

**Kingston
University**
London

Photo by Jenny Dume Production Project 2011, Ionesco's Rhinoceros

Drama BA(Hons)

single/joint honours

■ FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

www.kingston.ac.uk/drama



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Our programme

Drama at Kingston has been praised by our external examiners for its success in integrating the study of practice, history and theory. Developing an understanding of how these three aspects of drama feed into and impact upon each other lies at the heart of our teaching and course structure. The course emphasises the ensemble ethos of theatre-making, helping you to gain important teamworking and communication skills that will be of benefit to you in all walks of professional life.

As a drama student you will have the opportunity to:

- investigate the past, present and future of drama and theatre as it relates to society and culture;
- write, devise, perform, direct and design both within the curriculum and in extracurricular productions;
- develop your work through productions at outside venues such as the Edinburgh and Camden Fringe Festivals and the International Youth Arts Festival at Kingston's Rose Theatre; and
- make the most of London's wonderful theatre scene by seeing productions, joining in with events and participating in workshops with some of the leading professionals in the field.

You will benefit from our association with major figures such as:

- Sir Peter Hall, the internationally renowned director, founder of the Royal Shakespeare Company and former artistic director of the National Theatre, who is Kingston University's Chancellor; and
- Stephen Unwin, artistic director of the Rose Theatre, who is Visiting Professor of Drama.

A word from Sir Peter Hall

Theatre director and Chancellor of Kingston University

"The drama of the past and present gives us access to the greatest treasure house of humanist thought and feeling in history. Putting on a play is a group activity which is a small metaphor for a healthy tribe, a healthy country, even a healthy world. Studying drama is a way of studying life. Kingston, with its vibrant town, new theatre and its University dedicated to creativity is uniquely placed to make and appreciate the art of the future."

Extracurricular performances

Kingston University drama students perform in a variety of productions under the banner of KUDOS – Kingston University Drama On Stage. In 2011 they performed in *A Hero of Our Time* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and undergraduates and postgraduates joined forces to present a programme of their own writing and devising at the Camden Fringe. Over a hundred students were involved in the 2011 International Youth Arts Festival at the Rose Theatre, where highlights included a collaboration between Kingston, Southampton and Florida International universities on *Body and Soul* – a play about human trafficking – and a production of Steven Berkoff's *Greek*, which was originally created as an in-house extracurricular production.

The lively extracurricular programme runs throughout the year. Drama students produce and create these productions themselves (with support from staff), providing them with a great opportunity to gain practical experience. Past productions have included *Othello*, *After Miss Julie* and *The Lord of the Flies*. Undergraduate students have also organised evenings of cabaret and clowning at local venues, have performed in local carnivals and worked with our MA students on a range of projects.

In 2011, playwright Winsome Pinnock, a member of the Drama staff team, set up a playreading group where students can share and develop their own writing.

Careers

Kingston Drama graduates have gone on to work in theatre as actors, writers, directors, technicians and producers. Ben Barnes, who graduated in 2004 and is well known for his film role as Prince Caspian, also played the lead role in Trevor Nunn's production of *Birdsong* at the Comedy Theatre in London's West End (2010–11); while a group of 2006 graduates set up their own company, Tin Horse, which has been going strong ever since. Other graduates are working within the wider performance industry in community and outreach, marketing and publicity or theatre administration, or have moved onto postgraduate study in areas such as drama education or dramatherapy.

A drama degree also equips students with skills that make them desirable to employers in a wide range of other professional areas. Your initiative and problem-solving skills, teamwork, communicative skills, imagination and creativity, as well as the analytical and research skills you gain, are increasingly recognised by the working world as highly valuable in careers, from customer and public relations or sales and marketing, to education. The creative and cultural industries are major contributors to the UK's economy, and you will have the skills they are looking for. The degree also gives you a firm academic foundation to pursue a vocational training in the theatre arts or other postgraduate study programmes.

We run a number of events for final-year students where they can seek advice, get help with CVs and meet graduates working in a range of areas.

Kingston University offers a unique programme of postgraduate training for performers, devisers, designers and writers.



Xavier de Sousa graduated in 2010 and began work that summer for the Kings Head Theatre in Islington, later becoming Theatre Manager. He is also an artist and theatre producer. He says: *"Kingston University enabled me to explore the different areas of performance with a lot of freedom, which allowed me to develop as an artist; and the lecturers gave me the confidence to go out and pursue my dreams."*

Student feedback

We use feedback from students to evaluate and develop modules, and to monitor their experiences of learning. Here are some recent comments: *"The enthusiasm that came constantly from [the tutor] – the clear passion for the subject was motivating and inspiring."* Year 1 acting module

"It opened my mind up to different approaches to Shakespeare and ways to explore the text." Year 2 Shakespeare module

"The workshops were dynamic and fun." Year 2 Devising module

"The academic content was fantastic." Year 3 Renaissance Theatre module



"Kingston Drama department offers an exciting and rigorous study of theatre while also practically developing performance skills. I want to act and, through Kingston, I have performed and directed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Camden Fringe and The Rose Theatre." Cordelia Howard, final-year student, 2011



"Studying drama at Kingston has allowed me to explore and enjoy both reading and performing drama. The teachers are very supportive and I feel there is the freedom to take from the course what inspires me most. I'm really enjoying working with MA students on this year's devised production for the Camden Fringe." Sam Kozlowski, 2nd-year student, 2011

What you will study

The Drama degree focuses on four topic strands that run through all three years of the course: Performance Histories; Performance Vocabularies and Methods; Text and Performance; Performance and Culture. Each of these strands integrates theory and practice, and, throughout your studies, you will be encouraged to explore how these complementary areas of study relate to and impact upon each other.

Performance Histories

This strand looks at how theatre and drama change and develop over time. It considers the different ways in which people have thought about and staged performances; and the changing aims and expectations of theatre artists and audiences. Year 1 offers a historical overview and then, in Year 2 and 3 option modules, you can focus on important eras such as that of Renaissance Theatre, Shakespeare, Melodrama, Naturalism and Postmodernism.

Performance Vocabularies and Methods

This strand is all about understanding and practising different 'languages' of theatre performance and production. You begin, in Year 1, with a practically based exploration of essential elements of performance: body, voice, space, time, shape and rhythm, drawing on techniques and approaches such as Anne Bogart's 'Viewpoints' or Mike Pearson's 'In All Languages'. Years 2 and 3 then carry these skills into the context of devising (making theatre that does not begin with a script) and offers opportunities to study how devisers operate in specific contexts, such as that of community and applied theatre.

Text and Performance

This strand focuses on the written word – both the playscript and related texts such as analyses, critiques and reviews. It also draws on the skills you develop in Vocabularies and Methods and explores how these are applied to the craft of the actor, director and designer. Year 1 serves as a foundation. You undertake an in-depth investigation of a single text, studying it on the page, seeing it in production at a London theatre, reading a range of related contextual and critical material and experimenting with your own ideas about performance and staging. In Years 2 and 3, this strand extends into the study of contemporary plays and options in directing, design and scriptwriting.

Performance and Culture

This strand explores the relationship of performance to society. What you learn here underpins all the other strands because it enables you to understand how theatre can be interpreted from a range of social, cultural and political

viewpoints. Year 1 introduces you to some of these perspectives, for instance, Feminism, Marxism and Post-Colonial theories, and you can pick up any of these and study them in greater depth through both theory and practice in Years 2 and 3. There are also option modules in popular performance, including commedia dell'arte, clown and cabaret and variety performance.

Core and option modules

The first year of the Drama course comprises core modules, but Years 2 and 3 offer an increasing level of choice via a range of option modules. In 2011, our external examiner remarked that he was "very impressed by the range and variety of work and experience made available to the students."

The number of modules taken each year and the choices available will vary depending on whether you study Drama as a full field (single honours) or as a major, half or minor field (joint honours). The module list varies from year to year as the course structure is reviewed and refined.

Production projects

In Year 3, you have the opportunity to produce a major project. In past years, a number of these projects have been selected for further performances at external venues such as the Edinburgh Fringe. You can choose whether to devise or to work from a script and what role (actor, director, designer) you want to take on. Year 3 also includes optional Special Study modules. These focus on the particular research interests of your lecturers and so can change year on year. They combine in-depth study with creative experimentation and are very popular with current students.

Tutorials and academic advisors

You will be assigned an academic advisor in Year 1 and will meet with them once a week in a group tutorial. This person will remain your advisor throughout your degree, and so will get to know you well and have an overview of your progress and development. Should you have any problems, this person will be able to point you in the right direction to get whatever help you need from Kingston's excellent student support departments.



Centre for Academic Skills and Employability (CASE)

CASE offers students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences one-to-one help with their studies. We help both undergraduate and postgraduate students with:

- researching and presenting;
- structuring and editing traditional academic writing;
- structuring and editing multimedia texts; and
- referencing

CASE provides a range of resources to enhance employability, including help with writing CVs, application forms and preparing you for interviews. Results show that students who use the centre are significantly more likely to complete their degree. As they are better equipped to act on feedback, they also tend to do better in their studies.

Why study Drama at Kingston University?

- You can study Drama either on its own as a full field or in conjunction with another subject as a major, minor or half field (see overleaf).
- You will be taught by a team with a wealth of professional experience in both drama and education.
- You will be able to work with leading practitioners and be actively involved with productions both inside and outside the University.
- We have excellent facilities, including two adaptable studio theatres, used both for teaching and performance.
- There is easy access to London's West End and South Bank, including the National Theatre, and close links with Kingston's exciting theatre, the Rose.

"Our emphasis on teaching subjects relevant to the world today, and producing graduates able to make a positive contribution to that world, makes the educational experience on offer in our Faculty at Kingston unique among universities in the United Kingdom."

Professor Martin McQuillan
Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



Drama staff

Adam Ainsworth is especially interested in popular performance and is the module leader for the Clown and Cabaret modules. His research interests include 19th-century pantomime, music hall and variety, and he is currently developing a doctoral thesis that will present a detailed history of Kingston's Empire Theatre and position it within the context of suburban culture.

Professor Ian Brown is a playwright and poet and currently Chair of the Scottish Society of Playwrights. He has edited several books on theatre and cultural issues, most recently *The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Theatre*. He was, for eight years (1986–1994), drama director at the Arts Council in England.

Professor Colin Chambers has worked for many years as a journalist and theatre critic, and was literary manager of the RSC for more than a decade. He has published widely on contemporary theatre, most recently on Black and Asian Theatre in Britain.

Dr Steve Knapper is a specialist in the style and practice of commedia dell'arte. He studied at Ecole Jacques Lecoq, and has run a small scale touring company. Steve has published a number of articles on Scaramouche and contributed a chapter to *The Cambridge Companion to Moliere*.

Dr Alex Mermikides teaches theatre-making processes and models of devising (the subject of her PhD and the recently published *Devising in Process* with Jackie Smart). She is a member of Lightwork Theatre Company and was dramaturg

on their production *Sarajevo Story* ("a rich and intelligent production", *British Theatre Guide*). Her professional practice also includes writing for the stage and radio.

Winsome Pinnock is a practising playwright. Her work includes *One Under* (2005) at the Tricycle Theatre, *Can You Keep a Secret* (1999) at the Royal National Theatre and *Mules* (1996) at the Royal Court. Several of Winsome's plays are published by Faber.

Dr Trish Reid (deputy head of School) teaches theatre history and performance in culture. She is particularly interested in how identities, especially national and gender identities, are constituted through performance, and has written quite extensively on Scottish theatre. She is currently working on *Theatre & Scotland* for the Palgrave Theatre& series.

Dr James Reynolds specialises in applied theatre, directing and devising. His PhD research and publications have investigated these practices in the work of Robert Lepage and Ex Machina, Howard Barker and The Wrestling School, and Outside Edge. He has also published on the film adaptation of graphic novels.

Jackie Smart (director of studies) specialises in physical and devised theatre. She has published *Devising in Process* with Alex Mermikides as well as work on Random Dance, Forced Entertainment, Optic and Gecko theatre companies. Jackie has directed many theatre productions with both professional and student performers.

Frank Whately has written and directed a variety of productions, many for the National Youth Music Theatre. These have been performed in many leading theatres, in the West End and on Broadway. He has won several awards and his work has been broadcast on radio and television. Frank is a director of Kingston Theatre Trust.



Photo by Julia Duzant
Harriet Davis in *Special Study: Cabaret and Variety Performance*, 2011



Want to know more?
[www.kingston.ac.uk/
drama](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/drama)

Entry requirements

Typical offer

- Single honours: 300–360 points
- Joint honours: 300–360 points, depending on combination
- Grades: A-level BBB or BBC plus 40/80 points from AS level or equivalent
- BTEC: DDD
- Units: to include three A-levels or equivalent
- Subjects: A-level or equivalent: to include Drama/Drama and Theatre Studies/Performing Arts/English Literature (100 points required). General Studies and Native Language A-levels will only be accepted when one of four A-levels.
- Key Skills: points not accepted in tariff
- Plus GCSE: Mathematics and English (grade A–C required)

Further requirements for combinations

Please see the course webpage for full details.

International students

All non-UK applicants must meet our English language requirements. For this course it is IELTS of 6.5 overall, with special conditions for students who require a Tier-4 student visa. Please make sure you read our full guidance about English language requirements (see the course webpage), which includes details of other qualifications we'll consider.

Other entry routes

We will consider a range of alternative qualifications or experience that are equivalent to the typical offer. Applications from international students with equivalent qualifications are welcome. Please contact us for details.

Joint honours combinations

You can choose to study Drama as a single honours degree or in combination with one of the following:

- Creative Music Technologies
- Creative Writing
- Dance
- English Language & Communication
- English Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- History
- History of Art, Design & Film
- Human Rights
- International Relations
- Media & Cultural Studies
- Music
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Spanish

UCAS codes

For UCAS codes, please see the course webpage.

Contact details

Course enquiries

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Student Funding Service

T: +44 (0)20 8417 3560
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Disability and Dyslexia Support Services

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www.kingston.ac.uk/disability-and-dyslexia

International Office

T: +44 (0)20 8417 3411
www.kingston.ac.uk/international