

Marilyn I. Walker
School of Fine &
Performing Arts

Department of
Dramatic Arts
Brock University
Niagara Region
1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way
St. Catharines, ON
L2S 3A1 Canada
T 905 688 5550 x5255
dramatic@brocku.ca

Brock University
Faculty of Humanities

DART 3P94: Theatre Criticism
Online intensive, June 2-12, 2020

This course introduces students to the practical craft of and the theoretical background to theatre criticism. The activity of the course is divided between seeing productions and writing reviews of them; workshopping these reviews with the instructor and classmates; editing the reviews towards assessed submission, and eventual possible publication on a dedicated course blogsite; reading and discussing relevant academic and journalistic articles about criticism; and learning about alternative, digital, performative, and visual forms of criticism.

The instruction of this summertime intensive will be online, conducted using a combination of video conferencing, online chatrooms, animated Powerpoint lectures, and related formats. There will be designated course times during which students will be required to be virtually present; other activities during the two-week course will include reading/class preparation; writing and editing reviews and other forms of written response to theatre; creating digital critical responses using social media and other online platforms; participating in digital forums; and developing a summative criticism project. A final research paper about criticism will be due at the end of June.

Students will be required to see a minimum of four theatre productions as part of the course. If live theatre is being performed in June, students will have the option of going to see live performances, and will undertake these theatre visits themselves - there will be no organized course field trips, though the instructor will offer advice about acquiring affordable tickets, and students may wish to organize carpools together. There is also the option to watch theatre performances that have been captured on video; these will be made available to students online. It may be that a combination of live and recorded viewing is possible, or all the performances may be viewed online.

This is an intensive course experience and prospective students are advised to be prepared to engage with it full-time during the two weeks of the course.

Prerequisite(s) are DART 2P96 and 2Q92 (2F94) or permission of the department. Interested students are invited to write to the instructor, Prof. Karen Fricker (kfricker@brocku.ca), as she is willing to consider relevant course experiences from other programs than DART.

Karen Fricker is an associate professor in Dramatic Arts at Brock, a theatre critic at the Toronto Star, and vice-president of the Canadian Theatre Critics Association.