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New York University's Tisch School of the Arts is defining a new area of scholarship—performance studies.

Research in this new field is expanding the very concept of theatre and dance. It is bringing the social sciences and the arts together.

Performance studies goes beyond dramatic literature, beyond theatre and dance history, beyond familiar forms. It encompasses non-Western, indigenous, folk, and postmodern performance; explores all aspects of performance—from everyday interactions to shamanism, from Broadway to Kabuki, from ballet to burlesque.

Students learn how to document and analyze performances, undertake cross-cultural studies of rituals and festivals, and examine theories of performance ranging from aesthetics to semiotics.

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Graduates of the Performance Studies Program are teaching and working professionally throughout the world—in universities, theatres, museums, archives, and publishing. Many have had their dissertations published.

The program offers several areas of concentration: performance theory, dance, contemporary performance, performance writing and dramaturgy, folk performance, and performing arts archives. The faculty includes some of the most highly respected scholars in the field: Brooks McNamara, Richard Schechner, Marcia Siegel, Michael Kirby, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, and Kate Davy. This resident faculty is joined by such distinguished figures as Robert Farris Thompson, Jerzy Grotowski, and Joanne Kealiinohomoku.

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