

PERF 220 | Live Production Responses

Objectives:

- To capture the ephemera of live performance in written form.
- To outline the relationship between a given text and the event of performance.
- To apply the themes and historical trends learned in class to evaluating specific productions.

Overview:

You will be responsible for writing responses to three musicals over the semester:

1. A filmed production of your choice from the following: *She Loves Me* or *Falsettos* (BroadwayHD), ~~*Nurse*~~ or *Shrek* (Netflix); [Company](#), [Legally Blonde](#), [Pippin](#), [Into the Woods](#), [Cabaret](#), or *Passing Strange* [\[Part 1\]](#) [\[Part 2\]](#) (YouTube)
2. A live production of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* at American University's Department of Performing Arts.
3. A professional live production of *Little Shop of Horrors* at Constellation Theatre Company.

Requirements:

Each response should be single-spaced, with a word count at the top of the page.

Minimum: 450 words; maximum: 550 words. Submit your assignment to Blackboard.

Address the ways the musical and production reflect(ed) American society and values. Any plot summary you include should be brief—no more than three sentences. As you write your response, cite multiple, specific, detailed examples in the performance. These may include:

- The script (storyline, character development,
- The score (musical styles, use of orchestra),
- Choreography,
- Design choices (sound, lighting, scenery), and/or
- The actors' performances (singing styles, dialects/accents/languages).

Center your response on a single argument, and trace one or two of the threads above. For instance, you may follow the dramatic development of a particular character through three songs and/or scenes; or, you may outline the relationship between location and scene in the story, and lighting/scenic design in the show.

Proofread your response. Each response paper should be publishing-ready. You are free to let your subjective experience of seeing a production inform your writing. At the same time, a reader should understand what elements in the show you are evaluating with little trouble.

Suggestions for Writing:

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Do the preliminary research before you watch: the creative team (composer, lyricist, bookwriter/playwright, director), the plot of the show, etc. This will help a great deal as you write your response.

If you are in the show, you still can tackle these questions. You may, of course, feel free to address pertinent elements of the rehearsal and production process.

The DC/Baltimore area is the second largest theatre market in the United States. I hope that you will choose to take advantage of the opportunity to see as much professional theatre as possible. Many local theatres offer students discounted tickets.

Rubric:

This rubric will be attached to the grade for your Blackboard submission, with comments.

Content: ____/9

- Did you address the ways the musical and production engaged with theatrical, dramatic, and societal traditions/innovations?
- Did you cite specific elements of the production?
- Did you relate your experience in the performance to what we have learned and discussed in class?

Clarity: ____/8

- Was your writing appropriately focused on one or two main ideas?
- Did you avoid exposition and unnecessary plot summary?

Style and formatting: ____/8

- Would someone unfamiliar with this specific production be able to understand the elements you discussed?
- Was your response free of errors in spelling and grammar?