through an extended reflective essay, demonstrating your ability to record and evaluate your experiences within a wider critical perspective. Viewed as a stepping-stone towards professional life, this Unit gives you the opportunity to develop links and connections outside the School, understanding their broader significance, while maintaining regular contact and support from tutors and colleagues within the School, established during your first year of study at Central.

The MFA Sustained Independent Project gives you the opportunity to invest in knowledge and understanding of the creation of new theatre and performance work through various means.

Your work during Year Two will be based on your MFA Sustained Independent Project Proposal, agreed with your tutor. This is the opportunity to plan your route through the work of Year Two. This should be submitted to your tutor by the end of Term 3 and will also inform the Critical and Evaluative Commentary. The proposal needs to be passed in order for you to proceed onto the unit. Significant changes to the proposal must be approved.

Your route through Year Two may focus on Engagement in the Industry, Research into Practice or Practice Research. You will immerse yourself in advanced knowledge and understanding of the creation of new work demonstrating your learning through the following:

1. Presentations of your work to tutors and other students as required;
2. Full and detailed documentation of practical activity and other manifestations of your creative and productive work, including attachments.

You will also write a Critical and Evaluative Commentary, placing your work in an appropriate theoretical and critical context, demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of the critical field of your future practice.

You will receive a full briefing for the second year through a series of industry related sessions (with MA students as a part of the Sustained Independent Project Introduction) and you will be supported in the preparation of your proposal. It is expected that you will maintain a journal throughout, which tutors may ask to view at strategic points of the year, and which you should reference in your Critical and Evaluative Commentary. You will also advance your understanding of critical debates and academic practice in the broader field of drama/ theatre/ performance by means of this extended essay. The MFA Sustained Independent Project is the culmination of your learning on the course. It provides the opportunity for you to engage in industry contexts, gain advanced knowledge and/or experience of practice research and to be involved in the next generation of new work outside the School.

Contact time will be negotiated according to your needs, those of other MFA students and your tutor’s availability. Tutorials may be virtual (though you are responsible for ensuring you are contactable at all times).

In undertaking any attachment to support your study, you will follow Central’s Placement Guidelines.

**How You Learn**

* Tutorials/supervisions
* Individual research, documentation and writing
* Extended experience through practical activity outside the School

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| **Assessment Summary** |
| Type of task *(e.g. essay, report, group performance)*  | Magnitude *(e.g. No of words, time, etc.)*  | Weight within the unit*(e.g. 50%)*  |
| (i) Individual SIP Proposal.  |  | Pass/Fail |
|  (ii)The Portfolio of Works (see above) | Undertaking an agreed schedule of practice as outlined above demonstrating your work as an advanced theatre practitioner engaged in new performance practice and its documentation  | 50% |
| Critical Evaluative Essay | 5000 words. | 50% |
| **Assessment Detail** |
| The portfolio of works will be negotiated with the course team via a project proposal. |
| **Assessment Notes** |
| All elements must be passed.  |
| **Assessment Criteria** |
| * originality in the application of knowledge in relation to the matter of the unit;
* analytical and critical awareness of relevant contemporary issues;
* intellectual engagement;
* understanding and effective use of research and advanced scholarship.
* sustained, independent written argument
 |

# **READING LIST**

**CONTEMPORARY DISCIPLINES**

**Key Texts**

**Directing/Direction**

Anderson, M., Helmer, J. & Malzacher, F. (2004) “Not Even a Game Anymore” *The Theatre of Forced Entertainment* Berlin: Alexander Verlag

Bogart, A. & Landau, T. (2014) *The Viewpoints Book* New York: Theatre Communications Group.

Brayshaw, T., Fenemore, A. & Witts, N. eds. (2020) *The Twenty-first Century Performance Reader*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Machon, J. (2013) *Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performance* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Mitchell, K. (2008) *The Director’s Craft* London & New York: Routledge

Pavis, P. (2012) *Contemporary Mise en Scène: Staging Theatre Today* (trans. Joel Anderson) London & New York: Routledge

Schneider, R. & Cody, G. (eds) (2001) *RE: Direction:* *TDR Sourcebook* London & New York: Routledge

Shepherd, S. (2012) *Direction* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan

**Performer Practices**

Albright, A. (2019) *How to Land: Finding Ground in an Unstable World.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Callery, D. (2001) *Through the Body,* London: Nick Hern Books.

Dechery, C. (2023 (Ed) *Performing Collaboration in Solo Performance: A Duet Without You and Practice as Research*. London and Paris: Intellect.

Lecoq, J. (2002) *The Moving Body: Le Corps Poetique,* translated by David Bradby, London: Methuen.

Lecoq, J. (2006) *Theatre of Movement and Gesture,* (ed. David Bradby) London & New York: Routledge.

Lavender, A. (2020) *Performance in the Twenty First Century: Theatres of Engagement*. (Part 111 *On (not) being an actor*. Pp 103-113.

Oida, Y. (1997) *The Invisible Actor,* London: Methuen Publishing Ltd

Peters, J. (2023) *Performing Temporality in Contemporary European Dance. Becoming Rhythms.* Belgium: Intellect

Tashkiran, T. (2017) ‘Introduction’ *The Actor and his Body* by Litz Pisk, Bloomsbury: Methuen.

Zarrilli, P. (1994) *Acting (Re)Considered: Theories and Practices,* London & New York: Routledge.

**Scenography**

Aronson, A. & Collins, J. eds. (2015) *Theatre and Performance Design* London: Taylor and Francis.

Baugh, C. (2005) *Theatre Performance and Technology: The Development of Scenography in the Twentieth Century,* Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan.

Collins, J. & Nisbet, A. (eds) (2010) *Theatre and Performance Design: A Reader in Scenography,* London & New York: Routledge.

Gough, R. & Lotker, S. eds. (2013) *Performance Research: On Scenography* London: Taylor and Francis.

Hann, R. (2019) *Beyond Scenography*, London: Routledge.

Howard, P. (2002) *What is Scenography?* London & New York: Routledge.

Kendrick, L. and Roesner, D. (eds.) (2011*) Theatre Noise: the Sound of Performance,* Newcastle: CSP.

Kendrick, L. (2017) *Theatre Aurality*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

McKinney, J. and Butterworth, P. (2009*) The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography,* Cambridge: CUP.

McKinney, J. & Palmer, S. eds. (2017) *Scenography Expanded: An Introduction to Contemporary Performance Design*, London & Oxford: Bloomsbury Methuen.

**Supportive Reading**

Allain, P. & Harvie, J. (2014) *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance,* London & New York: Routledge.

Boal, A. (2002) *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, London: Routledge.

Caillois, R. (2001) *Man, Play and Games,* Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

DeFrantz, T. F., Craft R.A., Richards,S.L., and Perkins K.A. (2019) *The Routledge Companion to African American Theatre and Performance*. London: Routledge.

Heddon, D. and Milling, J. (2006) *Devising Performance: A Critical History,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Johnstone, K. (1981) *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre*, London: Methuen.

Kaye, N. (2000), *Site-Specific Art: Performance Place and Documentation*, London: Routledge.

Kondo, D. (2018) *World-Making: Race, Performance, and the Work of Creativity*, Durham NC: Duke University Press.

Lehmann, H.T. (2006) *Postdramatic Theatre,* London & New York: Routledge.

Sachsenmaier, S. 2015) “Productive Misapprehensions: Artscross as a Cross-Cultural, Collaborative Zone of Contestation of Contemporary Dance Practice” in Colin, N. and Sachsenmaier, S. (eds.)

P*erformance Practice: Premises, Workings and Failures.*London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Schechner, R. (2006) *Performance Studies: An Introduction (second edition),* London & New York: Routledge.

Shepherd, S. and Wallis, M. (2004) *Drama/Theatre/Performance*, London: Routledge.

Relevant journals include: *Contemporary Theatre Review; Performance Research; Theatre, Dance and Performance Training; Theatre and Performance Design.*

**PRACTITIONER STUDY**

**Key Texts**

These will mainly be selected by and with regards to the practitioners themselves, consisting of:

* texts and visual/auditory material concerning the practitioners under consideration
* writings and other material created by those practitioners
* texts and other material proposed and recommended by those practitioners, as influential on their own practice

**Additional Texts**

Machon, J. (2013) *Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performance,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Radosavljevic, D. (2013) *Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Radosavljevic, D. (2017) *The Contemporary Ensemble. Interviews with Theatre Makers.*  London: Routledge.

**Supportive Reading**

Bleeker, M. (2008) *Visuality in the Theatre: the Locus of Looking*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Bottoms, S. and Goulish, M. (2007) *Small Acts of Repair: Performance, Ecology and Goat Island,* London: Routledge.

Christie, J. Gough, R. and Watt, D. (2006) *A Performance Cosmology: Testimony from the Future, Evidence of the Past*, London: Routledge

Carter, P. (2005) *Material Thinking* Melbourne University Publishing.

Christopher K., and Mary Paterson (2021) *Entanglements of Two: A Series of Duets*, Bristol: Intellect.

Etchells, T. (1999) *Certain Fragments: Contemporary Performance and Forced Entertainment,* London & New York: Routledge.

---. (2023) *Amends*, London: Monitor.

Fisher, T. (2023). *The Aesthetic Exception: Essays on Art, Politics and Theatre*, Manchester: MUP

Goulish, M. (2000) *39 Microlectures: In Proximity of Performance,* London & New York: Routledge

Heathfield, A. (2000) *Small Acts: Performance, the Millennium and the Marking of Time,* London: Black Dog Publishing.

Jarvis, L., (2019).[*Immersive Embodiment: Theatres of Mislocalized Sensation*](http://repository.essex.ac.uk/id/eprint/35202), London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jarvis, L. and Savage, K., (2023). *Postdigital Performances of Care: Technology & Pandemic*. London: Bloomsbury.

Jarvis, L. and Buckmaster, S., (2021).*Theatre-Rites: Animating Puppets, Objects & Sites*, London: Routledge.

Kapsali, Maria (2021) *Performer Training and Technology: Preparing Ourselves*, London: Routledge.

Pavis, P. (2006) *Analyzing Performance: Theatre, Dance and Film,* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

---, (2016) *The Routledge Dictionary of Performance and Contemporary Theatre,* translated by Andrew Brown, London & New York: Routledge.

Remshardt, R. & Mancewitz, A. (2023) *The Routledge Companion to Contemporary European Theatre and Performance*, London: Routledge.

Min Tian (2018) *The Use of Asian Theatre for Modern Western Theatre* London: Palgrave.

**PERFORMING RESEARCH**

**Key Texts**

Atkinson, T. & Claxton, G. (2003) *The Intuitive Practitioner: On the Value of not Always Knowing What One is Doing*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Bannerman, C., Sofaer, J. and Watt, J. (2006) *Navigating the Unknown*, London: Middlesex University Press.

Barrett, E and Bolt, B. (eds.) (2010) *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry,* London: I BTauris & Co Ltd.

Harradine, D. (2011) *Invisible things: documentations from devising process*, London: Fevered Sleep.

Kershaw, B. and Nicholson, H. (eds.) (2011) *Research Methods in Theatre and Performance Studies*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Nelson, R. (2013) *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principals, Protocols, Pedagogies and Resistances,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pavis, P. (1998) *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Reinelt, J.G., and Roach, J. (eds.) (2007) *Critical Theory and Performance,* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Riley, S. R. and Hunter, L. (eds.) (2009) *Mapping landscapes for performance as research: scholarly acts and creative cartographies,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Romanyshyn, R. (2007) *The Wounded Researcher: Research with Soul in Mind*, New Orleans, LA: Spring Journal Books

Soyini, M, D. (2005) *Critical Ethnography: Methods, Ethics and Performance,* London: Sage.

Zarrilli, P, B., McConachie, B.,Williams, G, J., and Sorgenfrei, C.F., (2010) *Theatre Histories: an introduction,* London: Routledge.

**CULTURAL LANDSCAPES**

**Key Texts**

Additional reading and other resources may be introduced during the unit.

Harvie, J. (2009) *Theatre and the City*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

---. (2013) *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rowntree, J. (2006) *Changing the Performance: A Companion Guide to Arts, Business and Civic Engagement*, Routledge: London.

Seabright, J. (2010) *So You Want To Be A Producer*, London: Nick Hern Books.

**Websites**

Artsadmin http://www.artsadmin.co.uk/home

Arts and Humanities Research Council, Beyond Text. http://www.beyondtext.ac.uk

Live Art Development Agency www.thisisliveart.co.uk

Society of London Theatre

http://www.solt.co.uk/ (in particular, the organisation’s annual report may be useful in terms of its focus on audience).

Students should look at the application forms and accompanying notes for grants and funding. These are often available on the funding bodies’ websites (e.g. the National Lottery, the Arts Council of England, Stage One, the Wellcome Trust).

**Supportive Reading**

Adorno, T. (2008) *The Culture Industry*, London: Routledge.

---. (1997) *Aesthetic Theory*, London: Continuum.

Adorno, T., Benjamin, W. *et al.* (1977) *Aesthetics and Politics*, London: Verso.

Badiou, A. (2013) *Rhapsody for the Theatre,* London: Verso.

Beck, A. (Ed.) (2003) *Cultural Work: Understanding the Cultural Industries*, London: Routledge.

Belfiore, E. (2006) ‘The social impacts of the arts – myth or reality?’ in *Culture Vultures Is UK arts policy damaging the arts?* Mirza, M.(ed.):pp 20-338.

Bennett, S. (1997) *Theatre Audiences*, London: Routledge.

Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and The Politics Of Spectatorship*, London & New York: Verso.

Cowling, J. (Ed) (2004) *For Art’s Sake,* Institute for Public Policy Research.

De Certeau, M. (1977) ‘Culture within society’ in *Culture in the Plural*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hesmondhalgh, D. (2007) *The Cultural industries,* London: Sage Publications.

Hesmondhalgh, D., Oakley, K., Lee, D., Nisbett, M. (2015) *Culture, Economy and Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

McGuigan, J. (2004) *Rethinking Cultural Policy*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Du Gay, P. & Pryke, M. (eds.) (2002) *Cultural Economy: Cultural analysis and commercial life*, London: Sage Publications.

Maitland, H. (2006) *Navigating Difference: Cultural Diversity and Audience Development*, London: Arts Council of England.

Rancière, J. (2011) *The Emancipated Spectator*, London: Verso.

White, G. (2013) *Audience Participation in Theatre: The Aesthetics of the Invitation,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Williams, R. (1981) *Culture*, London: Fontana.

**PRACTICES: ADVANCED THEATRE PRACTICE**

**Key Texts**

Costa, M. and Andy Field (2021) *Performance in an Age of Precarity,* Bloomsbury Methuen Drama,

Cull, L. and Buchanan, I. (2009) *Deleuze and Performance*, Edinburgh: EUP.

Heddon, D. & Milling, J. (2005) *Devising Performance: A Critical History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Savage, K. & Symonds, D. (2018) *Economies of Collaboration in Performance: More than the Sum of the Parts*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

**Websites**

Goat Island, *Letter to a Young Practitioner.*

<http://www.goatislandperformance.org/writing_L2YP.htm>

**Supportive Reading**

Alston, A. (2016) *Beyond Immersive Theatre: Aesthetics, Politics and Productive Participation,* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Alston, A. and Welton, M. (2017) *Theatre in the Dark: Shadow, Gloom and Blackout in Contemporary Theatre,* London: Bloomsbury.

Auslander, P. (2007) *From Acting to Performance,* London: Routledge.

Bailes, S.J. (2010) *Performance Theatre and the Poetics of Failure,* London: Routledge.

Banes, S & Lepecki A. (2006) *The Senses in Performance*, London: Routledge.

Birringer, J. (2022) *Kinetic Atmospheres: Performance and Immersion*, London: Routledge.

Bleeker, M. (2023) *Doing Dramaturgy: Thinking through Practice*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bottoms, S. and Ghoulish, M.(eds) (2007) *Small Acts of Repair: Performance, Ecology, and Goat Island*, London: Routledge.

Delgado, M. & Svich, C. (2003) *Theatre in Crisis? Performance Manifestos for a New Century*, Manchester: MUP.

Garner Jr., S (1994) *Bodied Spaces: Phenomenology and Performance in Contemporary Drama*, New York: Cornell University Press.

Harvie, J. & Lavender, A. (eds) (2010) *Making Contemporary Theatre: International Rehearsal Processes*, Manchester: MUP.

Helmer, J. & Malzacher, F. (2004) *Not Even a Game Anymore: The Theatre of Forced Entertainment,* Berlin: Alexander Verlag.

Hill, L. and Paris, H. (2021) *Devising Theatre and Performance. Curious Methods*. (Book). London. Intellect.

Jarvis, L,. & Savage, K. eds. (2021) *Avatars, Activism and Postdigital Performances: Precarious Intermedial Identities*, London: Bloomsbury Methuen.

Leach, R. (2006) *Theatre Workshop: Joan Littlewood and the Making of Modern British Theatre*, University of Exeter Press.

Lorde, Audre (2018) *The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Masters House,* London: Penguin.

Malzacher, F. (2023) *The Art of Assembly*, Berlin: Verlag.

Ontroerend Goed. (2019) *Pieces of Work*, London: Oberon Books.

Quick, A. (2007) *The Wooster Group Work Book,* London: Routledge.

Muñoz, José Esteban (1999) *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics,* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Ridout, N. & Kelleher, J. (eds.) (2006) *Contemporary Theatres in Europe*, London: Routledge.

Read, A. (2008) *Theatre, Intimacy & Engagement: The Last Human Venue,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Schmidt, Theron (2019) *Agency: A Partial History of Live Art*, Bristol: Intellect.

Schneider, R. (2000) *‘*On Critical Art Ensemble’*, The Drama Review*, 44.4 (Winter), pp. 120-131.

Sedgwick, Eve (2001) ‘Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading’ in *Touching Feeling,* Durham NC: Duke University Press

Shah, Rajni (2021) *Experiments in Listening,* Performance Philosophy series, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Turner, C. & Behrndt, S. (2008) *Dramaturgy and Performance*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Welton, M. (2012) *Feeling Theatre,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

**SUSTAINED INDEPENDENT PROJECT (SIP)**

**Key Texts/ Supportive reading**

The key texts and supportive reading will be entirely dependent upon your choice of subject matter. It is expected that you will use texts and resources referred to earlier in the course as well as material new to you at this point in the course.