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THTR 512.01: Problems in Voice and Speech - Poetic Language

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School of Theatre & Dance
THTR 512 Problems in Voice & Speech: Poetic Language 3 Credits
Spring 2014: T,Th 11:10-12:30, SG 123
Dr. Randy Bolton: randy.bolton@umontana.edu McGill 212A/ 243-2880
Office: T, TH 1-3, or by appointment

Objectives

This course is about words and the critical moments to which they are connected. Words—their linguistic structure and shape, layers of meaning and possibilities, style, nature, idiosyncrasies, content, etc.—are the only means we are given to experience the internal conditions of persons that produced them. They are our only record or external manifestation of the original experience in which the writer/speaker/artist is involved.

The work of this course is to go through the words –their meanings (diction), rhythms and patterns, sounds and melodies, metaphoric actions, location, and voice—to their source to uncover the integrity of the words and their connection to that source so that they cannot remain just spoken or presented words. Robert Bly, a contemporary older gentleman of a poet, said something like, “When you want to find out about the stump, go to the stump!” Our work will use the words as the “tip of the iceberg” to get to the core of the moment (to go to the stump), to discover and experience the voice and its location and the emotion so that we can own the words written or spoken by someone else as our own. Continued work and attention to correct, full speech and voice will be emphasized.

Topics and Areas

- Theory and Philosophy of Words
- Words and Connection to Person, Place and Event
- Searching for the “Voice” and Its Place
- Physical/Vocal Exploration of Words
- Achieving Our Own Connection with Someone Else’s Words
- Searching for Our Voice and Place in the Words
- Close Text Analysis
 - diction, rhythm and patterning, sound and melody, figurative language

Expectations, Products, Evaluation

- Individual growth and evidence of daily vocal regimen
- Outside observations and attendance at departmental performances and other arts events
- Daily attendance and significant participation and contribution
- Assigned readings and study from required texts and additional sources
- Written analyses and exercises—process portfolio
- Performance and presentation
- ‘Profile of Development’ paper
- A ‘Theory of the Word’ paper (graduate students)
- Some outside readings

Required Texts

PETER PIPER'S PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

SOUND AND SENSE: AN INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

THE PLEASURE OF THE TEXT (graduate students)

Video viewing schedule for Bill Moyers's Power of the Word

| | | |
|---------|----|--|
| Feb. 6 | #1 | Simple Acts of Life, VT 1771 |
| Feb. 13 | #2 | Living Language, VT 1772 |
| Feb. 20 | #3 | Ancestral Voices, VT 1773 |
| Feb. 27 | #4 | Voices of Memory, VT 1774 |
| Mar. 6 | #5 | Dancing At The Edge of the Road, VT 1775 |
| Mar. 13 | #6 | Where the Soul Lives, VT 1776 |

Final Session Mon. May 12 8:00-10:00

Graduate Increment

Paper and presentation based on *The Pleasure of the Text*

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or 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://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance *Student Handbook*. The *Handbook* is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/theatredance/about/handbook>.

There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre & Dance classes as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk.