

THEATER ARTS (21T)

Undergraduate Subjects

21T.100 Theater Arts Production

Subject meets with 21T.500

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Students to join Theater Arts faculty and staff in the development of a fully-staged production for an audience in MIT's laboratory for the performing arts at W97. Students collaborate as performers, designers, writers, choreographers and technicians. Weekly rehearsals, design labs, and workshops introduce students to an array of rehearsal and performance techniques over the course of the term. Culminates in a public performance, open to students at all levels of experience. Each term evolves a different project which may include community-driven interventions, classical or contemporary plays, devised works, screenplays, musicals or other live performance events. Enrollment limited.

Staff

21T.101 Introduction to Acting

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Explores the actor's dramatic instincts with body, voice, imagination, language, and action. Studio exercises foster creative curiosity, improvisation, collaboration, and a sense of kinesthetic and spatial awareness. Develops communication skills and offers varied approaches to relating with self, ensemble, character, dramatic material, and audience. Limited to 20 per section.

Staff

21T.102 Voice and Speech for the Actor

Subject meets with 21T.502

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Thorough exploration of the voice in the context of human communication, provides a progression of exercises designed to free, develop, and strengthen the voice — first as a human instrument and then as the actor's instrument. Explores a progression of voice work that begins with physical awareness and breathing, moving into breath awareness, discovery of the body as the source and amplifier of sound vibration, opens the vocal channel, and develops strength and range in creative expression. Uses historical speeches and heightened language text to expand use and freeing of voice and self. Subject may culminate in a public presentation. Final grade highly dependent on attendance. Students taking graduate version will complete additional assignments. Limited to 20; preference to Theater majors, minors, and concentrators who have pre-registered.

K. Eastley, O. D'Ambrosio

21T.103 Motion Theater

Subject meets with 21T.503

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Examines the theatrical event from the perspective of composition in a performance workshop. Studio exercises address the process of developing a theatrical work through an internalized understanding of compositional principles in theater. Examines physical action in time and space. Includes outside readings, videos, short essays, and in-class discussions. Provides the performer, director, choreographer, designer or writer opportunities to engage with large and small group ensembles in creation of theatrical events. Topics include image, motion, shape, repetition, gesture, and spatial relationship. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Preference to majors, minors, and concentrators. Admittance may be controlled by lottery.

J. Scheib

21T.104 Fundamentals of Directing

Subject meets with 21T.504
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
 Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Studio workshop introduces students to the collaborative artistic practice of directing for the theater, opera, and other live performance disciplines. Weekly sessions provide students the opportunity to develop innovative theatrical events through rigorous analysis of dramatic texts, social practices, musical scores and libretti, and other source materials. With a focus on collaboration, students conduct dramaturgical research, experiment with behavior and motion, create compositional studies, design interventions, and complete other scenographic exercises culminating in an end-of-semester presentation for an invited audience. Generative studio prompts are complimented by selected readings, field trips, interactions with guest artists, and video viewings. Students are encouraged to bring their own unique points of view and to celebrate difference. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Scheib, D. Safer

21T.110 Physical Improvisation: Bodies in Motion

Subject meets with 21T.510
 Prereq: None
 U (Fall, IAP, Spring)
 4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Explores the realities of the body in space and motion - interacting with gravity, momentum, inertia, alignment, negative space, one's imagination, one's body, other bodies, the present room and rooms from memory, geometry, stillness, and more. By releasing tension and abandoning the notion of pre-planning, students experience a natural, spontaneous flow of movement, opening themselves up to, and diving into, whatever might happen. Develops alertness in order to work in an energetic state of physical disorientation, self-correcting what doesn't work and reinforcing what does on the spot, discovering physical/emotional truths and shared moments that leave students aware, centered, incredibly present, and sharply alive. Students taking graduate version will complete additional assignments. Limited to 20 per section.

D. Safer

21T.111 Physical Improvisation: Scores and Structures

Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 4-0-8 units. HASS-A
 Can be repeated for credit.

Explores physical improvisation in dance/theater from a variety of task-based, conceptual vantage points. Focuses on conceptual frameworks for generating intensely physical dramatic actions and dances that unlock the students' creativity. Investigates topics such as narrative, how stories and scenarios can elicit movement and emotionally resonant physical interaction; visual composition, creating movement and actions on stage from an imagistic starting point; and hypothetical worlds, movement based on the creation of rules for alternate worlds (e.g., strange, indigenous time, strange evolution). Explores solos, duets, trios, and larger ensemble improvisations. Limited to 20 per section.

D. Safer

21T.120 Fundamentals of Theater Design

Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Introduces the fundamental skills and concepts of scenography through a series of individual design projects structured to explore the relationship of the performer to the environment, the interrelation of lighting and stage design, and the evolution of visual narrative. Develops a basic visual literacy for the theater by honing skills in drawing, model building, 3-D modeling, digital image manipulation, and color theory. Projects complimented by study of artworks and theories by Cindy Sherman, Sol LeWitt, Alan Kaprow, Robert Wilson, Bertolt Brecht, Caspar Neher, and others. Lab fee required. Enrollment may be limited.

S. Brown

21T.121 Drawing for Designers

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores drawing as a fundamental component of the design process. In-class drawing exercises focus on developing the hand-to-eye relationship and pre-visualization skills essential to any designer. Studies the use drawing as a route to understanding space and form and achieving accuracy through expression. By drawing figures, landscapes and/or still life compositions in a variety of media, students investigate the figure/ground relationship while dealing with tone, line, and composition, which are all requisite elements of design. Provides exposure to designers who have used drawing as a central component of their work. Students create a portfolio that includes in-class drawings, studies done outside of class, and one research-based written project. Lab fee required. Limited to 20.

*S. Brown***21T.122 Introduction to Stagecraft**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Provides a foundation in theater technology, examining the creation of a theatrical production from conception to performance. Explores the realization of an artistic and structural vision for a play, taking into account all facets of technical theater: history of productions, types of technical roles, design, drafting, carpentry, costume, lighting, rigging, stage management, sound, and video. Students serve on the production team responsible for building, installing and/or running the department's show that semester. Limited to 18.

*Staff***21T.130 Performance Media**

Subject meets with 21T.530

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Integrates media and communication technologies in performing arts. Studio exercises provide a forum for experimentation. Contemporary and historical techniques for media integration examined through readings, viewing videos and short written essays. Technologies examined include digital imaging, composite and live feed digital video, and web-based performance. Engages the designer, director, choreographer, performer, visual artist or programmer in the practice of integrating media into live art events. Equipment is provided. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*J. Higgason, J. Scheib***21T.131 Script Analysis**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Focuses on reading a play's script critically and theatrically, with a view to mounting a coherent production. Through careful, intensive analysis of a variety of plays from different periods and aesthetics, a pattern emerges for discerning what options exist for interpreting a script from the distinct perspectives of the playwright, the actor, the designer, and the director. Students discuss the consequences of those options for production. Enrollment limited.

*D. Gammons***21T.141[J] Introduction to Drama**

Same subject as 21L.005[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

See description under subject 21L.005[J]. Enrollment limited.

*A. Fleche, D. Henderson***21T.150[J] Playwriting Fundamentals**

Same subject as 21W.754[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Introduces the craft of writing for the theater, with special attention to the basics of dramatic structure. Through weekly assignments and in-class exercises, students explore character, conflict, language and plasticity in scenes and short plays. In workshop format, students present individual work for feedback and heavily revise their work based on that response. Readings include a variety of plays.

K. Urban

21T.200 Dance Concert (New)

Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
 Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)
 3-3-6 units. HASS-A
 Can be repeated for credit.

Students collaborate with theater arts dance faculty and staff to create a fully-staged dance concert. Participants take on roles as performers, designers, writers, choreographers, and technicians, immersing themselves in the development of a dance-based performance. Weekly rehearsals, design labs, and workshops introduce various rehearsal and performance techniques. Those involved in design and technical aspects assist with research and technical support throughout the rehearsal process. In addition to weekly meetings, required out-of-class rehearsals and participating in the culminating public performances are integral components of the course. Exact dates available in syllabus. Projects vary each term, reflecting diverse dance forms, and may be faculty-led, student-led with faculty guidance, or created with a guest artist. Open to all experience levels. Enrollment limited.

Staff

21T.201 Acting with the Camera

Subject meets with 21T.601
 Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Studio workshop explores the discipline of acting for the camera through in-class exercises that focus on the creative challenges inherent to both filming and being filmed. Investigates the performer in the history of cinema, television, and multimedia stage performance through readings, screenings, and experimentation with the theory and practice of performing for and with the camera. Culminates in student-written, edited, directed, and acted short films. Instruction in written and oral communication provided. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

A. Kohler

21T.202 Solo Performance

Subject meets with 21T.602
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
 Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students study a range of solo performances, explore their own artistic voices, and hone their individual acting skills. Selected viewings and studio exercises support students with diverse strategies for composing and staging solo work. Culminates with students creating their own original solo performance pieces. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 20.

A. Kohler

21T.203 Music Theater Workshop

Subject meets with 21T.603
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Introduces applications of music in theater and performance. Encourages experimentation with different genres of singing, acting, and movement by exploring an array of historical and contemporary styles and techniques. Students develop and perform their own original songs and textual materials, gaining a theoretical and practical understanding of the actor's contribution to the dynamic form of musical theater. Previous experience in musical theater not required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

Staff

21T.204 Actor's Lab: Embodying Characters & Scenes

Subject meets with 21T.604
 Prereq: None
 U (Fall, Spring)
 4-0-8 units. HASS-A
 Can be repeated for credit.

Students apply performance skills to embodying characters in scripted scenes. Studio work further develops dramatic instincts and creative expression of the actor's body, imagination, and voice. Introduces the challenges of synthesizing self, character, events, physical actions, and offers approaches to interpreting scripted material. Weekly rehearsals with a scene partner. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 20.

J. Sonenberg, A. Kohler

21T.210 Choreography: Making Dances

Subject meets with 21T.610

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Laboratory-style class explores and invents techniques used to create dances. Students practice techniques focused on how and where to begin making a dance — sampling some of the endless ways to start a process, such as from the body, an idea, text, or a song — and then how to build up from there. Students make dances that are more than just a collection of moves, but events that do something, say something, or ask something. Builds a clear understanding of how a dance has an arc, a clear beginning, middle, and end, so that by doing it or watching it, both participants and audience end up somewhere new. Develops an understating of, and facility with, a wide variety of topics used to explore, start, and generate movement, dance, and performative events involving bodies moving through space. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

D. Safer

21T.220 Set Design

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Investigates the creation of set design for live performance. Students develop designs related to current production projects at MIT. Focuses on developing the designer's communication tools, particularly in the areas of visual research, 3-D digital model making, and design presentation. Examines the relationship of set design to theater architecture, emerging media technologies and dramaturgies of the 20th and 21st centuries. In addition to creating their own designs, students research, write about, and present the work and practice of a set designer. Lab fee required.

S. Brown

21T.221 Lighting Design

Subject meets with 21T.621

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Explores the history, concepts, and techniques of sculpting space with light within a contemporary context. Students experiment with a wide range of approaches, tools, and skills to develop their own creative vision. Focuses on discrete forms that include live performance, installation, architecture, and developments in applied technologies. Studio projects alternate between conceptual studies and realized designs reflective of students' own unique interests and talents. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Higgason

21T.222 Costume Design

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Studio workshop designed for students who possess a basic understanding of the principles of design and seek a more intensive study of costume. Students develop designs through a collaborative creative process that incorporates production dramaturgy and script analysis, and map those findings to a scenographically charged directorial concept. Fosters period research, conceptual design, and rendering skills through practical studio exercises. Instruction in life drawing, visual presentation, and basic costume construction provides the tools for applying conceptual design skills in performance. Lab fee required.

Staff

21T.223 Sound Design

Subject meets with 21T.523

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Introduces the elements of a sound designer's work, such as music and sound effects which inform and make stage action plausible, to sound system design and placement and the use of microphones. Discusses how effective sound design enhances live performance by clarifying storytelling, heightening emotional experience, and making words and music legible to an audience. Provides students with the tools to continue practicing and appreciating the art regardless of their professional ambitions. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

C. Frederickson

21T.224 Technical Design for Performance

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Studio examines the role of the technical designer as an integral member of an ensemble. Focusing on the artistic process, students develop their own unique approaches to stage design, lighting, sound, video design and other new media applications for the performing arts. They also explore an array of pre-production research and rehearsal techniques and analyze dramatic texts. Introduces theoretical and practical aspects of technical design, from the budgeting of time and selection of materials, to use of new technologies. Culminates in a public showing of final design projects for an invited audience. Enrollment limited.

C. Frederickson

21T.230 Production Seminar

Subject meets with 21T.630

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Pursues detailed study of a particular playtext or theme and is related to some planned production activity during the following IAP. Seminar activities may include guest speakers from various disciplines who approach some aspect of the playtext or theme from the perspective of their fields; various theatrical practitioners; and critical and scholarly presentations by seminar members. Participation in the IAP production is not required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Scheib

21T.231 Talking and Dancing

Subject meets with 21T.631

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Interdisciplinary dance theater studio invites students to investigate the spaces between dance and theater. Students engage in an array of acting and dance techniques to generate text from movement and movement from text. In-studio exercises examine the process of melding the expressive languages of words with languages of the body. Students use existing texts and compose original texts in the development of solo, duet, and ensemble projects. Explores the process of seeing and providing peer feedback to further expand the process of revision. Readings, short writings, video viewings, and guest lectures provide multiple avenues of understanding and illumine differing ways of making. Culminates with an opportunity for students to refine, develop, and share their projects in performance. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

D. Safer

21T.232 Producing Podcasts

Subject meets with 21T.532

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students write and produce a pilot episode of a narrative podcast (about fifteen minutes in length); sources come from interviews or research that students conduct. At the start of the term, students pitch possible stories. Discussions of selected episodes of narrative podcasts such as Serial, Homecoming, and This American Life. Introduces the basics of podcast recording with a primer on using Logic Pro X and hardware like the Apogee Duet. Students record and edit a rough draft of their podcast using provided portable recording studio kits. Podcasts shared with the larger MIT community at the Podcast Listening Room at the end of term. Students taking graduate version complete alternate assignments. Enrollment limited.

C. Frederickson

21T.240[J] Sport as Performance

Same subject as WGS.264[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Seminar investigates the aesthetics of sport as theatrical performance and explores the performance of race, gender, class, nation, and sexuality in sport. Readings drawn from theatre/performance studies, anthropology, sociology, ethnic studies, gender studies, history, and kinesiology. Topics include barnstorming, Olympics, Title IX, Native American mascots, and a variety of sports ranging from football to figure skating. Limited to 18.

C. Conceison

21T.241 China on Stage

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Credit cannot also be received for 21T.541

Explores the role theater productions have played in shaping Chinese society, politics, and cultural exchange during the past century. Topics include censorship, audience reception, and current translingual and cross-cultural trends. Examines plays in English translation, videos, photographs, archival materials, and English-language books and articles about Chinese theater. Enrollment limited.

C. Conceison

21T.242 Asian American Theater

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-1-8 units. HASS-A

Explores the history and impact of Asian American theater. Readings include plays and materials about cultural and political issues, family, and identity. Includes short formal and creative writing assignments and scene work resulting in a collaborative final performance. Limited to 18.

C. Conceison

21T.243 Theater and Race

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Explores Black, Latinx, Asian American, Indigenous, and/or mixed race theater through the lens of identities and experiences. Emphasis on BIPOC voices, plays, artists, theater ensembles, collectives, and cultural organizations. Topics may include cross-ethnic casting, public action and activism, and other emerging contemporary performance platforms. Seminar discussions, readings, research and creative projects, sessions with visiting artists and scholars, and attendance of at least one live performance inform and enrich the experience. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

C. Conceison

21T.244[J] Modern Drama

Same subject as 21L.486[J], WGS.285[J]

Prereq: One subject in Literature

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

See description under subject 21L.486[J].

D. Henderson

21T.245 Play Translation and Cultural Transmission

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Through reading texts about translation and by doing an independent project, students develop significant skills in translation theory and practice, culminating in a public staged reading of their translations. Each student chooses a dramatic text from a non-English language and translates a scene during the semester. Readings include topics such as globalization, adaptation, gender in translation, and postcolonial approaches to translation.

C. Conceison

21T.246[J] Studies in Drama

Same subject as 21L.703[J]
Prereq: Two subjects in Literature
Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-H
Can be repeated for credit.

See description under subject 21L.703[J]. Limited to 12.
S. Raman

21T.247[J] How We Got to Hamilton

Same subject as 21L.500[J], CMS.427[J]
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.427[J]. Limited to 20.
M. Gubar

21T.248 Contemporary American Theater

Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
Not offered regularly; consult department
3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Examines the exciting terrain of contemporary American writing for the theater, focusing on what is known in New York as "Off Broadway," "downtown," or "indie theater." Students read work by influential playwrights from earlier generations alongside plays by new voices currently in production in Boston, New York, and across the country. Students also examine the changing institution of American theater, reading a selection of plays in order to determine what constellation of issues and concerns they engage. Discussions unpack how these plays reflect, challenge and re-construct the idea of America in the 21st century. Enrollment limited.

K. Urban

21T.250[J] Playwriting Methods

Same subject as 21W.774[J]
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Builds understanding of the methods playwrights use to transform an idea - drawn from their own lives, news and current events, even the plays of other writers - into a reality. Students use a variety of inspiration to write their own new scenes and short plays. Examines how research can help develop an idea for a new play and discusses ways to adapt a classic text for the contemporary stage. Writers also conduct personal interviews and use the transcript as source material for a new scene. Enrollment limited.

K. Urban

21T.251[J] Screenwriting

Same subject as 21W.776[J]
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores the fundamentals of screenplay writing. Presents skills to create compelling characters and stories in different dramatic genres (comedy, drama). In addition to their own writing, students read a selection of screenplays and watch short films that form the basis of class discussion early in the term. Class is modeled on a professional development workshop in which participants, over the course of the term, write a short screenplay, including a final draft. Enrollment limited.

K. Urban

21T.301 Acting Styles

Subject meets with 21T.501
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered
3-0-9 units. HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit.

Refines the student actor's investigation of languages of the stage, including work on heightened texts and physical presentations. Explores issues of creative expression and embodying character within styles of different theatrical traditions. Time periods and styles studied may differ from term to term and may include an open presentation. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 20.

Staff

21T.320 Interactive Design for Live Performance

Subject meets with 21T.520

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-4-5 units. HASS-A

Studies design, history, artistic purposes, and programming techniques involved in the development of interactive performance design systems for controlling video projection, media, and lighting for live performances. Includes readings, viewings of historical and contemporary works, and in class-practice and performance. Students use motion-sensing input devices, such as the Kinect, infrared-light tracking, accelerometers, live video, and generative graphics, to create interactive design systems. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Enrollment limited.

J. Higgason

21T.321 Production Design Visualization

Subject meets with 21T.521

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Engages the skills and techniques used by contemporary production designers to pre-visualize their designs. Students explore perspective drawing, painting, drafting, storyboarding and an array of physical and 3D computer modeling techniques used in theatrical and cinematic production design practices. Emphasizes the combination of digital and analog approaches. Studio projects focus on the challenges of adapting existing found spaces as well as imagined environments for the stage and screen. Using the Nine Square Grid problem, students create virtual reality landscapes and interact dynamically with their production designs in AR and VR. Includes readings, video viewings and talks by guest artists. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

S. Brown

21T.331 Live Cinema Performance

Subject meets with 21T.531

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Interdisciplinary studio introduces the theoretical basis, technical idiosyncrasies, and artistic practices of Live Cinema Performance. Examines the meaningful integration of live theatrical and cinematic idioms through merging the disciplines of the performer and the director, scenographer and cinematographer, choreographer and filmmaker. Studio exercises, readings, screenings, field trips, and in-class presentations give students the opportunity to study the history and theory surrounding the development of the genre and engage the artistic practice from both sides of the camera. Guest artists, lectures, and master classes deepen the perspective. Each session focuses on a particular dramatist, theme, or artistic genre, culminating in a research-driven, full-length collaboration, to be presented in the final week of class for an invited audience. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Scheib

21T.340 Performance Studies: Advanced Theories of Sport

Prereq: 21T.240[J] and permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Seminar explores connections between athletics and theatre, performance studies, sociology, anthropology, and history. Focuses on performance of nation, race, and gender in sport, and how sport performs in society. Specific topics selected based on the research focus of each student. Enrollment limited.

C. Conceison

21T.345 Advanced Play Translation

Subject meets with 21T.545

Prereq: 21T.245 or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Builds on skills and theories introduced in 21M.716, with the goal of expansion of the one-scene translation project from the previous class into a full-length play translation. Includes selected readings and continued weekly progress on the play translation project, in consultation with instructor. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

C. Conceison

21T.350[J] Writing the Full-Length Play

Same subject as 21W.780[J]

Subject meets with 21T.550

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Students write and extensively revise a full-length play, from an initial idea to a revised draft. For our purposes, any script longer than thirty minutes and under a hundred minutes is considered a full-length play. Students respond to each other's work using a method inspired by dancer Liz Lerman, giving non-prescriptive advice and feedback to their fellow writers. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 10.

K. Urban

21T.355 Playwrights Lab

Subject meets with 21T.555

Prereq: 21T.350[J] or permission of instructor

U (Spring)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Students workshop their full-length play completed in 21M.780/21M.781 as part of the MTA Playwrights Lab, a collaboration between MIT students and professional actors and directors. Each writer engages in note sessions with a director and prepares a rehearsal draft. Writers attend rehearsals for a staged reading of their work and collaborate with their director and cast. Writers are expected to participate in other readings in the Lab, as a stage direction reader and as an audience member. Following the public presentation of the play, students process the experience and complete a final revision of the script. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 10.

K. Urban

Special Topics**21T.400 Independent Study in Performance and Design**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Multidisciplinary independent study provides opportunity for individual practica in the performing arts. While opportunities may include directed theoretical research and practice in production and performance with permanent and visiting faculty, students are encouraged to propose independent programs of study to a member of the theater arts faculty. Permission of supervising faculty member required.

Theater Arts Staff

21T.403 Performance and Design Workshop

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

0-3-0 units

Provides directed practice in the disciplines of performance practice, including design, acting, directing, technical theater, management, dramaturgy and other creative fields. Students test and refine their skills by participating in the creation of produced plays, intensive workshops, installations and other design or performance projects in dance, film, music theater, opera, and other performing arts events. Students work closely with faculty, peers and guest artists. Students seeking to design individual performance and design workshops must be supervised by a theater arts faculty member, and obtain his or her written approval.

Staff

21T.406 Applied Performance and Design Production

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

0-6-0 units

Provides opportunities for applied practice in the disciplines of performance, including acting, directing, playwriting, design, technical theater, dramaturgy, and management. Students test and refine their skills in the prototyping of design projects, installations, plays, dance, film, music theater, opera, and other performing arts events. They also apply theory and practice while tracing the research and rehearsal process through production and public presentation in the theater or in the studio. Students seeking to design an applied project must be supervised by a theater arts faculty member, and obtain his or her written approval.

Staff

21T.409 Performance and Design Intensive

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

0-9-0 units. HASS-A

Multidisciplinary, term-long, independent study geared toward the development of significant artistic and technical projects in performance and design. Students pursue projects in an array of fields and are invited to propose artistic and research projects as actors, directors, designers, dramaturges, and/or technical designers. Often in conjunction with Theater Arts-produced productions, proposals for intensives must be vetted and supervised by a member of the Theater Arts faculty with whom the student will work over the course of term.

Staff

21T.420 Topics in Performance Technique

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Explores elements of technique in a variety of performance disciplines. Topics vary from term to term; may be taught by visiting faculty. May be repeated for credit if content differs. Enrollment may be limited.

*Staff***21T.421 Topics in Performance Practice**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Class explores elements of performance in a studio setting. Topics vary from term to term; may be taught by visiting faculty. May be repeated for credit if content differs. Enrollment may be limited.

*Staff***21T.422 Advanced Topics in Theater Arts**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Advanced multidisciplinary studio workshop provides opportunity for advanced study in the performing arts. Topics vary from term to term; may be taught by visiting faculty. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

*Staff***21T.423 Topics in Theater Arts**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Multidisciplinary seminar provides opportunity for study in performance theory and practice. Topics vary from term to term; may be taught by visiting faculty. May be repeated for credit if content differs.

*Staff***21T.424 Topics in Performance Studies**

Subject meets with 21T.524

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Multidisciplinary lecture/workshop engages students in a variety of approaches to the study and practice of performance as an area of aesthetic and social interaction. Special attention paid to the use of diverse media in performance. Interdisciplinary approaches to study encourage students to seek out material histories of performance and practice. May be repeated for credit if topics differ.

*C. Conceison***21T.425 Research in Theater**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Offers directed research in the spheres of theory, history, performance studies, dramaturgy, etc. Permission of the supervising member of the Theater Arts faculty required.

*Consult Staff***21T.THT Theater Arts Pre-Thesis Tutorial**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

1-0-5 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Definition of and early-stage work on thesis project leading to undergraduate thesis in Theater Arts. Taken during the first term, or during IAP, of the student's two-term commitment to the thesis project. Student works closely with an individual faculty tutor. Limited to Theater Arts majors. Consult Theater Arts Major Advisor.

*Consult Theater Arts Faculty***21T.THU Theater Arts Undergraduate Thesis**

Prereq: 21T.THT or permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Completion of work on senior major thesis in Theater Arts under supervision of a faculty tutor. Includes oral presentation of thesis project early in the term, assembling and revising final text, and meeting at the close with a committee of Theater Arts faculty evaluators to discuss successes and limitations of the project. Limited to Theater Arts majors.

Consult Theater Arts Major Advisor

21T.UR Undergraduate Research in Theater Arts

Prereq: None
U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
Units arranged [P/D/F]
Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in ongoing Theater Arts research projects.
For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.
Staff

21T.URG Undergraduate Research in Theater Arts

Prereq: None
U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing Theater Arts research project.
For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.
Staff

Graduate Subjects

21T.500 Theater Arts Production

Subject meets with 21T.100
Prereq: None
G (Fall, Spring)
3-3-6 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Production studio invites students to join Theater Arts faculty and staff in the development of a fully-staged production for an invited audience in MIT's new laboratory for the performing arts. Students are immersed in the collaboration as performers, designers, writers, choreographers and technicians. Weekly rehearsals, design labs, and workshops introduce students to an array of rehearsal and performance techniques over the course of the semester. Culminating in a public performance, students at all levels of experience are encouraged to join. Each semester evolves a different project which may include community-driven interventions, classical or contemporary plays, devised works, screenplays, musicals or other live performance events. Enrollment limited.
Staff

21T.501 Acting Styles

Subject meets with 21T.301
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Spring)
Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered
3-0-9 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Refines the student actor's investigation of languages of the stage, including work on heightened texts and physical presentations. Explores issues of creative expression and embodying character within styles of different theatrical traditions. Time periods and styles studied may differ from term to term and may include an open presentation. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 20.
Staff

21T.502 Voice and Speech for the Actor (New)

Subject meets with 21T.102
Prereq: None
G (Fall, Spring)
4-0-8 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Thorough exploration of the voice in the context of human communication, provides a progression of exercises designed to free, develop, and strengthen the voice — first as a human instrument and then as the actor's instrument. Explores a progression of voice work that begins with physical awareness and breathing, moving into breath awareness, discovery of the body as the source and amplifier of sound vibration, opens the vocal channel, and develops strength and range in creative expression. Uses historical speeches and heightened language text to expand use and freeing of voice and self. Subject may culminate in a public presentation. Final grade highly dependent on attendance. Students taking graduate version will complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.
K. Eastley, O. D'Ambrosio

21T.503 Motion Theater (New)

Subject meets with 21T.103

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Examines the theatrical event from the perspective of composition in a performance workshop. Studio exercises address the process of developing a theatrical work through an internalized understanding of compositional principles in theater. Examines physical action in time and space. Includes outside readings, videos, short essays, and in-class discussions. Provides the performer, director, choreographer, designer, or writer opportunities to engage with large and small group ensembles in creation of theatrical events. Topics include image, motion, shape, repetition, gesture, and spatial relationship. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

*J. Scheib***21T.504 Fundamentals of Directing**

Subject meets with 21T.104

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-6 units

Studio workshop introduces students to the collaborative artistic practice of directing for the theater, opera, and other live performance disciplines. Weekly sessions provide students the opportunity to develop innovative theatrical events through rigorous analysis of dramatic texts, social practices, musical scores and libretti, and other source materials. With a focus on collaboration, students conduct dramaturgical research, experiment with behavior and motion, create compositional studies, design interventions, and other scenographic exercises culminating in an end-of-semester presentation for an invited audience. Generative studio prompts are complimented by selected readings, fieldtrips, interactions with guest artists, and video viewings. Students are encouraged to bring their own unique points of view and to celebrate difference. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*J. Scheib, D. Safer***21T.510 Physical Improvisation: Bodies in Motion (New)**

Subject meets with 21T.110

Prereq: None

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

4-0-8 units

Explores the realities of the body in space and motion - interacting with gravity, momentum, inertia, alignment, negative space, one's imagination, one's body, other bodies, the present room and rooms from memory, geometry, stillness, and more. By releasing tension and abandoning the notion of pre-planning, students experience a natural, spontaneous flow of movement, opening themselves up to, and diving into, whatever might happen. Develops alertness in order to work in an energetic state of physical disorientation, self-correcting what doesn't work and reinforcing what does on the spot, discovering physical/emotional truths and shared moments that leave students aware, centered, incredibly present, and sharply alive. Students taking graduate version will complete additional assignments. Limited to 20 per section.

*D. Safer***21T.520 Interactive Design for Live Performance (New)**

Subject meets with 21T.320

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)

3-4-5 units

Studies design, history, artistic purposes, and programming techniques involved in the development of interactive performance design systems for controlling video projection, media, and lighting for live performances. Includes readings, viewings of historical and contemporary works, and in class-practice and performance. Students use motion-sensing input devices, such as the Kinect, infrared-light tracking, accelerometers, live video, and generative graphics, to create interactive design systems. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Higgason

21T.521 Production Design Visualization

Subject meets with 21T.321

Prereq: None

G (Summer)

3-0-9 units

Engages the skills and techniques used by contemporary production designers to pre-visualize their designs. Students explore perspective drawing, painting, drafting, storyboarding and an array of physical and 3D computer modeling techniques used in theatrical and cinematic production design practices. Emphasizes the combination of digital and analog approaches. Studio projects focus on the challenges of adapting existing found spaces as well as imagined environments for the stage and screen. Using the Nine Square Grid problem, students create virtual reality landscapes and interact dynamically with their production designs in AR and VR. Includes readings, video viewings and talks by guest artists. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

S. Brown

21T.523 Sound Design (New)

Subject meets with 21T.223

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

4-0-8 units

Introduces the elements of a sound designer's work, such as music and sound effects which inform and make stage action plausible, to sound system design and placement and the use of microphones. Discusses how effective sound design enhances live performance by clarifying storytelling, heightening emotional experience, and making words and music legible to an audience. Provides students with the tools to continue practicing and appreciating the art regardless of their professional ambitions. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

C. Frederickson

21T.524 Topics in Performance Studies

Subject meets with 21T.424

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

See description under 21M.846. Assignments differ.

C. Conceison

21T.525 Research in Theater

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Offers directed research of advanced theatrical subjects occurring in either the performance or theoretical spheres. May be repeated for credit with permission.

Staff

21T.530 Performance Media

Subject meets with 21T.130

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

4-0-8 units

Integrates media and communication technologies in performing arts. Studio exercises provide a forum for experimentation. Contemporary and historical techniques for media integration examined through readings, viewing videos and short written essays. Technologies examined include digital imaging, composite and live feed digital video, and web-based performance. Engages the designer, director, choreographer, performer, visual artist or programmer in the practice of integrating media into live art events. Equipment is provided. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Higgason, J. Scheib

21T.531 Live Cinema Performance

Subject meets with 21T.331

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Interdisciplinary studio introduces the theoretical basis, technical idiosyncrasies, and artistic practices of Live Cinema Performance. Examines the meaningful integration of live theatrical and cinematic idioms through merging the disciplines of the performer and the director, scenographer and cinematographer, choreographer and filmmaker. Studio exercises, readings, screenings, field trips, and in-class presentations give students the opportunity to study the history and theory surrounding the development of the genre and engage the artistic practice from both sides of the camera. Guest artists, lectures, and master classes deepen the perspective. Each session focuses on a particular dramatist, theme, or artistic genre, culminating in a research-driven, full-length collaboration, to be presented in the final week of class for an invited audience. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Scheib

21T.532 Producing Podcasts (New)

Subject meets with 21T.232

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Students write and produce a pilot episode of a narrative podcast (about fifteen minutes in length); sources come from interviews or research that students conduct. At the start of the term, students pitch possible stories. Discussions of selected episodes of narrative podcasts such as *Serial*, *Homecoming*, and *This American Life*. Introduces the basics of podcast recording with a primer on using Logic Pro X and hardware like the Apogee Duet. Students record and edit a rough draft of their podcast using provided portable recording studio kits. Podcasts shared with the larger MIT community at the Podcast Listening Room at the end of term. Students taking graduate version complete alternate assignments. Enrollment limited.

C. Frederickson

21T.541 China on Stage

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Credit cannot also be received for 21T.241

Explores the role theater productions have played in shaping Chinese society, politics, and cultural exchange during the past century. Topics include censorship, audience reception, and current translingual and cross-cultural trends. Examines plays in English translation, videos, photographs, archival materials, and English-language books and articles about Chinese theater. Enrollment limited.

C. Conceison

21T.545 Advanced Play Translation

Subject meets with 21T.345

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Spring)

Acad Year 2026-2027: Not offered

3-0-9 units

Builds on skills and theories introduced in 21M.716, with goal of expansion of the one-scene translation project from the previous class into a full-length play translation. Includes selected readings and continued weekly progress on the play translation project, in consultation with instructor. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

C. Conceison

21T.550 Writing the Full-Length Play

Subject meets with 21T.350[[]], 21W.780[[]]

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Students write and extensively revise a full-length play, from an initial idea to a revised draft. For our purposes, any script longer than thirty minutes and under a hundred minutes is considered a full-length play. Students respond to each other's work using a method inspired by dancer Liz Lerman, giving non-prescriptive advice and feedback to their fellow writers. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 10.

K. Urban

21T.555 Playwrights Lab

Subject meets with 21T.355

Prereq: 21T.550 or permission of instructor

G (Spring)

4-0-8 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Students workshop their full-length play completed in 21M.780/21M.781 as part of the MTA Playwrights Lab, a collaboration between MIT students and professional actors and directors. Each writer engages in note sessions with a director and prepares a rehearsal draft. Writers attend rehearsals for a staged reading of their work and collaborate with their director and cast. Writers are expected to participate in other readings in the Lab, as a stage direction reader and as an audience member. Following the public presentation of the play, students process the experience and complete a final revision of the script. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment is limited to 10.

K. Urban

21T.601 Acting with the Camera (New)

Subject meets with 21T.201
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)
4-0-8 units

Studio workshop explores the discipline of acting for the camera through in-class exercises that focus on the creative challenges inherent to both filming and being filmed. Investigates the performer in the history of cinema, television, and multimedia stage performance through readings, screenings, and experimentation with the theory and practice of performing for and with the camera. Culminates in student-written, edited, directed, and acted short films. Instruction in written and oral communication provided. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

A. Kohler

21T.602 Solo Performance (New)

Subject meets with 21T.202
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered
Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)
3-0-9 units

Students study a range of solo performances, explore their own artistic voices, and hone their individual acting skills. Selected viewings and studio exercises support students with diverse strategies for composing and staging solo work. Culminates with students creating their own original solo performance pieces. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 20.

A. Kohler

21T.603 Music Theater Workshop (New)

Subject meets with 21T.203
Prereq: None
G (Spring)
Not offered regularly; consult department
3-0-9 units

Introduces applications of music in theater and performance. Encourages experimentation with different genres of singing, acting, and movement by exploring an array of historical and contemporary styles and techniques. Students develop and perform their own original songs and textual materials, gaining a theoretical and practical understanding of the actor's contribution to the dynamic form of musical theater. Previous experience in musical theater not required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

Staff

21T.604 Actor's Lab: Embodying Characters & Scenes (New)

Subject meets with 21T.204
Prereq: None
G (Fall, Spring)
4-0-8 units
Can be repeated for credit.

Students apply performance skills to embodying characters in scripted scenes. Studio work further develops dramatic instincts and creative expression of the actor's body, imagination, and voice. Introduces the challenges of synthesizing self, character, events, physical actions, and offers approaches to interpreting scripted material. Weekly rehearsals with a scene partner. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 20.

J. Sonenberg, A. Kohler

21T.610 Choreography: Making Dances (New)

Subject meets with 21T.210
Prereq: None
G (Fall, Spring)
4-0-8 units

Laboratory-style class explores and invents techniques used to create dances. Students practice techniques focused on how and where to begin making a dance — sampling some of the endless ways to start a process, such as from the body, an idea, text, or a song — and then how to build up from there. Students make dances that are more than just a collection of moves, but events that do something, say something, or ask something. Builds a clear understanding of how a dance has an arc, a clear beginning, middle, and end, so that by doing it or watching it, both participants and audience end up somewhere new. Develops an understating of, and facility with, a wide variety of topics used to explore, start, and generate movement, dance, and performative events involving bodies moving through space. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

D. Safer

21T.621 Lighting Design (New)

Subject meets with 21T.221

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

4-0-8 units

Explores the history, concepts, and techniques of sculpting space with light within a contemporary context. Students experiment with a wide range of approaches, tools, and skills to develop their own creative vision. Focuses on discrete forms that include live performance, installation, architecture, and developments in applied technologies. Studio projects alternate between conceptual studies and realized designs reflective of students' own unique interests and talents. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Higgason

21T.630 Production Seminar (New)

Subject meets with 21T.230

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Pursues detailed study of a particular playtext or theme and is related to some planned production activity during the following IAP. Seminar activities may include guest speakers from various disciplines who approach some aspect of the playtext or theme from the perspective of their fields; various theatrical practitioners; and critical and scholarly presentations by seminar members. Participation in the IAP production is not required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Scheib

21T.631 Talking and Dancing (New)

Subject meets with 21T.231

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

Acad Year 2026-2027: G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Interdisciplinary dance theater studio invites students to investigate the spaces between dance and theater. Students engage in an array of acting and dance techniques to generate text from movement and movement from text. In-studio exercises examine the process of melding the expressive languages of words with languages of the body. Students use existing texts and compose original texts in the development of solo, duet, and ensemble projects. Explores the process of seeing and providing peer feedback to further expand the process of revision. Readings, short writings, video viewings, and guest lectures provide multiple avenues of understanding and illumine differing ways of making. Culminates with an opportunity for students to refine, develop, and share their projects in performance. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

D. Safer