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DRAM 379.01: Introduction to Directing

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Introduction to Directing: DRAMA 379

Dr. Jillian Campana

Spring 2007 - Tuesdays and Thursdays: 12:40-2:00 MASQUER THEATRE

McGill 212a jillian.campana@umontana.edu 243-5846

Office Hours: Wednesdays 9-10, Thursdays 10-11, Fridays 9-10

Course Aim:

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the fundamentals of the directing craft and process. The goal is to assist the director in the creation of their individual directorial process and aesthetic by way of consistent, practical work.

Course Objectives:

In this workshop setting the student will:

- Understand the fundamentals of directing;
- Cultivate a way to communicate with actors;
- Cultivate an understanding of the total sceneography involved in directing;
- Begin to cultivate a personal approach to the directorial craft and process.

Course Expectations:

- Arrive on time to every class prepared to work.
- PARTICIPATE. Participate actively. Participate by observing.
- Challenge yourself. Do not wait for me to do it for you.
- Respect the risks that your colleagues take by supporting each other.
- Put forth all effort when you do all of the work.
- Complete all assignments on time.

Course Evaluation:

The final grade will be based on:

- Attendance and participation: after two absences the grade is lowered a full letter, after five the student must withdraw from the class 20%
- Clarity and strength of choices: ability to use the principals and practices taught as demonstrated in the scenes presented to the class 20%
- Quizzes and tests 20%
- A 10 minute presentation: sharing a director, a new technique, or a directing approach with the class in a creative way 20%
- Final Exam: The direction of a published ten-minute play with a director's notebook that includes your director's notes and a typed paper analyzing the process and product 20%

Text:

Ball, William. *A Sense of Direction*. Drama Publishers, 1984 is the required text for sale in the bookstore. There will also be periodic handouts that will be required reading. There will be quizzes based on the reading.

Course Content:

The exercises, performances and readings will address these areas:

1. Analysis and Vision:
The world of the play, metaphor, and form
2. Building Dramatic Action:
Characters and objectives, beats, tempo, and rhythm
3. Staging:
Stage choice, ground plan, design elements and blocking (composition and picturization)
4. Communication:
Working with actors, designers and stage-managers
5. Exploration:
Discovering what works through play and experimentation

Policy:

All Drama/Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the Department of Drama/Dance Handbook. The Handbook is available online at <http://www.sfa.umt.edu/drama/index.html>.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and /or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.mt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>

Other Readings Provided:

Hodge, Francis and McLain, Michael. *Play Directing: Analysis, Communication, and Style*. Pearson, 2005. p. 81-108.

Knopf, Robert. *The Director as Collaborator*. Pearson, 2006. p.101-127.

Rob Kendt. Bill Rauch's Oregon Trail in American Theatre. TCG October, 2006. p. 28-31 and 148-150.

Maria Irene Fornes. *Mud. Plays*. PAJ Publications, 1986. p.14-40.