PS[NYC]

THE PRIMARY STAGES THEATER SEMESTER IN NEW YORK CITY
This 14-week program is held at Primary Stages, one of Off-Broadway’s leading producers of new works and home of the Einhorn School of Performing Arts (ESPA), a multidisciplinary school with departments in playwriting, acting, and directing. PS[NYC] gives students maximum exposure to New York theater and the industry professionals who create it.

"I’ve worked at Primary Stages both as an actor and as a teacher at ESPA. My first sentence to my students was, ‘I rehearsed in this room.’ Their faces lit up. Suddenly they could imagine themselves part of a process of learning, growing, taking root, and blooming. They sat up straighter; they gave their best, knowing they were surrounded by both school and theater company—one foot in the present, one step into their future.”

—Joanna Gleason, ESPA Faculty, Tony Award-winning actress, Into the Woods
WHY PS[NYC]?

WHY NEW YORK CITY? New York is the perfect place to learn theater while living it. Studying in this cultural epicenter allows students to learn from working artists and to experience theater of all kinds at all stages of development while perfecting their own skills. The entire city becomes the campus: you will not only attend readings and workshops of new plays and productions on and off Broadway, but will also visit museums, galleries, and other important New York City cultural institutions—all vibrant experiences that will inform and infuse your work.

IS PS[NYC] RIGHT FOR YOU? We are looking for bright, adventurous, and enthusiastic students who love theater. A background in theater or playwriting is not essential, but you must be passionate about spending a semester exploring theater arts and new plays. Students will rarely work with such intensity, examine their art so rigorously, or learn so much.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN IN PS[NYC]? Students will not only learn what it takes to make great theater, but will sharpen their critical thinking skills as well. You will be encouraged to identify and nurture your own artistic inner voice, and will leave the program with knowledge, insight, and skills that can only be developed in an environment built on artistic excellence.

THE [NUTS AND BOLTS]

THE PS[NYC] STUDENT. PS[NYC] is designed for undergraduate liberal arts students who are interested in studying theater and playwriting. Students may be majoring in anything from creative writing or journalism to theater or English—it is not necessary to have an extensive theater background. All students interested in exploring theater in a meaningful way are encouraged to apply.

HOUSING. Primary Stages has partnered with Educational Housing Services, a respected provider of student housing. Students will stay in dorm-style residences at the New Yorker Hotel, four blocks from Primary Stages and within walking distance from the Theater District. The building boasts gym and laundry facilities, as well as Resident Advisors and group activities designed for students to meet and interact. More information can be found at STUDENTHOUSING.ORG/RESIDENCES/NEW-YORKER

DISCOVER MORE ONLINE AT PRIMARYSTAGES.ORG/PS[NYC]
PS[NYC] is committed to creating and cultivating artists and critical thinkers. To that end, students will study a variety of theater disciplines in classes taught by professional actors, directors, playwrights, and producers.

Students have the option of focusing their attention on either Theater Arts Studies or Playwriting. Within the Theater Arts Studies focus, students will explore everything from acting and design, to playwriting and directing, to producing and theater history. The Playwriting focus is designed for students who have written plays or have had at least one playwriting course at their college and would like to continue this course of study. The playwriting students will also participate in workshops in media and lyric writing.

Since our founding in 1984, Primary Stages has produced more than 100 new plays by such established playwrights as Charles Busch, Christopher Durang, Horton Foote, A.R. Gurney, Tina Howe, David Ives, and Terrence McNally, as well as mid-career and emerging playwrights like Brooke Berman, Cusi Cram, Kate Fodor, and Julia Jordan.

Primary Stages was honored with the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Body of Work, which encompasses much more than the plays we produce. We also support playwrights and develop new works through commissions, workshops, readings, and through our two flagship programs: The Dorothy Strelsin New American Writers Group, which develops many new plays every year, and the Einhorn School of Performing Arts (ESPA), which has provided a home to over 1,800 students since its inception. With these programs, we advocate for artists, helping them make important connections within the theater community.

Student work will benefit from practical guidance offered by accomplished theater professionals within the Primary Stages artistic community, while gaining important industry awareness and connections that can be used post-graduation.

There is a real sense of community and excellence that surrounds all the productions at Primary Stages. You feel it when you are working on a show and when you are sitting in their audience. Those priorities continue in their school, which offers an astounding array of classes taught by the very best in their field. I love teaching there and was inspired by the energy, commitment, and passion of the students”

—Leigh Silverman, ESPA Faculty and Director of Chinglish on Broadway

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EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES OF PLAYWRITING. This course will teach the basics of playwriting, including character, relationships, conflict, scene structure, style, language, and dramatic arc. Students will analyze a variety of texts as examples of the weekly lessons or discussion. In-class exercises will be utilized in order to develop a practical understanding of each week’s topic. Students will divide into two groups and present their scenes in class on alternating weeks. By the end of the course, students will be expected to have completed the first act of a new play. This class is for both Theater Arts Studies and Playwriting students. Since it is understood that the Playwriting students are working at a more advanced level as playwrights, they will be assigned writing exercises and a final project that forces them to explore alternative forms of playwriting and more sophisticated story structures.

CREDITS 3

COURSE OBJECTIVES To explore the basics of playwriting and to develop writing skills.

MODERN AMERICAN PLAYS AND PLAYWRIGHTS. This course will provide students with historical and aesthetic contexts regarding the development of American playwriting in the latter half of the twentieth century. The primary focus is on the Off-Broadway movement in the years after 1950; however, texts (and contexts) that planted seeds for the Off-Broadway movement will be examined as well. This class is for both Theater Arts Studies and Playwriting students.

CREDITS 3

COURSE OBJECTIVES To develop an understanding of the ways in which American playwriting developed in the twentieth century and to build critical and analytical skills through research and writing.

PERFORMING AND FINE ARTS IN PROGRESS. This course will provide full immersion into the live theater experience in New York City, offering students the opportunity to see plays and readings over the course of the semester. Weekly discussions will focus on different aspects of the production, including design, concept, direction, performance, execution, and the text/material. Coursework will also include trips to a dance event and to the opera as well as visits to several museums and galleries. Guest artists from these shows and readings will occasionally participate in the discussions. This class is for both Theater Arts Studies and Playwriting students.

CREDITS 2

COURSE OBJECTIVES To experience a mix of live Broadway, Off-Broadway, experimental theater, and other cultural attractions in New York City, and to gain a critical understanding of how plays and other performing arts events are produced, developed, and ultimately presented before an audience.

PRODUCING NEW AMERICAN PLAYS. This weekly seminar will focus on all aspects of producing on and off Broadway. Guest artists will include producers, agents, casting directors, critics, and other collaborators involved in New York theater. This class is for both Theater Arts Studies and Playwriting students.

CREDITS 2

COURSE OBJECTIVES To give a broad overview of the business of theater and the collaboration required to bring full-scale productions to the stage.

THEATER ARTS LAB. This workshop is an exploration of directing, acting, and design, allowing students to experiment with the different roles of a theater practitioner and within those disciplines, gain a better understanding, critical response, and common vocabulary. The coursework seeks to advance the students’ skills in the rehearsal room, as well as to enhance their work as collaborators and artists. The last three weeks will be dedicated to working on final projects of plays written in the playwriting class. The course will conclude with rehearsed staged readings of these plays where students will put all of these newly-acquired skills to work. This class is for Theater Arts Studies students only.

CREDITS 4

COURSE OBJECTIVES To develop an understanding of, and appreciation for, the arts of acting, directing, design, new play development, and artistic collaboration.

FIRST DRAFT LAB. Based on our highly successful New American Writers Group technique, the primary focus of this class is to create the first draft of a play. Students will bring in ten pages each week to be read aloud by other members of the class. Through this workshop process, students will participate in the feedback of their own work and that of their classmates. At the end of the semester, these works will be staged and performed by student actors and directors in Theater Arts Lab. In addition to writing, students will be introduced to a variety of play forms and structures through the works of and about well-known playwrights. By examining the choices made by these skilled and established playwrights, students will discover many theatrical and narrative techniques, allowing them to identify and strengthen their playwriting style. At the end of the semester, students will discuss the numerous opportunities for submitting plays to theaters, festivals, and competitions. This class is for Playwriting students only.

CREDITS 4

COURSE OBJECTIVE To write a full-length play employing collaboration with actors and directors in a classroom rehearsal setting, and to become familiar with the work of preeminent American playwrights.

MEET THE FACULTY AT PRIMARYSTAGES.ORG/PS[NYC]
The students coming out of Primary Stages are of the highest caliber.”
—Tanya Barfield, Playwright, ESPA Faculty, and Literary Manager of The Juilliard School

For more information about our application procedures, please visit PRIMARYSTAGES.ORG/PS[NYC]

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