

MARIST CLS - THE POWER OF READERS THEATRE  
FALL 2023  
CLASS #1

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READERS THEATRE – WHAT IS IT?

**READERS THEATRE** IS A STYLE OF THEATRE IN WHICH ACTORS PRESENT READINGS OF MATERIAL WITHOUT COSTUMES, PROPS, SCENERY, OR SPECIAL LIGHTING. ACTORS USE ONLY SCRIPTS AND VOCAL EXPRESSION TO HELP THE AUDIENCE UNDERSTAND THE STORY.

READERS THEATER IS ALSO KNOWN AS "THEATRE OF THE MIND"



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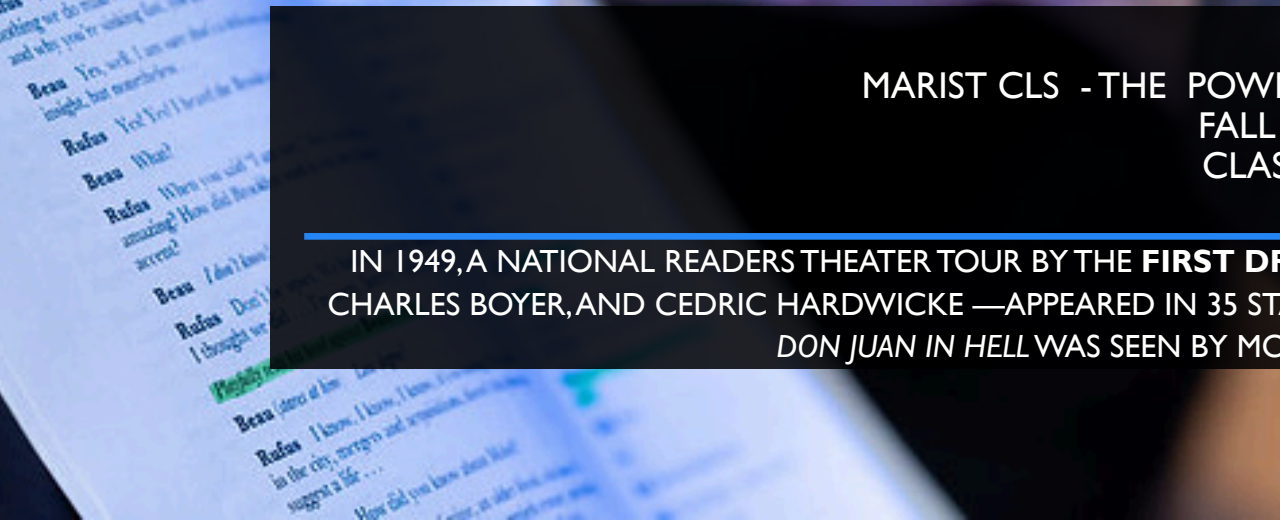
- THE FORM OF READERS THEATRE IS SIMILAR TO THE RECITATIONS OF EPIC POETRY IN FIFTH-CENTURY GREECE AND IN LATER CENTURIES PUBLIC READINGS BY CHARLES DICKENS AND MARK TWAIN.
- ALTHOUGH GROUP DRAMATIC READINGS HAD BEEN POPULAR SINCE AT LEAST THE EARLY 1800S, THE FIRST USE OF THE TERM "READERS THEATRE" IS ATTRIBUTED TO A NEW YORK GROUP.
  - In 1945, Eugene O'Neill Jr. established the Readers Theatre Group, which presented *Oedipus Rex* at the Majestic Theatre on Broadway.



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IN 1949, A NATIONAL READERS THEATER TOUR BY THE **FIRST DRAMA QUARTET**—CHARLES LAUGHTON, AGNES MOOREHEAD, CHARLES BOYER, AND CEDRIC HARDWICKE —APPEARED IN 35 STATES, PUTTING ON 500 PERFORMANCES. THEIR PRESENTATION OF *DON JUAN IN HELL* WAS SEEN BY MORE THAN A HALF-MILLION PEOPLE.

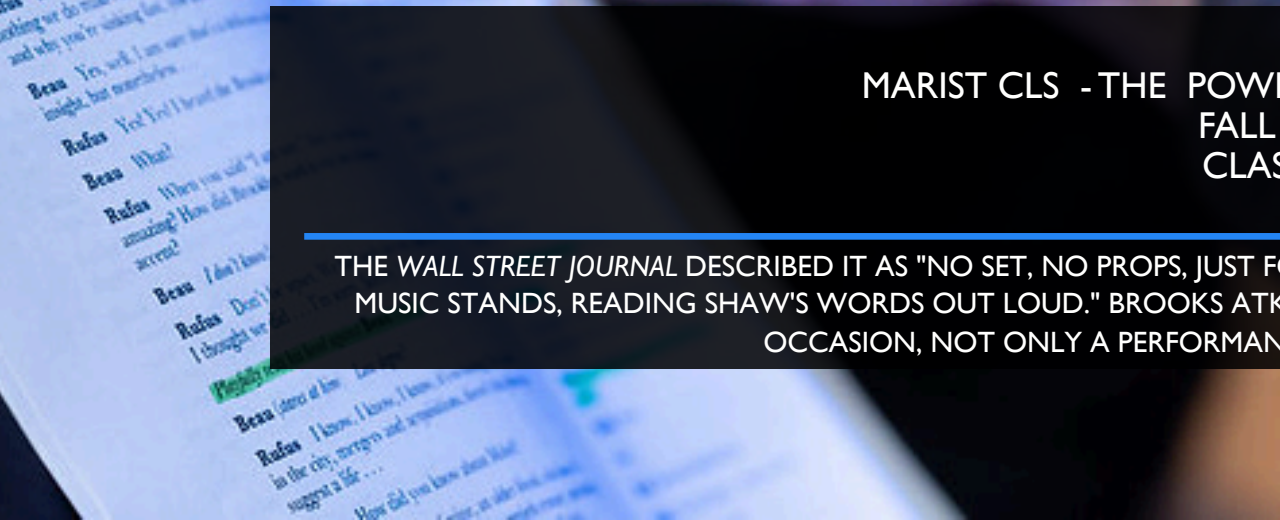




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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL DESCRIBED IT AS "NO SET, NO PROPS, JUST FOUR ACTORS IN EVENING DRESS SEATED ON STOOLS PLACED BEHIND MUSIC STANDS, READING SHAW'S WORDS OUT LOUD." BROOKS ATKINSON IN THE NEW YORK TIMES CALLED IT "A MIGHTY AND MOVING OCCASION, NOT ONLY A PERFORMANCE BUT AN INTELLECTUAL CRUSADE."



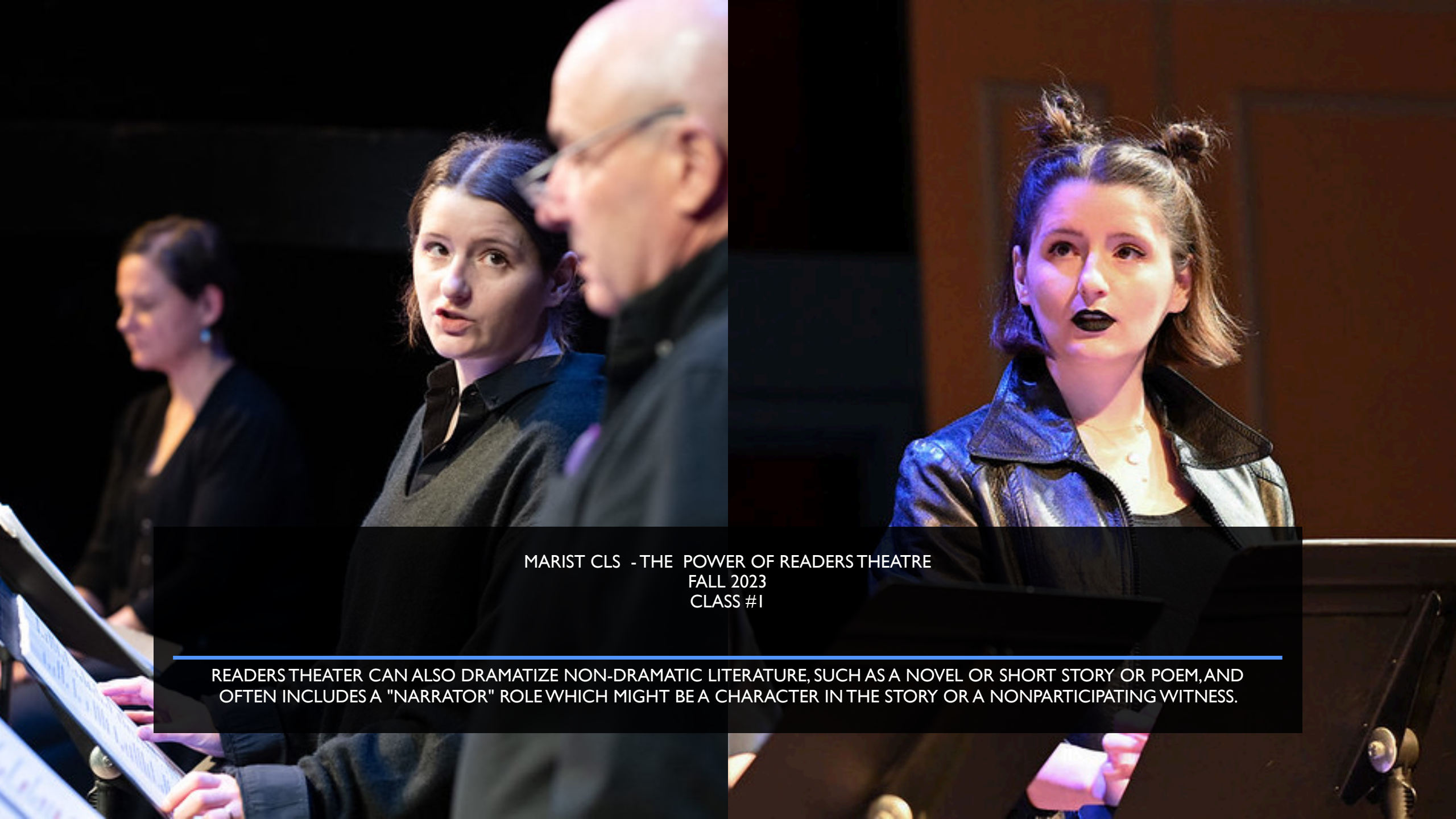
A KEY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL THEATER AND READERS THEATER IS THAT READERS THEATER IS NOT STAGED OR ACTED OUT THROUGH PHYSICAL MOVEMENT.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DRAMATIC READING RELIES ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THE ACTORS' VOICES.

ALTHOUGH FORMAL READERS THEATER GROUPS USE ONLY SCRIPTS AND STOOLS, THE CHOICE TO READ OR MEMORIZE AND WHETHER TO REMAIN SEATED OR ALLOW MOVEMENT VARIES ACCORDING TO THE DESIRES OF THE PERFORMING GROUP.

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READERS THEATER CAN ALSO DRAMATIZE NON-DRAMATIC LITERATURE, SUCH AS A NOVEL OR SHORT STORY OR POEM, AND OFTEN INCLUDES A "NARRATOR" ROLE WHICH MIGHT BE A CHARACTER IN THE STORY OR A NONPARTICIPATING WITNESS.

MARIST CLS - THE THEATRE EXPERIENCE  
SPRING 2023  
MAY 24, 2023  
CLASS #8

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- WEEK #1 – 9/5 – INTRODUCTION – SAMPLE READINGS
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- WEEK #2 – 9/12 – LAUREN GUNDERSON – SILENT SKY
- 
- WEEK #3 – 9/19 – GARSON KANIN – BORN YESTERDAY
- 
- WEEK #4 – 9/26 – PAULA VOGEL – HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE
- 
- WEEK #5 – 10/3 – THORNTON WILDER – OUR TOWN
- 
- WEEK #6 – 10/10 – A.R. GURNEY – ANCESTRAL VOICES
- 
- WEEK #7 – 10/17 – TERRENCE MCNALLY – LIPS TOGETHER TEETH APART
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- WEEK #8 – 10/24 – COLD BUFFET / CLASS BRINGS SHORT TEXTS AND READERS  
READ THEM “COLD”



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- TODAY'S MENU
- HE SAID, SHE SAID – DAVE BARRY
- WHO'S ON FIRST
- THE GOD WHO LOVES YOU – CARL DENNIS
- LOST – MARY LOUISE WILSON
- I'M HERBERT – ROBERT ANDERSON

