



Announcement of Graduate Student Project/Seminar

'Social and Ethical Aspects of Scientific Research': the Science&Theatre Project

Instructors: Prof. Dr. Regine Hengge (FU) & Günther Grosser (English Theatre Berlin)

Time: 25. October 2011, 09:15 – 10:45 (essential); 19. + 20. December (2 full days; essential); optional in January and February 2012 (rehearsals of the science play)

Place: Institut für Biologie – Mikrobiologie, Königin-Luise-Str. 12-16, Room 209

Working language: Mainly English

Participants: **max. 10 PhD students of Biology** (with a focus on molecular biology – but with an interest to look beyond everyday lab experiments into **arts and culture!**).

Background and motivation of the Science&Theatre project:

Science is not only about discovery of facts which may eventually lead to technological applications, but is also a social enterprise undertaken by people with individual histories, motivation, needs and goals. Social aspects thus include the practical 'rules of the game' of the scientific community. In addition, scientific research can have social and political consequences as well as ethical aspects. These aspects are important for researchers as well as for society in general. This implies a need for science communication and for young scientists to get training in science communication.

Science&Theatre is a cooperation project with the English Theatre Berlin, which provides a completely novel approach to science communication: Experienced and young scientists communicate their expert knowledge and research experience to theatre people, who will then bring a 'science play' to the stage for a general audience.

Special topics for the Winter term 2011/12:

This year's project will focus on the play '**Photograph 51**' by Anna Ziegler, which is about the discovery of the DNA double helix structure and the role Rosalind Franklin played in this discovery.

Seminar Topics:

- Biographies of Franklin, Watson, Crick and Wilkins;
- basic concepts of DNA structure, biochemistry and molecular biology (to be presented to non-scientists);
- the relevant original papers about DNA structure (published in Nature in 1953);
- issues of scientific integrity;

- women in science (history as well as situation today);
- the human genome project incl. social, political and ethical consequences;
- DNA and the future: Synthetic biology.

How does the *Science&Theatre* project work?

The project leaders and the participating graduate students will prepare seminar talks on these subjects which will be presented in two full seminar days (in December) that will be attended by all scientists and theatre people (director, actors, designers) participating in the project. These seminars and discussions will lay the conceptual foundation for the production of the play 'Photograph 51'. The seminar block will be followed by the first staged reading of the play by the actors. Rehearsals in the theatre will begin in January. Scientists are invited to be present during the rehearsals (this is optional, but especially in the beginning many scientific questions will still come up). In parallel, we will prepare the text for the programme booklet (essentially on the subjects covered by the seminar). Finally, our play will premiere at the English Theatre Berlin around 23./24. February.

More information (also on the previous project rounds):

http://www.biologie.fu-berlin.de/en/microbio/mibi-hengge/Science_and_Theatre.html

<http://www.etberlin.de>

Interested to participate?

Please, send an e-mail to me as soon as possible and/or be here on October 25 (see above)!

I am looking forward to working with a group of motivated and open-minded young scientists in an exciting project at the interface of science and the arts!

With best regards,



Prof. Dr. Regine Hengge