

## ENGLISH 252: THEATER IN ENGLAND 4 CREDITS

December 29, 2009, through January 9, 2010

**English 252: Theater in England** will be conducted in London from **Tuesday, December 29, 2009, through Saturday, January 9, 2010**. Students should arrive in London no later than the evening of December 28. They may return on Sunday, January 10. We will see approximately 18 plays. We do not yet know what the full schedule of plays will be, but you can be certain that we will see the best of what's available in the world's theater Mecca. Last year we saw, among others, such distinguished productions as Patrick Stewart and David Tennant in *Hamlet*, Derek Jacobi in *Twelfth Night*, Michael Gambon and David Bradley in Pinter's *No Man's Land*, Ralph Fiennes and Clare Higgins in *Oedipus*, and such award winning productions as *August: Osage County* and the rarely performed *Family Reunion*, by T.S. Eliot. We saw several world premiers such as David Hare's *Gethsemane*, Marina Carr's *The Cordelia Dream*, *Zorro the Musical*, and Emma Rice's *Don John*. The historical spread of the plays was terrific; only in London is such a range of theater possible.

This year we will again see a remarkable number of world premieres — Alan Bennet's *The Habit of Art*, Michael Wynne's *The Priory*, John Logan's *Red*, and David Hare's *The Power of Yes*. And we will see some superb revivals, including Tom Stoppard and Andre Previn's *Every Good Boy Deserves a Favour*, John Guarre's *Six Degrees of Separation*, Ferdinand Bruckner's *Pains of Youth*, and Lee Hall's *The Pitmen Painters*, which will be paired with Hall's most famous play, *Billy Elliot, the Musical*. It will be a splendid treat to see one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's finest playwright's contrasting treatment of the same historical traumas where the working class turns to the arts for intellectual and emotional refuge (painting in the one instance, and dance in the other). We will also be seeing three wonderful extravaganzas — Nick Stafford's brilliant *War Horse* (a National Theatre production that we have seen the past two years, but which has now moved to the West End), the National Theatre's new equivalent to *War Horse*, a play called *Nation* (a survival story that deals with teenagers from different cultures thrown together by a tsunami in the South Pacific), and the Menier Chocolate Factory's *La Cage aux Folles*, that likewise has moved into the West End with great success. And one of the great treats of this year's trip will be Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, with James Earl Jones, Phylicia Rashad, Adrian Lester, and Sanaa Lathan.

There will be ample time to do and see much besides plays. Each year many in the group go to free music performances at St. Martin-in-the-Field or attend services at Westminster Abbey and sit in the choir in the Queen's scholars' pews directly adjacent to the musicians. And many will visit the National Gallery, the old and new Tate Galleries, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum where last year we saw an exhibit of The First Emperor of China's Terracotta Army. Or they will go to the Royal Academy of Art, the Courtauld Institute, the London Museum, the Museum of Natural History, and historical sites like the Tower, Dickens' House, Parliament, and the Inns of Court. There will be time to witness the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace and to explore Covent Garden, Camden Town, the antique shops of Islington or Portobello Market, and to go to Harrods. And you will be able to sample the atmosphere of many a historic pub, like the Sherlock Holmes on your way to attend evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral or go to the Neal's Yard Cheese Shop.

We will stay at the Harlingford Hotel, 61-63 Cartwright Gardens, a couple of blocks from the British Museum and the new British Library. The course is restricted to 18 students and carries four credits. The fee will be \$2550.00, which includes tickets to all plays and housing. Students must obtain passports and make their own travel arrangements to and from London. If you wish

to see what students have seen on previous years go the Web site for the course where you can investigate various aspects of the seminar — syllabuses from 1992 to the present, student journals, information about the Harlingford Hotel, in Bloomsbury, where we always stay, the London Theatre scene in general. **You may obtain the application form from the English Department or Professor Peck. You need permission of the instructor to register. See Professor Russell Peck <[russell.peck@rochester.edu](mailto:russell.peck@rochester.edu)> (phone 275-0110 or 473-7354).**