



Getting ready for your Drama and Theatre ALEVEL... Summer Study...

Welcome to our wonderful department at Northbrook College!

Throughout the summer we want you to get excited about your course and to prepare the following research tasks to support with your learning. This pack will also allow your Lecturer to gain an understanding of your interests and why you have selected this course.

Task 1 – Student Questionnaire

What excites you about studying at Northbrook?

What previous experience have you had as a: performer, director, designer, producer or stage manager?

What was your highlight of GCSE Drama, if studied this course previously?

What is your favourite theatre practitioner or film director – and why?

If you were a superhero, what would you be and why?

What do you find challenging about the subject and may want your Lecturer to be made aware of?

What are your plans for after your ALevel course? Will you be seeking to continue your study within the performing arts sector?

Overview:

Component 1 – Devising – Year 1

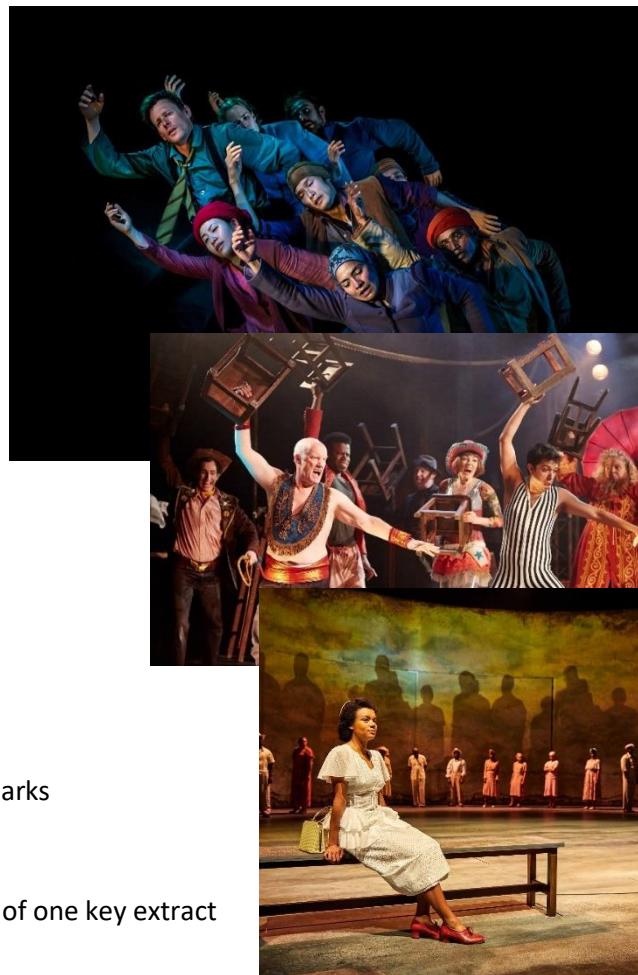
Non-examination assessment

40% of the qualification

80 marks

Content overview

- You will devise an original performance piece.
- You will use one key extract from a performance text and a theatre practitioner as a stimuli.
- For this component there are performer or designer routes available.



Component 2: Text in Performance – Year 2

Non-examination assessment 20% of the qualification 60 marks

Content overview

- You will perform a group performance/design realisation of one key extract from a performance text.
- You will perform a monologue/design realisation from one key extract from a different performance text.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice – Final exam – June 2027

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes 40% of the qualification 80 marks

Content overview

- You will write one **Live theatre evaluation** – you will practice your reviewing skills throughout the course.
- You will practically explore and study a complete performance text – focusing on how this can be realised for performance. Your selected text is **Machinal** by Sophie Treadwell.
- You will practically explore an interpretation of another complete performance text, in light of a chosen theatre practitioner – focusing on how this text could be reimaged for a contemporary audience. Your selected text is **Woyzeck** by Georg Büchner.

There are three areas to be covered.

- 1) A live theatre evaluation.
- 2) Page to stage: realisation of a complete performance text.
- 3) Interpreting one complete performance text, in light of one practitioner for a contemporary audience.

***You will study different areas of the written exam throughout your two-year course.**

Play texts you will need for this course:

Section B – Machinal by Sophie Treadwell - Nick Hern Books ISBN 9781854592118

Section C - Woyzeck, Georg Büchner (translated by John Mackendrick)



This research will support with our weekly industry discussion groups. Our industry discussions will sometimes be:

- As a whole group
- In study groups
- In one-to-ones with your Lecturer



Task 2 – Gaining knowledge of different pioneers within the devising theatre world

Watch the following three clips on different theatre companies:

- 1) Punchdrunk – The Burnt City Trailer

[\(115\) Punchdrunk's The Burnt City | Trailer - YouTube](#)

- 2) Gecko – Kin Trailer

[Kin Trailer - Gecko - Nottingham Playhouse](#)

- 3) Paperbirds – Clip from 'In a Thousand Pieces.'

[\(115\) The Paper Birds: QUICK-CLIPS - Playing the Same Character: 'In a Thousand Pieces' - YouTube](#)

Make notes on the following:

- When did the company form?
- What style of theatre are the company most known for?
- What is their creative process?
- How do the actors in the clip create mood and atmosphere?
- What are the social, cultural, political and historical themes of the company?

Now refine your notes into the following:

- The Theatre Company's Aims and Intentions
- Key features/methodologies
- Important design elements

Extended reading materials on devising theatre:

Websites:

<https://www.punchdrunkenrichment.org.uk/about-us>

<https://www.complicite.org/learning-and-creative-engagement/resources/>

Books:

Katie Mitchell – The Director's Craft – A Handbook for the Theatre

Task 3 – Part 1 - Machinal Design Challenge

***Context – Throughout year 1 and 2 of your course you will be studying Machinal by Sophie Treadwell – this is one of your studied play texts for Component 3 – Section B (Theatre Makers in Practice).**

- Read the full play of Machinal
- Read the summary of Episode 2 below and consider how you would go about designing a set for this EPISODE.

Episode 2

AT HOME - Overview

The Young Woman is now at home. It is clear from the dialogue between her and her mother that they have a negative and volatile relationship. The lack of communication between them is evident from their opening dialogue, and their contrasting views on love and marriage dominate the subject matter of the scene. The fluidity of the scene is interrupted on several occasions by different character voices: the Janitor, Woman's Voice, Small Boy's Voice, Wife and Husband. The function of the interjections is to reinforce and highlight aspects of the Mother and Young Woman's broken relationship. During this episode the Young Woman announces that George H. Jones wants to marry her. The Mother is ecstatic and begins to think about the financial benefits of her daughter marrying the 'Vice-President'. The discussion of love continues and it is clear that both characters see the act of marriage differently. A key reference to the Young Woman's hands is made and the fact that she washes the dishes in gloves is an important observation. The Young Woman's outburst plants the seed in the mind of the audience that she is unstable and desperate.

Watch the following two versions of 'Machinal' – Episode 2 and read the play text.

Clip 1 (Episode 1&2) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mysjee4eRgk&t=51s>

Clip 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Belq-2H5KrY&t=484s>

Make detailed notes on the following areas:

Knowledge – Context	Style of performance	Set Design ideas

Task 4 – Part 2 – Machinal Design Essay

You have been employed as a set designer for a new version of this production to be performed at The Theatre Royal – Brighton in February 2026.

Write a short essay on your set design ideas for this episode, please consider the following:

- Subject specific terminology
- Dimensions of your set
- Context/time period
- Colours, textures, designs

Word Bank:

Back drop/Book flat/Colours of props or setting/Cyclorama/Entrances and exits/Fabrics and Fittings/Façade/Flats/Fly Floors/Fly Tower/Fly-bar/Gauze/Magnitude/Proscenium Arch/Revolving stage/Rigging/Scale/Kabuki Drop/Theatre in the round/Thrust staging/Travelator/Traverse staging/Projections

***Submit this as an essay, try to write 2-3 sides of A4. This can be typed or handwritten.**

Task 5 – Preparing a monologue (Traditional or Contemporary)

When you start your course, you will present a monologue to your peers and Lecturer. This can be a monologue of your choice and can be selected from a theatre script or film. Try to pick a monologue that you really enjoy and want to share with your group.

This will be performed in the first two weeks of your course and will enable your Lecturer to gain an understanding of your performance skills and potential ideas for our monologue carousel that will take place throughout the course.

Consider if your monologue will be *Contemporary* or *Traditional* – read up on the differences below.

- **Classical:**

Monologues and scenes from **plays first produced before 1900** are typically labeled as *classical*. This includes works from:

- Ancient Greek and Roman periods
- Shakespearean and Elizabethan theatre
- Restoration theatre
- 18th and 19th-century works

- **Contemporary:**

Monologues and scenes from **plays produced in 1900 or later** are generally considered *contemporary*.

Your monologue must be 2-3 minutes long.

The Actor's Guide to Performing a Monologue – <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/how-to-perform-a-monologue-5067/>

**Goodluck with all your texts and see you in September!
Welcome to our team and have a wonderful summer!**

