

Stages of Discovery

Essay exam

Instructions:

- * Please choose 3 of the 6 questions below.
- * Please keep your answers to roughly 500 words, and spend no more than 3 hours total writing the exam itself.
- * The exam is due via e-mail to your seminar leader by 6pm on Tuesday.

Questions:

1. At first glance, the concept of dialectics (Marxism, Brechtian theater) seems very close to the idea of frames of reference (relativity). Explore the similarities and differences between the two concepts in relation to 2 musical, historical or dramatic texts. You may wish to discuss, for example, some of the examples of modern music covered in lecture, or you may wish to compare and contrast the different historical and theatrical presentations of Galileo. This is a good opportunity to discuss works other than the play texts, but you may of course use the play texts as examples.
2. Examine a particular performance we have experienced this quarter (including, for example, the films by Jarman, Losey, Almerayda, or your performance of *Tempest* or your Galileo scenes). Describe the performance's apparent intentionality, including (if relevant) its relationship to its source text. What were the distinctive features of this interpretation? You may discuss everything from the delivery of individual speeches (particularly if you are able to watch the film again) to staging. If you can, talk about the relationship between the work's intention and its reception (including both reception by the audience and critical/scholarly reception).
3. Describe your favorite Galileo performance in relation to its presentation of scientific elements and its application of Brechtian theory. You may talk about your own if you wish. How did it depict science? How was its form inspired by science? How did it apply other elements we learned in performers' workshop? Did it change your understanding of Brechtian theory or Galilean science?
4. Apply a Brechtian framework to either Stoppard's plays or Shakespeare's. Make sure to describe & apply the following elements as specifically and carefully as possible: theatricalism, juxtaposition, dialectics, A-effect, didacticism around moral/political questions.
5. Discuss two of your favorite individual experiential activities (either in writing, performance, or physics workshop or in seminar). How did these particular workshops help you rethink what it means to be a writer/scientist/performer? What do you now see as the differences and similarities between these investigative modes?
6. We have a only a few examples available to us for defining what a "science play" is at this point in the program, but we can talk about whether and how our study of these plays allow us to consider science, art, and issues of how to live in the world. Discuss 2 of the 3 modern plays we have studied (*Life of Galileo*, *Arcadia*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*). In your essay, please consider at least 2 of these questions:
 - 1) How does the play provide a didactic exposition of scientific content?
 - 2) How does the play function as a work of art?
 - 3) How does the play address moral, ethical and/or political concerns?