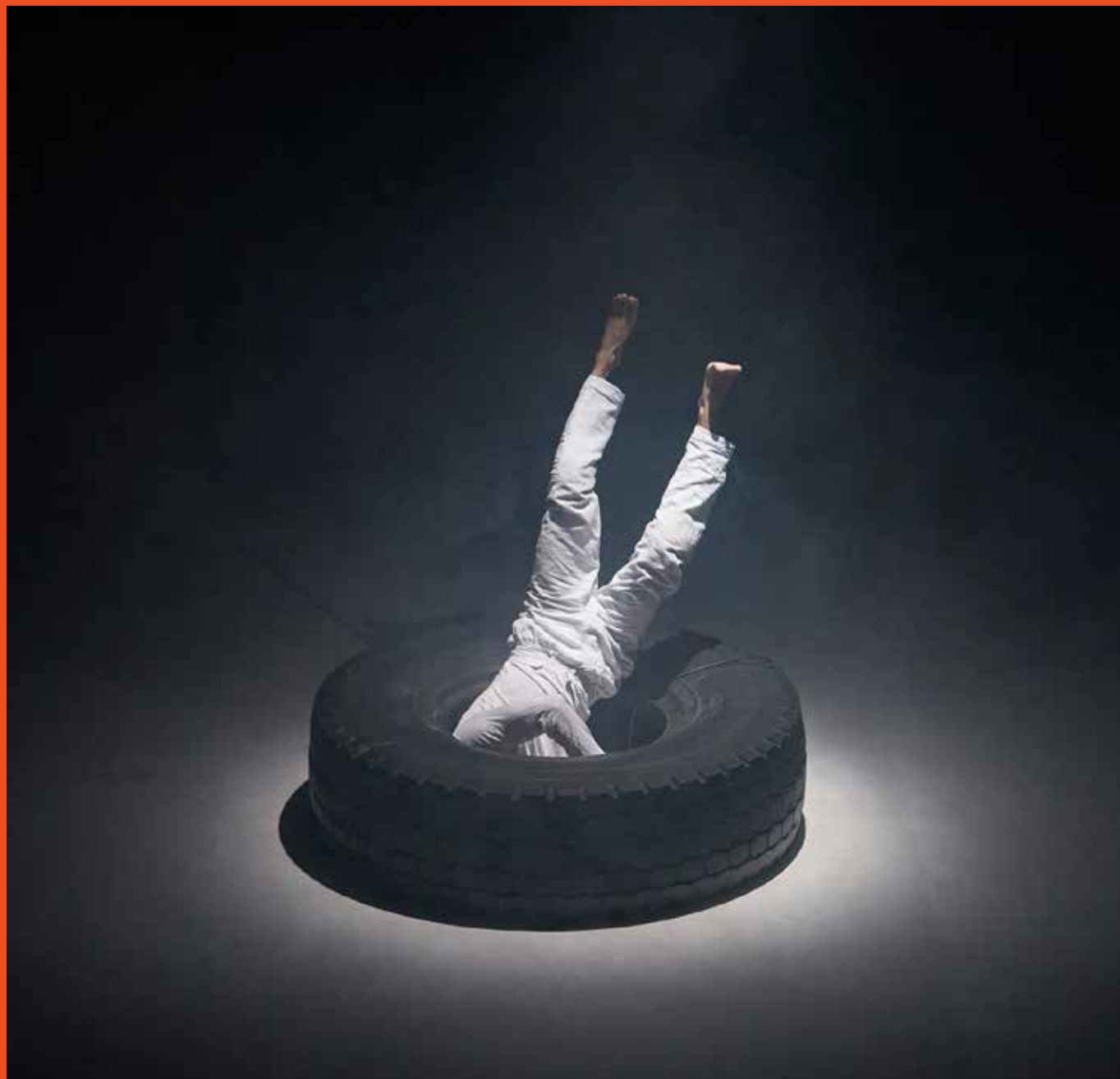


# Theatre and Performance Studies



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY





Performer Jawad Yaqoubi during development of  
 PYT Fairfield's *Dorr-e Dari: A Poetic Crash Course in the Language of Love*,  
 Rex Cramphorn Studio 2020. Photo: Paul Dwyer.

All images in this publication are of students or professional practitioners and companies who have engaged in research and rehearsal in association with the Discipline of Performance Studies as part of the artist-in-resident programme in the Rex Cramphorn Studio.  
 Cover image: Raghav Handa performing *Follies of God*. Developed in the Rex Cramphorn Studio 2022 and premiered at Carriageworks for the Keir Choreographic Awards 2022. Photo: Zan Wimberley.

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Information in this booklet is to be used as a guide only, as there may be changes closer to the start of the academic year.

Please check the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Future Students web page for complete course and study information:

[sydney.edu.au/arts/study.html](https://sydney.edu.au/arts/study.html)



Paul Dwyer, Chair of Discipline.  
Photo: Alex Wissler.

## Welcome

Dive into Theatre and Performance Studies! Maybe this is what the performance-maker, Raghav Handa, is trying to tell us via the extraordinary image on the front cover of this booklet.

And why not? Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Sydney is a vital meeting point between the talents of undergraduate and postgraduate students, the knowledge and skills of outstanding academics, and the inventiveness of professional artists-in-residence, like Raghav, pictured here during the creative development of a new dance/theatre work.

I love this image of Raghav because it illustrates so beautifully both the playfulness and the rigour of performance. He literally turned up in the studio one day with a huge truck tyre and the open-ended question: what can I make out of this? His search for answers to that question were relentlessly practical—rolling the tyre around the space and ‘dancing’ with it, squeezing his body into the tyre, cataloguing the results of these experiments—and, at the same time, they drew on a rich theoretical and historical understanding of contemporary performance.

And that’s the kind of balance we offer in Theatre and Performance Studies. We know that some of our students are aspiring performance-makers or drama teachers and we do include many practical studio experiences in our curriculum. You’ll devise and perform short works for your fellow students; you’ll have opportunities to do workshops with and/or observe professional artists at work; you’ll become proficient at watching and analysing rehearsal processes and performances, developing a sense of how meanings are made ‘on the floor’, through physical action.

We also understand that many students are interested in performance as a much broader phenomenon that goes beyond conventional theatre contexts. A strong practical and theoretical understanding of performance offers powerful ways of conceptualising what is happening in social or cultural processes as diverse as political protest actions, criminal trials, music festivals, rituals, or everyday performances of identity.

Performance is an intensely sensuous way of knowing. In all cultures, people make theatre and other forms of performance to understand more fully what it is to be human. Performance offers the gift of reflexivity, enabling us to see and to question our relationships to others and our place in the world, to recreate the past, to imagine the future.

That’s what excites me and my colleagues. That’s what I see in the achievements of so many outstanding graduates who’ve come before you. That’s your cue...

Dr Paul Dwyer  
Chair of Discipline

## Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Sydney

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The discipline of Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Sydney is recognised world-wide as a leader in the field. Studying with us is challenging and fun, and students report high levels of satisfaction with their learning experiences. The discipline has been embedded in the Sydney performance scene for over thirty years and we have long and enduring relationships with companies such as Griffin Theatre, Performance Space and Mooghalin Performing Arts, to name a few. Theatre and Performance Studies is the major you need for the twenty-first century because:

- It offers critical insights into performances of race, class, gender and sexuality;
- It gives you foundational skills for further professional study (many of our graduates are now making some of the most exciting work in Sydney);
- It opens up the possibility for further postgraduate study. Our PhD graduates hold positions across Australia, in the UK, Singapore and South Africa.

We don't know where Theatre and Performance Studies could take you because we have recent graduates in many fields: international aid workers, policy advisers in federal parliament, teachers, and journalists. Others are now working as professional actors, directors, designers or have pursued careers in arts administration, project co-ordination and management. If you're interested in studying how human bodies make meaning in a range of contexts, you'll enjoy Theatre and Performance Studies. We see theatre practice, and performance more generally, as labs for human experience. We offer a full undergraduate major and fourth year Honours program. We also supervise postgraduate research students at Masters (MA Research or MPhil) and PhD levels.



Griffin Theatre Co rehearsing *Dogged* in the Rex Cramphorn Studio, 2021.  
(Bottom to top) Kirk Page, Sandy Greenwood, Anthony Yangoyan.  
Photo: Brett Boardman.





Students and academics discussing *Something's Going On* by Martin del Amo (in red pants) and performers David Huggins and Miranda Wheen (to his right) during PRFM3607: Production Strategies class in the Rex Cramphorn Studio, 2020. Photo: Richard Manner.

## What our students say

*In Theatre and Performance Studies, I'm continually struck by how much of what we learn relates to ways I have performed, even phrases of movement, ideas, tactics for performance... I find myself halfway through a reading, muttering, 'That's where that idea came from' or 'I know how that feels'. It's that moment where something makes sense and slots into your own body of experience. For me it's been the best part of university.*

**Agatha Gothe-Snape (performance artist)**

*Theatre and Performance Studies was the most intellectually satisfying area of study I took in my undergraduate years: it offers a unique chance to fully explore and critically analyse a range of exciting performance practices and events.*

**Dr Christopher Hay (professor in drama at Flinders University)**

*Rehearsal Studies allowed me to forge direct relations with members of the theatre profession and witness first-hand the workings of a professional rehearsal room. It was one of the most academically and practically useful courses I completed during my degree. More than any other course it equipped me with skills and resources of relevance both for a future career outside university and for higher academic study.*

**Dr Emma Cole (dramaturg and senior lecturer with Department of Classics and Ancient History, University of Bristol)**

*Theatre and Performance Studies has taught me to engage critically, to think outside the box, and has fostered a deep and diverse knowledge base from which I constantly draw.*

**Dino Dimitriadis (genderqueer director, creative producer and curator)**

## Our Facilities

Most of the learning activities in Theatre and Performance Studies take place in our open-plan flexible studios, the AV Room (Room S113 on Level 1 of the Woolley Building) and the Rex Cramphorn Studio (Room S114).

The “Rex”, as it is affectionately known, is named after one of Australia’s most significant theatre directors, Rex Cramphorn, who was also a great advocate for collaboration between universities and professional theatre companies. Inspired by Rex, each year we curate a program of artists-in-residence who come to the university to devise and rehearse new work, or who come to work on creative projects in which members of our staff are directly engaged as part of their research.

A number of our most popular senior undergraduate units of study are “wrapped around” the creative practice that happens

in the Rex: this is where you have the chance to learn through intensely-engaged participant-observation, as new plays and performances are workshopped and rehearsed; it’s also your chance to take workshops with our artists-in-residence and to develop some hands-on skills in theatre production.



The Rex Cramphorn Studio

# Theatre and Performance Studies as a major or minor

In Theatre and Performance Studies we look at a broad range of aesthetic, social and everyday performances: from theatre, dance and 'live art', to the performative dimensions of politics, sport and popular culture. As a Theatre and Performance Studies major you will explore a range of different approaches to performance making, devise short works, and engage with professional artists-in-residence. While this program does not provide vocational training, it functions as a window onto professional practice. As well as developing practical skills in workshops, you will attend a wide variety of performances, learn how to document them, how to describe the way spaces and architecture are used, how bodies are moving, and how to build these observations into a detailed critical analysis.

Performance, as a conceptual lens, also provides a powerful way of interpreting many non-theatrical events, using both theoretical and critical approaches from a diversity of disciplines, including theatre and movement studies, anthropology, history, philosophy and sociology. A Theatre and Performance Studies major provides a strong theoretical basis for students who seek to later train as performers, directors, teachers, arts administrators, or those who wish to work in related areas of the arts and cultural practice.

## Degree Structure and Requirements

**A major in Theatre and Performance Studies requires 48 credit points including:**

- 6 credit points of 1000-level core unit
- 6 credit points of 1000-level selective unit
- 6 credit points of 2000-level core unit
- 12 credit points of 2000-level selective units
- 6 credit points of 3000-level core unit
- 6 credit points 3000-level selective unit
- 6 credit points of Interdisciplinary project unit

**A minor in Theatre and Performance Studies requires 36 credit points including:**

- 6 credit points of 1000-level core unit
- 6 credit points of 1000-level selective unit
- 6 credit points of 2000-level core unit
- 12 credit points of 2000-level selective unit
- 6 credit points of 3000-level selective unit

### First year

In first year you will explore key ideas about theatre and performance through performance itself. Working in small groups we develop an understanding of how theatre and performance contribute to, and critique, our world. We have units on the work of the director, what is dangerous about performance and the places where performance happens.

### Second year

Second year builds a deeper understanding of artistic practices and performance in everyday life. We extend our understanding of what performance might be, research performance within social events—festivals, sport, ceremonies—and you get to create your own research project. In selective units you can explore histories of theatre and performance, Shakespeare's rehearsal processes, improvisation techniques of the Commedia dell'Arte, different approaches to acting, and the 'theatre' of politics.

### Third year

Third year takes up key issues in performance theory, applying the theoretical, methodological and analytical tools developed in your first two years. In our core unit you study rehearsal with our artists in residence. Other units allow you time in the studio to learn from visiting performance artists, or to study the sociology of theatre—you 'make' a theatre company. Then you get to see the work of playwrights and dramaturgs as they develop new writing for performance; and we also explore how to make documentary theatre and how to understand rituals and play as performance.

### Honours

For advice on Honours in Theatre and Performance Studies, see page 8.

– <https://bit.ly/ug-prfm>



## Learning outcomes

- Evaluate and describe aesthetic performance practices, including those practices involved in the making of performance.
- Demonstrate an understanding of performance practice as a mode of inquiry as well as an object of study.
- Apply performance theory and performance analysis skills to 'non-theatrical' events and practices.
- Contribute effectively and inventively to public, industry and community discussions, debate and practice in the field of cultural production, from a theoretically, methodologically, and evidence-based perspective.
- Exemplify cultural competence through project work and/or interdisciplinary study by applying transferable skills in observation, documentation, analysis, and the dissemination of discoveries.
- Apply high level skills in discipline-informed, evidence-based inquiry in order to produce innovative responses to, and engagement with, aesthetic, cultural and social practices.



A student as the servant Arlecchino in a *commedia dell'arte* scenario during PRFM2603: Between Text and Improvisation, Rex Cramphorn Studio, 2016. Photo: Richard Manner.

Bachelor of Arts with a Theatre and Performance Studies major (Sample Pathway)					
Year 1	Sem 1	PRFM1601 (Core) Making Theatre: The Work of the Director	Bachelor of Arts Core: FASS1000 Studying Arts and Social Sciences	1000 level unit	1000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM1000 Selective Unit	1000 level unit	1000 level unit	1000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 2	Sem 1	PFRM2601 (Core) Being There: Theories of Performance	2000 level unit	2000 level unit/ OLE*	2000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM2000 Selective Unit	PRFM2000 Selective Unit	2000 level unit/ OLE*	2000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
Year 3	Sem 1	PRFM3961 (Core) Rehearsal Studies	Elective unit from Table A or S	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S	2000/3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S
	Sem 2	3000 level (Selective) Theatre and Performance Studies unit	FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact unit	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S	3000-level unit in another major/minor from Table A or S

\*OLE: Open Learning Environment unit of study

\* Table A: Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences majors, minors and units of study

\* Table S: University shared pool of majors, minors and units of study

# Honours

Our honours year brings theory and practice together. It involves specialised seminars, a research thesis on an individual topic and a detailed case study based on first-hand fieldwork. Honours students become a valued part of the department's research culture.

## Honours admission requirements

Honours is a separate fourth year program in the Bachelor of Advanced Studies. Admission into Honours requires the completion of a major in Theatre and Performance Studies with an average of 70% or above across your 3-year BA/BAS.

Prior to commencing honours, you will need to ensure you have completed all other requirements of the Bachelor of Arts or other bachelor degree as well as 12 credit points of Open Learning Environment (OLE) units which is a requirement of the Bachelor of Advanced Studies.

Honours in Theatre and Performance Studies requires 48 credit points including:

- 18 credit points of 4000-level Honours seminar units
- 30 credit points of 4000-level Honours thesis and casebook units

Students in Theatre and Performance Studies Honours have had placements with companies such as Sport for Jove, Belvoir St Theatre, Sydney Dance Company, Griffin Theatre Co, Monkey Baa, Bell Shakespeare Players Company, Australian Performance Exchange and with independent artists such as Nikki Heywood.

Honours theses have explored diverse understandings of performance such as: queer performance on TikTok; disability and intersectionality; musical theatre; First Nations performance and identity; stand-up comedy; and placemaking in Western Sydney.

Bachelor of Arts, progressing to 4th Year Honours (Sample Pathway)					
Year 1	Sem 1	PRFM1601 Making Theatre: The Work of the Director	Bachelor of Arts Core: FASS1000 Studying Arts and Social Sciences	1000 level unit	1000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM1000 Selective Unit	1000 level unit	1000 level unit	1000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
Year 2	Sem 1	PRFM2601 (Core) Being There: Theories of Performance	2000 level unit	Open Learning Environment (OLE) units	2000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM2000 Selective Unit	PRFM2000 Selective Unit	Open Learning Environment (OLE) units	2000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
Year 3	Sem 1	PRFM3961 (Core) Rehearsal Studies	Elective unit from Table A or Table S	3000 level unit in another major from Table A or S	2000/3000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM3000 Theatre and Performance Studies Selective Unit	FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact	FASS3333 Industry and Community Project	3000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
Year 4	Sem 1	PRFM4116 Critical Theory and Performance	PRFM4113 Research Methodologies 1	PRFM4117 Embodiment or PRFM4118 Contemporary Performance	PRFM4111 Honours Thesis/Casebook 1
	Sem 2	PRFM4112 Honours Thesis/Casebook 2			

\* Table S: University shared pool of majors, minors and units of study

\*\* A second major is required but a minor is optional

\*\*\* These units may be taken in third year, and minor units or electives may be taken in fourth year

\*\*\*\* TAPS = Theatre and Performance Studies

## Advanced coursework

As an alternative to a research-focused Honours program in 4th year, there is an Advanced Coursework model for the final year of the Bachelor of Advanced Studies, co-taught across the disciplines of the School of Art, Communication and English (SACE). Students taking this pathway in their 4th year will engage in advanced seminars that complement their individual research in project units. In SACE, this may be within the study of arts-based practices such as visual art, film, performance and writing, as well as literature, or live and digitised media. Students will have the opportunity to apply disciplinary knowledges and methodologies to the legacies of the past, present and possible futures in the areas of communication, technology, literature and art in creative ways.

Advanced Coursework requires completion of a minimum of 24 credit points, including:

- 12 credit points of Advanced Coursework units of study
- 12 credit points of Advanced Coursework Project units of study

A student can use the remaining 24 credit points that are available to them within the required total of 48 credit points for the BAS degree in order to complete their second major or (if they have already completed a second major) to take additional units of study from the menu available to BAS students in the Sydney Student enrolment system. These additional units could be any 1000-level, 2000-level, 3000-level or 4000-level offerings for which the student meets pre-requisites.

Advanced Coursework Track: Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies (Sample Pathway)					
Year 1	Sem 1	PRFM1601 Making Theatre: The Work of the Director	Bachelor of Arts Core: FASS1000 Studying Arts and Social Sciences	1000 level unit	1000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM1000 Selective Unit	1000 level unit	1000 level unit	1000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
Year 2	Sem 1	PRFM2601 (Core) Being There: Theories of Performance	2000 level unit	Elective unit/minor from Table A or Table Ss	2000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM2000 Selective Unit	PRFM2000 Selective Unit	Elective unit/minor from Table A or Table Ss	2000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
Year 3	Sem 1	PRFM3961 (Core) Rehearsal Studies	Elective unit from Table A or Table S	Elective unit/minor from Table A or Table S	2000/3000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	PRFM3000 Theatre and Performance Studies Selective Unit	FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact	Elective unit/minor from Table A or Table S	3000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
Year 4	Sem 1	Selective: SLAM4004 Working the arts and Humanities or CAVA4001 Art Writing and Artists	Project unit: SLAM4001 SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A	Elective unit/minor from Table A or Table S	3000 level unit in another major from Table A or S
	Sem 2	Selective: SLAM4003 Meaning in the Anthropocene	Project unit: SLAM4002 SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B	Elective unit/minor from Table A or Table S	FASS3333 Industry and Community Project

## Units of Study

Undergraduate Program taught within Theatre and Performance Studies:

### 1000-level units of study

#### Core

PRFM1601 Making Theatre: The Work of the Director

#### Selective

PRFM1602 Dangerous Performances

PRFM1603 Placemaking and Performance

### 2000-level units of study

#### Core

PRFM2601 Being There: Theories of Performance

#### Selective

PRFM2602 Performance: Production & Interpretation

PRFM2603 Between Improvisation and Text

PRFM2605 Rehearsing Shakespeare

PRFM2607 Performance Histories

PRFM2608 Playing Politics

PRFM2609 Approaches to Acting

### 3000-level units of study

#### Core

PRFM3961 Rehearsal Studies

#### Selective

PRFM3607 Production Strategies for Performance

PRFM3611 Dramaturgy

PRFM3621 Ritual, Play and Performance

PRFM3622 Sociology of Theatre

PRFM3624 Performance Studio

PRFM3625 Documentary Theatre

CHNS3651 Chinese Drama and Theatre

### Advanced Coursework units of study

SLAM4003

Meaning in the Anthropocene

SLAM4004

Working the Arts and Humanities

CAVA4001

Art Writing and Artists

### Advanced Project Coursework units of study

SLAM4001

SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A

SLAM4002

SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B

FASS4901

Advanced Industry and Community Project A

FASS4902

Advanced Industry and Community Project B

### Honours Thesis and Casebook units

PRFM4111

Theatre and Performance Studies Honours Thesis

PRFM4112

Theatre and Performance Studies Casebook

### Seminar units

PRFM4113

Research Methodologies 1

PRFM4116

Critical Theory and Performance

PRFM4117

Embodiment

PRFM4118

Contemporary Performance

### Interdisciplinary Project unit of study

Where this major is being completed as a first major towards a degree, students should ensure that the Interdisciplinary Impact unit of study is undertaken. Where this major is being completed as a second major from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences towards a degree, the Industry and Community Project unit of study is the appropriate unit to select.

FASS3333 Industry and Community Project

FASS3999 Interdisciplinary Impact

\*Please note that some units of study are not taught every academic year. Some units are taught on a rotational basis.



## 2023 Units of Study

### Semester 1

PRFM1601	Making Theatre: The Work of the Director
PRFM2601	Being There: Theories of Performance
PRFM2605	Rehearsing Shakespeare
PRFM3622	Sociology of Theatre
PRFM3961	Rehearsal Studies
PRFM4111	Theatre & Performance Studies Honours Thesis
PRFM4112	Theatre & Performance Studies Casebook
PRFM4113	Research Methodologies 1
PRFM4117	Embodiment
PRFM4118	Contemporary Performance
SLAM4001	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A
SLAM4002	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B
SLAM4004	Working the Arts and Humanities
PRFM5900	Contemporary Performance
PRFM5902	Rehearsal Studies

### Semester 2

PRFM1602	Dangerous Performances
PRFM1603	Placemaking and Performance
PRFM2602	Performance: Production and Interpretation
PRFM2608	Playing Politics
PRFM3611	Dramaturgy
PRFM3624	Performance Studio
PRFM4111	Theatre & Performance Studies Honours Thesis
PRFM4112	Theatre & Performance Studies Casebook
SLAM4001	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A
SLAM4002	SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B
SLAM4003	Meaning in the Anthropocene

## Unit of Study descriptions

### 1000 Level Units

#### **PRFM1601 Making Theatre: The Work of the Director**

What is involved in creating a work of theatre? This unit introduces students to the craft of directing theatre, both through a study of the historical emergence of the director and the practices involved, and participation in practical workshops in which key skills, involving creative leadership and collaboration, are developed and put to work. Students will then reflect upon this work, applying theoretical and methodological approaches in theatre and performance studies, including embodiment theory, ethnography, and dramaturgy. No theatre-making experience is required.

#### **PRFM1602 Dangerous Performances**

Performance has long been associated with risk: in the popular imagination, among performers, writers and theorists. From breathless narratives of courageous actors taking on risky roles, to the extremes of performance art, contemporary performance and political action, you will explore and understand performance pushed to the limits.

#### **PRFM1603 Placemaking and Performance**

Using a range of case studies, including examples of local theatre and performance companies working in Sydney, students will explore the relationship between place and performance. They will learn techniques and theories of site-specific performance: that is, performance which creatively responds to built and natural environments, to contested histories, and to complex cultural politics. They will then apply those techniques to create their own site-specific performance works on University of Sydney campuses. Students will produce portfolios documenting the performance work they have created.

### 2000 Level Units

#### **PRFM2601 Being There: Theories of Performance**

What if all the world really is a stage? In this unit, you will learn key theories and conceptual tools for analysing the broad spectrum of performance events that lie beyond what is conventionally associated with the term 'theatre'. You will conduct original research, focusing on how performance (re)constitutes identity and (re)forms a culture..

#### **PRFM2602 Performance: Production and Interpretation**

How do the members of an audience make meaning from their experience of theatrical performance? How

(and to what extent) can theatre-makers guide this process through the use of text, movement, spatial design, costuming, lighting, sound and other production elements? In this unit of study, students will attend events at a number of Sydney theatres and develop a critical language for analysing live performance. Practical workshops will also provide an introduction to theatre production techniques.

#### **PRFM2603 Between Improvisation and Text: Making Performance**

All performances exist at the interface of oral and literate culture, involving combinations of 'fixed' and 'free' elements. In this unit, you will explore, through practical workshops and group research, the flexibility of traditional genres like Commedia dell'Arte as well as contemporary forms of performance where improvisation can occur.

#### **PRFM2605 Rehearsing Shakespeare**

How did actors in Shakespeare's time rehearse a play? In this unit, students will explore rehearsal in the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre from part-playing, cueing, and exploring the relationship between voice and gesture, through to the general rehearsal. Students will have the opportunity to workshop selected scenes from plays by Shakespeare or his contemporaries in order to understand how a Renaissance English actor embodied their part.

#### **PRFM2607 Performance Histories**

This unit of study reflects on the issues and methods that constitute theatre history and its relationship to Performance Studies. We will consider the variety of source materials on which histories of performance are based and some of the genres of historical scholarship that are useful for historians. We will also study how descriptions and theorisations of creative practices from the past are influential in the work of contemporary theatre and performance practitioners.

#### **PRFM2608 Playing Politics**

How are theatrical representation and political representation enmeshed? How do politicians, in Question Time or during an election campaign, project an image of themselves as worthy of our support? How do social movements advance their claims through performative protest actions? Why has performance become central to so many political processes? This unit tackles such questions through a combination of fieldwork, media/performance analysis, and a closely supervised original group research project.

### **PRFM2609 Approaches to Acting**

In this unit you will survey a range of acting practices from the seventeenth century to the present, and interrogate their truth claims in order to reveal the social, cultural and historical contingency of each approach. The unit invites you to examine how these different approaches to acting have been influenced by implicit theories of the self.

## **3000 Level Units**

### **PRFM3607 Production Strategies for Performance**

This unit offers an introduction to theatre lighting, sound design and audiovisual projection. Through practical workshops and site visits, students will develop some basic technical skills as well as an understanding of the creative contribution that production personnel can bring to the realisation of performance concepts.

### **PRFM3611 Dramaturgy**

What is a dramaturg? How do you read a play? Write a non-text based performance? Prepare a production of a classic play? This unit of study will investigate the various roles of the dramaturg, focusing on new play dramaturgy, background research for historical texts, translation and the role of the dramaturg as co-creator in non-text-based work. This unit will include practical exercises in analysing and workshopping a new Australian play or text for performance.

### **PRFM3621 Ritual, Play and Performance**

Setting out from a distinction between special events and everyday life, you will investigate fundamental kinds of performative events, including play, ritual, work and carnival, developing an understanding of culture as performance. You will learn and apply ethnographic approaches to a range of contemporary case studies.

### **PRFM3622 Sociology of Theatre**

Art is created in a complex cultural field, the effects of which influence and shape the work itself. This unit develops an understanding of theatrical production in Australia, using Bourdieu's sociological theory, and practically, as students create viable performing arts companies, covering production management, budgeting and programming.

### **PRFM3624 Performance Studio**

In collaboration with an artist/artists in residence, students will experience training and/or rehearsal and/or creative development practices geared towards public performance. Guided by the artists and lecturers, students will participate physically, conceptually, and creatively through the course of intensive workshops,

framed by preparatory and post-experience seminars. Students will keep a journal of the experience, and will prepare a presentation and research paper critically reflecting upon the workshops, employing methodologies and theoretical perspectives from the Major.

### **PRFM3625 Documentary Theatre**

In recent decades, there has been an explosion of interest in what is sometimes called "non-fiction theatre" or "reality theatre". Forms such as documentary theatre, verbatim, solo autobiographical shows, lecture performances, and performance ethnography—while they are often very different stylistically—involve negotiating similar dramaturgical, ethical and political questions. In this unit, we will address these issues primarily through practice. You will select a topic of interest, conduct original research, edit transcripts and archival materials into a script, rehearse and perform a short documentary piece. Key theoretical readings and rich case studies will help inform your practice.

### **PRFM3961 Rehearsal Studies**

Rehearsal is typically off-limits to outsiders but the exceptional creativity of performance-makers in this 'hidden world' makes it a compelling focus of performance research. This unit examines accounts of rehearsal by playwrights, actors, directors, journalists and academics, as well as video recordings, prompt books and other rehearsal documentation. We will also approach the study of rehearsal through ethnographic theory, reading key texts on participant-observation fieldwork and trying out these methods through small-scale practical exercises.

### **FASS3333 Industry and Community Project**

This unit is designed for third year students to undertake a project that allows them to work with one of the University's industry and community partners. Students will work in teams on a real-world problem provided by the partner. This experience will allow students to apply their academic skills and disciplinary knowledge to a real-world issue in an authentic and meaningful way.

### **PRFM3999 Interdisciplinary Impact**

Interdisciplinarity is a key skill in fostering agility in life and work. This unit provides learning experiences that build students' skills, knowledge and understanding of the application of their disciplinary background to interdisciplinary contexts. In this unit, students will work in teams and develop interdisciplinarity skills through problem-based learning projects responding to 'real world problems'.

## 4000 Level Units

### **SLAM4001 SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures A**

Each student will develop, in consultation with their teacher, a project involving the application of contemporary scholarship in their discipline to a question arising within their disciplinary specialisation, for example: issues concerned with cultural, institutional or digital archives (with links to Fisher Library or other libraries/online data repositories/community organisations); the creation and development of contemporary practice[s]; or how cultural practices, from arts-based work through to the practice of language, address futures, dystopian, utopian or otherwise.

### **SLAM4002 SLAM Project: Pasts, Presents, Futures B**

Each student will complete, in consultation with their teacher, a project involving the application of contemporary scholarship in their discipline to a question arising within their disciplinary specialisation, for example: issues concerned with cultural, institutional or digital archives (with links to Fisher Library or other libraries/online data repositories/community organisations); the creation and development of contemporary practice[s]; or how cultural practices, from arts-based work through to the practice of language, address futures, dystopian, utopian or otherwise.

### **SLAM4003 Meaning in the Anthropocene**

This unit focuses on key themes for understanding meaning in the Anthropocene, an age of human planetary impact: human-nature relations, social and environmental activism. Students will learn how the various disciplines in the School of Art, Communication and English engage with the Anthropocene in literary, visual, digital and performative modes. Collaborating with the Sydney Environment Institute, the unit underscores the contribution of the arts to the ethics and aesthetics of meaning in an age of global economic crisis. This unit is team-taught and assessment will accommodate a student's research interests.

### **SLAM4004 Working the Arts and Humanities**

We will explore how we might think about 'work' in the arts and humanities. First: works of art, culture, literature, film. What is a work of art? How do works 'work'? How do they function? Second, labour in the humanities and arts: the industrial conditions cultural work in contemporary conditions of precarity and uberisation? Third, how the arts and humanities are put to work. What values are associated with these fields, to the labour involved? How are the knowledges generated in the arts and humanities put to use, appropriated, marginalised, dismissed? The

unit is team taught and accessible to students from diverse backgrounds; assessment tailored to student's research interests.

### **PRFM4111 Theatre and Performance Studies Honours Thesis**

In this unit you will research, write and submit your substantial, independent research project in Theatre and Performance Studies. Regular meetings with a supervisor approved by the Discipline of Theatre and Performance Studies Honours Coordinator will guide your progress. You will submit drafts at agreed times, and develop your expertise in relevant research methods and analytical skills as well as in the subject matter of your specialist topic.

### **PRFM4112 Theatre and Performance Studies Casebook**

In this unit, you will produce a substantial casebook based on your fieldwork placement in PRFM4115 Inside Rehearsal. Grounded in principles of 'thick description' and rehearsal ethnography, the casebook will provide you with the opportunity to produce a substantial piece of writing that reflects and reports on the work of professional performance makers.

### **PRFM4113 Research Methodologies 1**

In this seminar you will be introduced to the principles of Human Ethics in research and will write and submit an ethics application in preparation for your semester 2 research. You will also be given additional training in using research databases, bibliographic software, referencing, and quantitative and qualitative data collection. You will also revise key theoretical principles used in theatre and performance analysis.

### **PRFM4116 Critical Theory and Performance**

The discipline of Performance Studies has drawn upon a wide range of theoretical positions and resources, from semiotics to New Historicism, cultural studies, feminism, psychoanalysis, discourse theory, deconstruction, phenomenology and hermeneutics. This unit functions as an advanced reading seminar in which you will consider some key theoretical texts and examine how they have been applied to the analysis of performance.





De Quincey Co, Image-Lab in the Rex Cramphorn Studio, 2022.  
(L-R: Kristina Mah, Anna White, Alan Schacher, Weizen Ho, Elly Brickhill,  
Frank van de Ven, Eliza Scott, Joshua Freedman, Lynne Santos)  
Photo: Vsevolod Vlaskine.

#### **PRFM4117 Embodiment**

Ways of thinking about how you perceive and make sense of objects, time, place, space, yourselves and others, are pertinent to the study of all aspects of performance. Western thought has not always trusted either the body or experience as valid sources of knowledge about the world. In this unit of study you will explore how theories of embodiment affect research in/of performance and, as a result, question the continued prevalence of mind/body, theory/practice dichotomies.

#### **PRFM4118 Contemporary Performance**

In this unit you will examine the history, development and theoretical influences on contemporary performance genres, with a specific focus on what is happening at venues in Sydney today. Taking advantage of the discipline's artists-in-residence program, you will develop analyses and a practical understanding of how new work is developed.

## Coursework Program

The PRFM postgraduate coursework units below are available to research students (from Theatre and Performance Studies or other disciplines) who are looking for these kinds of theoretical and methodological tools to fulfill the coursework component of their research degree.

Students who are enrolled in Masters degrees that are entirely by coursework (eg. Masters students in Liberal Studies or Media and Communications) may also be able to take these units as selectives within their degree. Please contact the Chair of Theatre and Performance Studies for more advice.

PRFM5900	Contemporary Performance
PRFM5901	Critical Theory and Performance
PRFM5902	Rehearsal Studies

## 2023 Units of Study

Postgraduate program taught within the department

### Semester 1

PRFM5900	Contemporary Performance
PRFM5902	Rehearsal Studies

### PRFM5900 Contemporary Performance

In this unit you will examine the history, development and theoretical influences on contemporary performance genres, with a specific focus on what is happening at venues in Sydney today. Taking advantage of the department's artists-in-residence program, you will develop analyses and a practical understanding of how new work is developed.

### PRFM5902 Rehearsal Studies

This unit prepares students for the task of observing and analysing rehearsal practices (or training, creative development etc) in theatre and other genres of aesthetic performance. We will canvass some of the key theoretical and methodological issues of ethnographic research, not only through readings but also through practical tasks involving video recordings of rehearsal, prompt books and other materials held in the department's unique archive.

Note: not every unit is offered every year. Full details regarding pre-requisites, degree requirements and how to enrol can be found on the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences website.

## Postgraduate Program

### Research Degrees

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The Discipline offers the following postgraduate research degrees:

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)  
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)  
Master of Arts (Research)

The Discipline of Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Sydney offers postgraduates an internationally renowned program of teaching and research which covers the whole extended field of aesthetic, social and everyday performances: from theatre, dance, popular music and contemporary performance through to the performative dimensions of rituals, sport, politics and the law.

All our academic staff are leading researchers as well as experienced practitioners. We have graduates who are now working as lecturers at universities across Australia and in the UK. Others are developing their careers as performance-makers, drama teachers, designers, arts administrators, curators and researchers in related fields. We also often host international scholars through such prestigious schemes as the Fulbright program and the Endeavour Fellowship.

The Department supports a great deal of innovative contemporary performance through an artists-in-residence program. This programme has involved companies such as Griffin Theatre, Performance Space, My Darling Patricia, Opera Australia, Monkey Baa Theatre, De Quincey Company, Siren Theatre, The Fondue Set, Version 1.0 and individual performance makers like Nigel Kellaway, Martin del Amo, and Gail Priest. This program also provides numerous opportunities for students to become involved in participant-observation fieldwork.

### Options for Postgraduate Study

Depending on your previous academic experience and the nature of your interests, the available options include:

#### **Master of Arts (Research), Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**

These research degrees vary in length and entry requirements, and offer different post-degree possibilities. Please contact the Theatre and Performance Studies Chair of Discipline for advice.

All research degrees include a small amount of coursework at the start of candidature, designed to help you develop the theoretical and methodological framework for your thesis.

In most cases, the research to be submitted for examination will be a more-or-less conventional scholarly thesis (although many candidates in Theatre and Performance Studies use intensely practice-engaged methods, like ethnography, to generate the material they are analysing in the thesis).

A candidate who has the requisite professional performance-making skills may be able to incorporate a creative practice-as-research component in their thesis project (though this is not common and requires the approval of your supervisory team).

Please consult the Theatre and Performance Studies website for advice on areas where we offer research supervision, and on how to prepare a thesis proposal.

## Staff

### Lawrence Ashford

**lawrence.ashford@sydney.edu.au**

Lawrence is an interdisciplinary practitioner with experience performing in film and television, devised and scripted theatre, interactive theatre, storytelling, and applied theatre programs in hospital settings. His teaching and research focuses on agency: that afforded to audiences in works of interactive theatre; to artists in the field of theatre and performance practice; and to patients encountering the healthcare system.

### Dr Barbara Campbell

**barbara.campbell@sydney.edu.au**

Barbara is a practicing artist in performance and other media and is the Project and Placements Coordinator for the discipline. Her own residency projects in the Rex Cramphorn studio from 1997–2001 were gathered into a retrospective season and collection of essays, *Flesh Winnow*, co-edited by Laura Ginters and Barbara and jointly published by Power Publications and Performance Studies in 2002.

### Dr Amanda Card

**amanda.card@sydney.edu.au**

Amanda performed with some of Australia's leading contemporary dance groups of the 1980s and on the commercial dance circuit of Japan and South East Asia. She was Executive Producer of One Extra dance company and currently researches and teaches on the history of social dance forms, intercultural performance, movement studies and theories of embodiment.

### Dr Paul Dwyer

**paul.dwyer@sydney.edu.au**

Paul teaches and writes on the intersections between politics and performance. His research on reconciliation ceremonies and restorative justice has been supported by a prestigious Australian Research Council grant. His professional theatre credits include award-winning works with version 1.0 and Belvoir Street Theatre.

### Dr Laura Ginters

**laura.ginters@sydney.edu.au**

Laura has supported the development of new plays/productions through her work as a dramaturg, script assessor and translator with,

among others, the Australian National Playwrights Conference, Playworks, PlayWriting Australia, Griffin Theatre and Company B Belvoir. She teaches and researches on dramaturgy, rehearsal studies, and German and Australian 19–20th century theatre history.

### Richard Manner

**richard.manner@sydney.edu.au**

Richard is the Technical and Education Officer at Theatre and Performance Studies. Trained as a visual artist and lighting designer, Richard has held positions at PACT Centre for Emerging Artists, and Performance Space, and has worked with many independent artists and companies nationally and internationally including De Quincey Co, Paul Dwyer and David Williams' *Grace Under Pressure* and PYT Fairfield's *Dorr-e Dari*.

### Associate Professor Ian Maxwell

**ian.maxwell@sydney.edu.au**

Ian trained as a theatre director at the Victorian College of the Arts and has worked with Opera Australia among other companies. He has published widely on popular culture (including *Phat Beats*, *Dope Rhymes*, one of the first books on Australian Hip Hop) and on the work of Rex Cramphorn, one of the key directors from the 1970s "new wave" of Australian theatre.

### Dr Glen McGillivray

**glen.mcgillivray@sydney.edu.au**

Glen was a director and acting teacher for nearly twenty years (Australian Theatre for Young People, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Actors Centre, NIDA Open Program, etc.). Glen's research explores how emotions were embodied in the eighteenth-century theatre focussing on actor-audience relationships. He has supervised postgraduate students using arts-based practices and teaches undergraduate units on approaches to acting, rehearsing Shakespeare and directing.



## Academic Coordinators 2023

For the current list of academic coordinators, please refer to the Performance Studies webpage at [bit.ly/usyd-prfm](https://bit.ly/usyd-prfm) or email us at [SACE.enquiries@sydney.edu.au](mailto:SACE.enquiries@sydney.edu.au).

## Prizes, Scholarships and Financial Assistance

Information on prizes and scholarships, and financial assistance available through the University can be found at: [sydney.edu.au/scholarships/](https://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/)

## Policies

For information on policies that apply to current students, please visit: [sydney.edu.au/students/](https://sydney.edu.au/students/)

## Keys Dates 2023

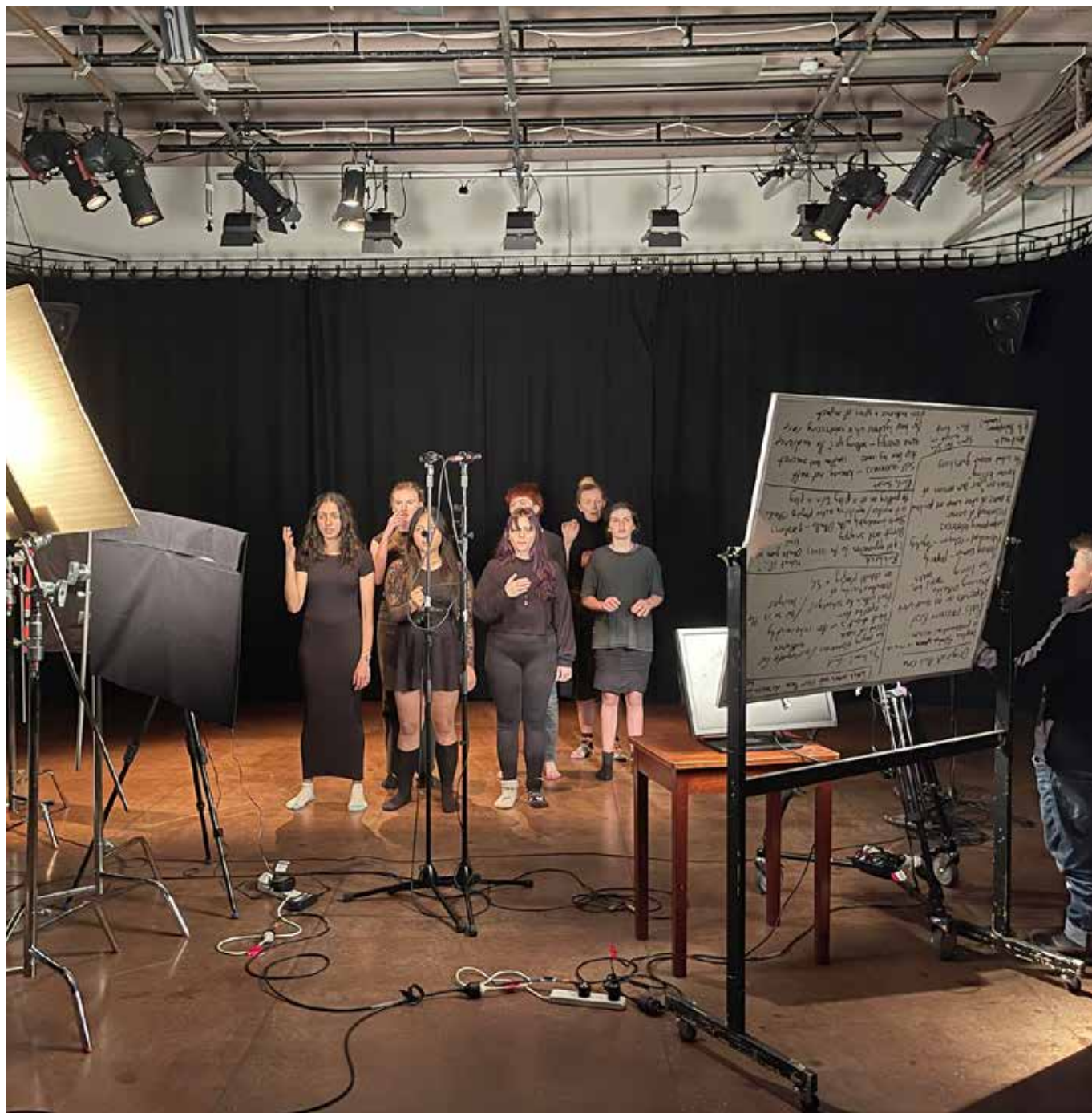
For the key dates in 2023 including semester start dates and breaks, please refer to the University webpage at [sydney.edu.au/students/study-dates.html](https://sydney.edu.au/students/study-dates.html).



Mia Lazzarini, student in PRFM2602: Performance Production and Interpretation, Rex Cramphorn Studio, 2013.  
Photo: Richard Manner.



Artist-in-residence Kathy Cogill showing her work-in-development, *The Channel* in the Rex Cramphorn Studio, 2020. Photo: Richard Manner.



The choir from The House that Dan Built being recorded during Vic McEwan's Facial Nerve Clinic residency in The Rex Cramphorn Studio as part of Vic's PhD research, 2021. Photo: Vic McEwan.

# Theatre and Performance Studies

**School of Art, Communication and English (SACE)  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences**

[sydney.edu.au/study](http://sydney.edu.au/study)  
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