

# *Performing Memory*

## WAC 220

Spring 2009

Professor Mary (Polly) Nooter Roberts

ID# 759-121-202

Thursdays 3:00-5:50

Kaufman 153

This upper division graduate seminar focuses on theories and practices of memory and mnemonic processes as expressed through the arts, with emphasis on culturally specific notions of memory and the link between memory and the body, memory and place, and memory and motion. The course will juxtapose theoretical readings on memory with diverse case studies of actual practices, performances, and art forms that stimulate memory to articulate the very close epistemological connections between memory and action. Presentations and discussions will consider the ways that memory is not confined to the past, but rather is always performed in the present. The course will also address the tensions between memory and history, and the role of forgetting in memory process.

Authors will include Frances Yates, Pierre Nora, Jacques Derrida, Johannes Fabian, Sigmund Freud, Suzanne Kuchler and Walter Mellion, and Roberts and Roberts among others.

### Topics to be addressed:

Mnemosyne and Lethe: Cultural Constructions of Memory  
Memorials, Monuments, and Shrines: Memory and History in Contest  
Museums as Memory Theaters  
Culture Heroes and Saints: Performing the Past in the Present  
Embodied Memory and Corporeal Inscriptions  
Divination, Healing, and Spirit Possession  
Materiality and Accumulation, Palimpsests and Traces  
Diasporic Divides and Postcolonial Reinscriptions of Memory  
Truth and Reconciliation: Arts of Memory and Obliviscence



World Arts and Cultures  
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