

<b>Institution:</b>	Goldsmiths, University of London
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b>	35: Music, <u>Drama</u> , Dance and Performing Arts [THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE]
<b>a. Context</b>	

The Department of Theatre and Performance (TaP) is committed to an interdisciplinary, innovative and socially alert exploration of theatre and performance praxis. Our research is undertaken in the understanding that theatre and performance are practices that cannot be abstracted from their impact: our activities and our analysis place a strong emphasis on understanding such praxis as a form of agency, directly involved in social processes and the possibility of change. TaP research seeks both to investigate and to participate in these processes. It is our conviction that the intrinsic involvements of our discipline lie in interdisciplinarity, in social practice and in discourse: public engagement, the event and audience are essential aspects.

This emphasis on praxis is evident in Practice as Research (PaR). For instance Furse's works on reproductive medicine, specifically childlessness and adoption in *The Peach Child*, was selected by the National Theatre for its annual youth theatre scheme *New Connections 2008*; it was subsequently chosen for production by 16 schools and inclusive theatre groups, with approximately 350 active participants including the disabled theatre group Razed Roof and others based internationally. It is also manifest in our work in Applied Theatre: user groups of such work include South African women in danger of corrective rape (Adebayo) and Jewish community audiences (Braverman); opening up to non-academic publics the London International Festival of Theatre Living Archive, based at Goldsmiths since 2008, Mayo heads a group of artists running participatory projects, partnered with seven Schools across London, working with 150 children and young people, and 12 teaching staff (2012-2013).

We are also a department of engaged scholars who participate in the public sphere, for instance with regard to performers, writers and communities of the black diaspora, an area of direct relevance to our locality in SE London. This includes Gordon and Okagbue's platform for post-colonial writing at TaP's Pinter Centre and Osborne as instigator-organiser of *D-Day: Celebrating Diane Abbott's 25 Years as an MP* (Goldsmiths, 2012: participants included Moira Stuart, Ken Livingstone, Darcus Howe, Malorie Blackman OBE, Harriet Harman MP, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Margaret Busby OBE and SuAndi OBE). We have strong relations with the theatre and performance industry by virtue of our London location and our international reach, with well-established connections to the public sector; community arts organisations; other performance media including dance, radio, television and fashion; health and humanitarian NGOs and human rights campaigns.

<b>b. Approach to impact</b>
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TaP takes praxis as its principal mode of operation, manifest in three particular approaches: Applied Theatre, Practice as Research, and Engaged Scholarship. Such research impact is sponsored collectively, through Departmental structures, and generated individually, through research projects and connected extramural work.

1. Applied Theatre: TaP's Applied Theatre and Theatre for Development practitioners generate and participate in a range of processes that study, discuss and perform in order to raise awareness and develop the political purchase of marginal groups; they also elaborate the possibilities of Art, employ people, raise funds and stimulate the creative economy, often in financially challenged areas. The approach to impact in these cases is one intrinsically connected to the practice: it is in that sense 'impact as research'. Adebayo's *I Stand Corrected* (2012) provided black lesbian women in Cape Town (South Africa), living under threat of rape and murder, with participatory workshops and inclusion in the resulting production. This informed the debate on 'corrective' rape in South Africa and the equal marriage debate in Britain, resulting in an invited presentation to ministers at the German Bundestag (1 February 2013) on cultural responses to homophobia in Africa and EU-Africa relations. Braverman, as Co-Artistic Director and Producer for bread&circuses (Arts Council England R&D funded) has built partnerships with schools, universities, Jewish community organisations

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(JW3) and arts organisations (Summerhall, Edinburgh; Tobacco Factory, Bristol). His production *Wot? No Fish!!* was the most successful *Sponsume* fundraiser for the 2013 Edinburgh festival; he chairs the 'Unfinished Histories' charity (documenting alternative theatres), and sits on the UK committee for ASSITEJ (International young people's theatre organization). Mayo's workshops with Magic Me (2008–13) have combined intergenerational arts focus with Continuing Professional Development for Community artists as well as conducting projects for Glyndebourne Community Opera, the Geffrye Museum staff, the National Trust, and Serviço Social do Comércio, São Paulo, Brazil (British Council funded, 2013).

2. **Practice as Research (PaR):** The participatory/disseminating function of such work is also evident in those performance companies established by PaR researchers, focused on socially-driven projects and produced for diverse audiences, nationally and internationally. Furse (Athletes of the Heart) works on reproductive medicine (case study 1); Saner (cafila aeterna) embodies the interrelation of aesthetics, subjectivity and social intervention: *ev·de·yol·da/ at·home·on·the·road* (2011–12) incorporates autobiographical stories of walking/drifts in London with fictional tales of tortoises, performed in two languages (in Istanbul, Athens, Holstebro, Bakersfield CA, Berlin) – it has now developed into *Göçmen Adımlar/Migrant Steps* (2013), a project engaging Turkish-speaking migrant women in collaboration with community organisations Day-Mer and North London Community House. Twitchin has combined work with the Shunt Collective (e.g. *Money*, 2010) with public dissemination of their role, presenting on site-specificity and the formation of ensembles (e.g. 'Masterclass', Royal Haymarket Young People's Programme 2009), including co-curation with Anthony Hampton and Tim Etchells ('Live Weekend', ICA, 2011). Cusumano has contributed to sustaining avant garde practice, through his own internationally toured pieces, including collaboration with Crickot2 and Hermann Nitsch (*Aktion 135*, Eleventh Havana Biennial, Cuba 2012), while disseminating ideas and techniques through workshops (Scenofest, PQ13-Prague Quadrennial, 2010; National Theatre Studio, London, 2013). Rotie has produced prizewinning PaR as a performer and choreographer in the public-procession piece on sexual violence in Spain (*Pamplona*, 2012); and combined it with commissioned work including the V&A Museum, Laban and six shows with the London College of Fashion (2007–2011).

3. **Engaged Scholarship:** The praxis of scholarship also engages publics beyond academia. Gordon and Okagbue's leadership at the Pinter Centre has brought new audiences to post-colonial and black diaspora writing; Levitas co-organises Irish Studies' annual Coffin Memorial public lecture, now a video podcast (including Colm Toibin 2008, Frank McGuinness 2010); London complements Catalan studies with translations commissioned by the Sala Beckett, Barcelona (Sirera *Continuity* 2010; Riera *Declassified* 2011), and his translation of Sirera's *The Audition* was recently performed at the Arcola Theatre (2013). Shevtsova's work includes several articles in theatre programmes (London Barbican, Paris, Barcelona, Chicago), regular commissioned post-performance discussions and public interviews, such as a series of broadcasts for Romanian National Radio (2008) and Radio România Cultural (2010, 2012). Osborne's research in Black British writing is combined with wide ranging involvement, for example as Auditor of the Black Plays Archive at the Royal National Theatre and as Trustee of the *Inside Job* Theatre Project.

<b>c. Strategy and plans</b>
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TaP research impact is focused around three key strategic plans:

1. **Embedding Applied Theatre:** TaP believes that Education *is* an impact: and that to teach theatre and performance is also to teach the 'why' and 'how' of impact. As a result, a primary strategy is to continue to deepen a curricular emphasis on praxis in our programmes: in which critical analysis of performance also functions as sociology and cultural criticism; theatre history is also political history; and performance making is necessarily socially and politically engaged. A key dimension of this intent is our move to embed Applied Theatre pathways at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. We have moved from one full time Applied practitioner to three 0.5 practitioners (Adebayo, Braverman, Mayo) who combine educational work with professional engagement and experience. This team, assembled 2011-13, are generating a hub of dynamic impact processes and relations that feed back into teaching practice. For instance: Mayo has won (2013) a £15k grant from Creativeworks London with partners Talawa Theatre and Emergency Exit Arts, to research and evaluate TaP's participatory drama skills programme for emerging practitioners from Black, Asian

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and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. The pilot was designed and trialed by Applied Theatre MA students 2012/13 as part of Creative Routes, a project combining TaP, Talawa and EEA. The funders' published report, *A New Direction*, has been distributed to more than 300 arts and education organisations, and online to many more.

2. Developing new audiences for research via active research Centres and sources, including The Pinter Centre (TPC), the Centre of the Body (CoB) and the LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre) Living Archive. An essential element in the foundation of both TPC and CoB was an interdepartmental commitment to widening research impact by reaching new audiences (working with English and History, Sociology, Anthropology and Media & Communications respectively). The TPC project 'Beyond Linear Narratives', facilitated by an AHRC grant of £351,195 in 2009-12, provided (along with lectures and conferences) a platform for performance and readings by black British, diasporic and post-colonial writers, open to all, with local public interest in South-East London a key aspect of its intent (14 events over 3 years, including Fred D'Aguiar, Patience Agbabi, Bernardine Evaristo, Aminatta Forna, Janice Okoh, Bonnie Greer, Diane Abbott MP).

3. Developing global networks: Strong international interests deepen and extend TaP impact, both abroad and with migrant communities in the UK. Well-founded links exist with many countries: Australia (Osborne), India (Cusumano), Ireland (Levitas), Russia (Shevstova), Slovenia and Serbia (Furse), Spain and Catalunya (London, Rotie), Turkey (Saner), USA (Rowe). Particularly impact-rich work with publics in Africa, China and Italy provide dynamic opportunities now and in the future; thus in **Africa**, work in Nigeria and South Africa (Adebayo, Gordon, Okagbue) forms a key element of TaP research going forward, connecting to diasporic communities via the Pinter Centre projects; in **China**, TaP is partnered with the Goldsmiths Confucius Institute for Dance and Performance, its special relationship with the Beijing Dance Academy (BDA) enhanced by the appointment as Confucius Director of Aiping Guo, an alumna of both institutions. Gordon worked as dramaturge on *Butterflies* (SongLei Musical Theatre Productions, 2007) and Guo was subsequently appointed Producer of this large-scale musical in Beijing; further exchanges include a Furse masterclass to postgraduates at the BDA (2013). In **Italy**, Cusumano has established a strong relationship between TaP and the Cantieri Culturali Zisa, Palermo. TaP presented the Goldsmiths Performance Festival (July 2013), and plans to establish a permanent research base for TaP in Palermo on invitation from Cantieri are in progress.

<b>d. Relationship to case studies</b>
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The two case studies (Furse, Okagbue) are culminations of a long-standing commitment to conducting research with impact, and indicative of our intention to develop this strategy further. Furse was appointed (2001) as part of the strategic choice to build engaged and innovative PaR into TaP's research profile. *The Art of A.R.T.* (Assisted Reproduction Technologies) has resonance with the work by Adebayo on women and violence, Braverman's interest in access to disabled youth, Cusumano's exploration of new dynamics in scenography and physical theatre. Furse's work on the female body links with Rotie's extensive history of working with the body in dance/theatre from a feminist perspective, as well as Shevstova's explorations of gender as a dimension of sociology of theatre and Osborne's work on and with black women writers and activists. The interdepartmental Centre of the Body was founded on Furse's interest in the Body in myriad dimensions, including the body and medical technologies, and likewise forms part of TaP strategic intent: we plan to develop an MA on The Body and are already attracting international doctoral researchers.

Also appointed in 2001, Okagbue's leadership role in African theatre studies develops a strategic area of world theatre for TaP. His engagement with Nigerian theatre, performance and national arts policies corresponds to the South African work of Adebayo, postcolonial aspects of African theatre in related work by Gordon; and in wider comparative terms with the interculturalism of Shevstova and the studies of postcoloniality and nationalism in the work of Levitas (Ireland) and London (Catalunya). Okagbue's interest in diasporic communities is consonant with that of Osborne on Black British writing, while support for Ade Solanke and Janice Okoh within the 'Beyond the Linear Narrative' project accords with the TaP/TPC support for performance and writing for multi-cultural and diasporic communities of South London and beyond. Okagbue's framing of a follow-on project 'Intersections of Diaspora' 2013-14 again offers continuity to TaP's status as a platform for marginalised performance and creative practice in the UK.