

**Prof. Stephen Byrnes**  
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**EN 256: Poetry & Drama**  
**Syllabus: Summer 1999**

**Texts Required:**     *Sound and Sense* by Thomas Arp  
                              *The Heath Introduction to Drama* by Jordan Miller

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The purpose of both drama and poetry is to entertain. Drama entertains by telling stories onstage, captivating the audience with gripping situations, clever dialogue, and developed characters. Dramas can be tragic, comic, stylistic, or realistic. This class will study both the written texts of plays, as well as any necessary background relevant to them or the time periods they were written in, and their performances by skilled actors.

Poetry is language that delivers a profound message to its reader in condensed, concentrated language. We will examine how poetry uses imagery, symbolism, realism, meaning, tone, rhyme, allusion, and other techniques to convey information in an entertaining way.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To recognize the elements of good drama;
2. To recognize the elements of good poetry;
3. To become familiar with great poetic and dramatic works;
4. To understand the historical background of several dramatic pieces.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Attendance:** This class meets only once a week for four hours. Missing class, then, is not a good idea. If you must be absent, you are responsible for the work covered in that class, including viewing any performances we may have shown.

**Reading:** Unless told otherwise, all plays should be read IN ADVANCE.

**Class Work:** There will be a short, in-class essay on most of the plays in the syllabus. These are to insure that you've read the play and to have you think about major issues at work in each play. These essays together will make up 40% of your grade.

**Final Exam:** The final will be on the last day of class. It counts for 50% of your grade.

**Participation:** We will be discussing themes in the plays and poems and your input is required. Your participation will make up the remaining 10% of your grade.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

- July 10: Intros; *Oedipus Rex*; Sound & Sense, chs. 1 and 2.
- July 17: *Oedipus Rex*; *The Lysistrata*; Sound & Sense, chs 3 and 4; essay.
- July 24: *Hamlet*; Sound & Sense, chs 5 and 6; essay.
- July 31: *A Doll's House*; Sound & Sense, chs 7 and 8; essay.
- August 7: *A Raisin in the Sun*; Sound & Sense, chs 9 and 10; essay.
- August 14: *The Glass Menagerie*; Sound and Sense, chs 11 and 12; essay.
- August 21: *Death of a Salesman*; Sound and Sense, chs 13 and 14; essay.
- August 28: *Death of a Salesman*; Sound and Sense, chs 15 and 16.
- Sept. 4: 'Night Mother'; selected poems; essay; review sheet for final distributed.
- Sept. 11: Selected poems; Final Exam.