

International Summer School at Reading

# Performing the Past



## Course level

Undergraduate

Also suitable for anybody interested in museums or considering a career or further study in the heritage sector.

The University of Reading campus is home to three museums and close to the world famous museums of London and Oxford. This course is a global initiative, bringing together the expertise of four bodies professionally interested in the theory and practice of live, costumed, historical interpretation:

- **University of Reading** – experts in theatre and museum studies.
- **Past Pleasures Ltd** – the leading UK professional practitioners of live, costumed historical interpretation.
- **Historic Royal Palaces** – the organisation which runs H.M. Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace and The Banqueting House, Whitehall.
- **The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation** – the body behind the living history site Colonial Williamsburg, in Virginia, USA.

We engage students in hands-on learning and real-world live interpretation projects in the Museum of English Rural Life and the historic royal palaces.

## Course details

The Performing the Past Summer School is for students who want to explore the theoretical and practical challenges which face living history interpreters.

This course will include the opportunity to explore: forms and theories of live interpretation, identifying best practice, philosophy behind best practice, understanding the visitor, period posture and stance, using unconventional performance spaces, visitor inclusion, interpretatively useful research, practical character development and practical devising.

On campus you will have access to the Museum of Rural Life's social history collections, collections of rare books, photographs and films. Trips to Historical Royal Palace sites will enable you to deliver site-specific live interpretation performance where history happened.



### How do I find out more?

For general enquiries regarding the International Summer School please contact the ISLI or visit our website: [www.reading.ac.uk/jiss](http://www.reading.ac.uk/jiss)

### Fees and applications

Applications are made through the ISLI at the University of Reading. Please see our website for individual course fees and further details: [www.reading.ac.uk/jiss](http://www.reading.ac.uk/jiss)

### In your country

The University of Reading website includes information about visits from our University representatives: [www.reading.ac.uk/international](http://www.reading.ac.uk/international)



## Course benefits

This course gives you an overview of the theory, philosophy and practice behind good delivery of live, costumed interpretation. By exposure to world renowned sites you will learn how different professionals approach visitors in their daily practice, in a variety of environments. You will also get to put your knowledge into practice. The course culminates in students delivering live interpretation presentations in a range of heritage sites.

## How you will be taught

You will be taught in the Museum of English Rural Life. This space combines a stunning Alfred Waterhouse designed Victorian building and garden with a state-of-the-art museum space and archival store. This course is the first in the world to study the art of live interpretation in such practical detail. Classes are taught by Reading's Museum Studies Programme Director, Film Theatre and Television Department lecturers, Past Pleasures Ltd (including the Founding Managing Director), HRP Interpretation Manager and the Creative Director of the Historic Area at Colonial Williamsburg.

Lectures will be combined with workshops in which you will handle objects and costumes, look behind the scenes and talk with a range of live interpretation professionals.

The course includes a day trip to Hampton Court Palace and returns there for the final delivery days.

## Why study at Reading?

The University of Reading is among the UK's most research-intensive institutions, and is one of the top 1% of universities in terms of worldwide rankings. Alongside its three museums, the University hosts special collections on the history of the book, typography and ephemera collections and one of the largest Beckett archives in the world.

Reading is conveniently located near Heathrow Airport, London and Oxford.



## International Study and Language Institute

For more information, please contact:

### International Study and Language Institute

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