

Module Title: Offstage London

Module Code: DRA333

Credit Value: 15

Level: 6

Pre-requisite modules:

Content Description

This module explores the political and artistic aims and effects of non-theatrical performance in the twentieth century and contemporary urban environment. It explores how the city is sometimes conceived as a dystopian site of potentially enormous social oppression. And it examines everyday, artistic and activist performative responses to this potential subjection, responses which imagine the city as, instead, a utopian site of personal and social liberation. We contextualise and historicise our analysis through studying various theoretical analyses of urban experience (e.g. Baudelaire, Benjamin, Debord, Lefebvre) as well as a variety of artistic practices (e.g. everyday interventions, activism, public art). Throughout the module, we work to map the ideas and practices we encounter, many originally grounded in Paris, in our own experiences of London. The module concludes by imagining what performance might do next to contest the particular challenges of living in the city now and to explore and exploit its opportunities. Please note that in addition to the weekly 2-hour seminar there will be regular 3-hour field-trips and/or screenings.