

LS 810: Writing and Performing the Modernist Self

Spring 2019 | Dr. Sasha Colby

Course Description

“If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.” The mythology of Paris between the wars is based in quotations like this one, the suggestion that it was one of those great moments in history – artistic ferment, social agitation, the great international community. While we address this collectivist spirit, in this course we will also be particularly attentive to revisions of self-hood that occurred in relation to the artistic, social, and political moment, and in doing so we will consider forms of memoir, autobiography, and other forms of modernist self-representation. Throughout the course we will use a variety of techniques – including close and socio-historical readings – to draw the nuances out of the texts and understand the readings in relation to each other. Our overarching method, however, will be research-creation, as students research and write an original one-act play about a modernist, direct a 5-7 minute excerpt, and perform the scene in the final class. In preparing for this assignment, we will read several variations of the form of literary biographical drama. Final performances may be one-person or ensemble productions, with an emphasis on exploring the subjectivity of the writer or artist in the inter-war Parisian context.

Course Requirements

Author/Artist presentation	10%
Play-script	35%
Statement of Intent	20%
Staging	20%
Participation and reading	15%

Required readings

Jeff Wallace, *Beginning Modernism*, Manchester UP, 2011: 0719067898, 978-0719067891

H.D., *Asphodel*, Duke UP, 1992, 0822312425, 978-0822312420

Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*, Scribner, 1996: 068482499X, 978-0684824994

Andre Breton, *Nadja*. Grove Press, 1994. 0802150268, 978-0802150264

Sarah Ruhl, *Dear Eizabeth*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014: 0865478155, 978-0865478152

David Hare, "The Judas Kiss," *David Hare Plays 3*, Faber & Faber, 2008, 0571241131, 978-0571241132

Tom Stoppard, *The Invention of Love*, Grove Press, 1998, 9780802135810, 978-0802135810

Mina Loy, *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997, 0374525072, 978-0374525071

Tom Dulack, *Incommunicado*, Dramatists Play Service 1990, 0822205653, 978-0822205654

James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Dover Thrift Editions, 1994,
9780486280509,
978-0486280509

F. Scott Fitzgerald *Tender is the Night*, Penguin, 2010. 9780141194066, 978-0141194066

LS 810 Custom Courseware, SFU Vancouver Bookstore and electronic readings and media