

## 2009 MALS LONDON DRAMA AND CULTURE PROGRAM

**Primary Instructor: John M. Clum, Professor of Theater Studies and English and Chair of the Department of Theater Studies. Professor Clum is also Director of the Duke in London Drama Program, and a member of the MALS faculty. He has directed and taught this program for a number of years.**

London is one of the cultural centers of the world. It is definitely the theater capitol of the world with over one hundred productions running at any given time in a variety of theatrical venues. This course is meant to explore the role of the performing arts in the twenty-first century by experiencing theater, music, dance and art and thinking about what its meaning is for us today. What meaning to we glean from works of the past and what can drama do in our media oriented era?

*In 2009 our works and background readings will center on a theme – see below*

Before the course begins in London, participants will be asked to read a number of background works and engage in a discussion of those readings via Blackboard.

### **London Residency, June 14 – 27, 2009**

In London, the group will meet for two hour classes in the morning and will see approximately ten performances and a number of museum showings which will be the basis for class discussion. There will be discussions and workshops with visitors from the professional theater. There will be an orientation tour of London museums and group excursions to important historical sites around London.

Students will have afternoons and the weekend free to explore London and the surrounding area.

The written work will be a 15 page paper on some subject inspired by the works seen and studied in London. The topic will be chosen and approved while in London, but the paper will not be due until the end of the second summer session.

Students will be housed in Langton Close Residence Hall of University College London. All rooms are single rooms.

**In 2008 students saw twelve productions** including Shaw's PYGMALION, Brecht's GOOD SOUL OF SZECHUAN, Ibsen's ROSMERSHOLM, Shakespeare's KING LEAR, Bagnold's CHALK GARDEN and new plays PITMEN PAINTERS, THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING, HARPER REGAN and BLACK WATCH plus a performance by the Royal Ballet and the hit musical, BILLY ELLIOTT.

**In 2009** the program will focus on the ways in which drama has focused on gender politics, particularly changes in the role of women in various social contexts from Elizabethan England to the present. The group will see and study ten plays including:

Shakespeare, A WINTER'S TALE at the Old Vic Theatre directed by Sam Mendes and starring Simon Russell Beale and Ethan Hawke and/or ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL directed by Marianne Elliott at the Royal National Theatre of Great Britain. Both plays center on a man's mistreatment of a woman and his subsequent education.

Ibsen, *A DOLL'S HOUSE* starring Gillian Anderson (formerly of the X FILES) at the Donmar Warehouse. This play in which a wife walks out on her husband in order to be able to mature and find herself was one of the most celebrated and controversial plays of the nineteenth century and a battle cry for the young feminist and suffragist movements.

Chekhov, *A CHERRY ORCHARD* AT THE Old Vic Theatre, depicts an aristocratic Russian family at the cusp of enormous social change.

Puccini, *MADAMA BUTTERFLY* in the celebrated production by film director Anthony Minghella (*THE ENGLISH PATIENT*) at the English National Opera. Based on a hit American play by David Belasco and John Luther Long, Puccini's work is on one hand a picture of American arrogance when confronting another culture and the ultimate picture of a woman as faithful and long suffering. The French critic Catherine Clement has written in *Opera and the Undoing of Women* about the many operatic versions of female masochism. *Madama Butterfly* is one of the most famous examples.

The new musical, *PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT* based on the classic Australian film. What does it mean when men dress as women. Is it in some way empowering or more mockery.

Plus new works relevant to the subject.