



A GUIDE TO STUDYING THEATER ABROAD

Every society has its own way of expressing itself through performance. By studying theater abroad, you get a unique window into your host culture. You will also have the chance to broaden your performance style to include local traditions. In many cultures the study of theatre is rooted in religion, so don't be surprised if rituals, prayers, or other sacred practices are involved when preparing for a performance. Just like your day-to-day training at home, you will need to be open to new experiences and ways of thinking when studying theater abroad.

WHY STUDY THEATER ABROAD?

Theater is about telling stories and capturing a wide range of experiences. When you study theater abroad, you are exposed to different ways of capturing the human condition than you would at home. You get to study different performance styles in the places they originated with masters of the art form, some of whom have been training their whole lives. Contemporary Western approaches to acting often blend techniques and approaches from different places. Studying performance abroad gives you unique local knowledge to become a well-rounded performer who is able to draw on a variety of methods when approaching a role; this includes different ways of training your body to move, ways of interpreting classical texts, adapting to performing in a range of physical spaces, and much more. Technical theater artists who study abroad get exposure to some of the newest, most cutting-edge technology which may not have reached their home country yet. They also get to work in a variety of spaces that are often much older and grander than what they are used to.

LOCATIONS

Shakespeare is famous for the line "all the world's a stage," and indeed, every culture has its own approach to performance. As a result, choosing a location for theater study abroad programs must depend on your goals as a theater practitioner. Do you want to train in a premier institution for classical Western theatrical performance? Do you want to improve your stage presence and movement vocabulary with a departure from the standard realism taught in Western universities? Do you want to explore the impact of theatre on the current national consciousness and economic system? Are you interested in ritual and its intersection with gender, class, and religion? Your specific interests should dictate your choice of destination.

COURSES & PROGRAMS

Many theater courses abroad focus primarily on the performance styles of the location where you are studying. When considering when to study theater abroad, you should consider the seasons in your destination, as you want to be in your destination when there are plenty of performances to attend in your free time. In many Eastern traditions that rely on highly stylized movement and vocalizations, one specific master of the art form in a mentor-mentee setup often trains young actors. This is sometimes applied to theater practitioners coming from abroad, especially if this is your primary interest. In many other locations, it is important to train as an ensemble, so you can expect to work together in a small group.

Most universities have beginner level theater courses open to most applicants, as well as more advanced courses with prerequisites. These may be met by coursework you've taken at your home university, but you should also expect to audition or present a technical portfolio for these higher-level courses.

BENEFITS

Theater study abroad programs give you the chance to explore theater in a completely different cultural context, making you open to new techniques and experiences that make you more attractive in the professional world. In many auditions, you are going up against dozens or even hundreds of other performers with similar training and background. When you have a line on your resume about performing on the stage at the Globe Theatre in London, training in ancient movement techniques with Japanese masters, or taking theatre into the streets in Kenya, casting directors will take note. These kinds of experiences make you a more versatile performer and an attractive option for filling a wide variety of roles.

SJU SEMSTER ABROAD PROGRAMS

Please note the list of programs and courses are only listed as a guide and does not guarantee automatic approval of courses counting for SJU academic credit. You will work with both your Academic Advisor and Study Abroad Advisor to determine the program and courses to best meet your needs. All courses **must be approved** by the appropriate SJU Department Chair or Associate Dean prior to studying abroad.

- **Danish Institute for Study Abroad**
 - *Sample Courses: Birth of Modern Drama: Ibsen & Strindberg, Hamlet: Prince of Denmark*
- **Florence University of the Arts**
 - *Sample Courses: Introduction to Acting, Writing the Body: Women's Performance from the 60s to Present, Musical Theatre Performance*
- **Lancaster University, England**
 - *Sample Courses: Introduction to Theatre Studies, Modernism in the Arts, Performance Composition, Theatre Techniques, Applied Theatre Practice, British Theatre*
- **University College of Cork**
 - *Sample Courses: Texts & Context: Western Theatre, Theatre and Performance Practice, Theories of Theatre, Period Theatre & Performance*

In addition to Theater Major/Minor courses, you may also be able to take some of SJU's GEP courses while abroad, including but not limited to: Art/Lit, Social Science, Religious Difference & Philosophical Anthropology.

Can't find a program or university on our approved list that appeals to you? You can always petition to attend another study abroad program of your choosing with more information can be found on our [website](#).

NEXT STEPS

- Meet with the Study Abroad Advisor** | Learn about your options
- Meet with your Academic Advisor** | Discuss course selection
- Apply for a passport** | <http://travel.state.gov/passport>
- Apply to study abroad!** | Applications are due to the CIP office by: March 1st for the Fall semester abroad, and October 1st for the Spring semester abroad

