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Fall 9-1-2017

THTR 525.01: Problems in Acting/Acting VII

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THTR 525-01 – Problems in Acting / Acting VII – CRN 72078

3 Credits, Fall 2017

Instructor: DR. PAMYLA STIEHL
Class times/place: MWF 11:00-12:50pm / Schreiber Gym 124
Email: Pamyla.stiehl@umontana.edu
Office / Office Hours: McGill 212c / T/R 1:00-3:00pm – and by appointment

Aim:

This course will use elements of a variety of theatre and actor training methods to interrogate a number of contemporary texts. We will work with Brecht's epic theatre, later interpretations and applications of Stanislavski's System, Michael Chekhov's Psychological Gesture, Grotowski's Poor Theatre and Bogart's body/voice work to expand the actor's range of training techniques and textual approaches. We will then work on studio performances of selected scenes and monologues from select contemporary texts using strategies from the methodologies studied.

Outcomes:

In this setting you will achieve:

- A demonstrated knowledge of the techniques covered by the course
- A demonstrated knowledge of a variety of approaches to a contemporary text
- A fuller understanding of the potentials of these techniques in the theatre and in actor training
- A fuller experience of the group as a performance ensemble
- An extension to your range of performance articulation and documentation
- A broadened exposure to contemporary theatre scripts.

Required Texts:

Actor Training edited by Alison Hodge

Play scripts as listed (provided on Moodle)

Any supplemental handouts or online video viewings (links supplied during the course)

Course Requirements and Graded Assignments:

- 1) **Attendance & Promptness:** Acting is participatory: there is no way to learn without doing, no adequate substitute for a missing partner, and no way to "make up" a missed experience. School of Theatre & Dance policies will be strictly enforced. **Only documented absences will be excused. For every unexcused absence, the grade will be lowered a third of a letter grade. If absences persist, the student must take the responsibility to withdraw from the class or risk a failing grade.** For example, if an illness should cause you to miss excessive class time to the point of failing, it is your responsibility to pursue a medical withdrawal so that the course may be attempted again once you have recovered.

Furthermore, besides adversely affecting your own learning, arriving late for class disrupts the learning process of your fellow students. Therefore, **tardiness in excess of 10 minutes will be considered a complete absence, and every three instances of tardiness—of whatever duration—will equate to one absence.**

2) **Class Participation, Progress and Attitude/Effort/Collaboration (20 pts):** Following is the 20-point grading rubric for overall class participation, progress and attitude/effort/collaboration. This component will also reflect **class punctuality/attendance**, as well as **your work on the individual monologue exercises**:

- 18-20 Rigorously/generously participated in exercises/discussions; demonstrated growth; positive, attentive & collaborative
- 16-18 Dutifully/semi-regularly participated in exercises/discussions; some growth; irregularly attentive & collaborative
- 14-16 Resistant/occasionally participated in exercises/discussions; limited growth; issues with attitude/effort/collaboration
- 12-14 Participated/contributed only when absolutely required; minimal growth; repeated issues with attitude/effort/collaboration
- 0-12 Failed in regards to participation, contribution, progress, attitude, effort and collaboration

3) **Scene work from four plays (20 pts “process” / 20 pts “product” per scene).** Please be aware that “product” will also reflect process (i.e., growth, effort and preparation evidenced by final product).

4) **Written Reflection/Documentation (20 pts):** 5-page written reflection/documentation of class process.
DUE MONDAY DECEMBER 18

Overall Course Assignments / Grading Criteria Breakdown:

Participation/Progress/Attitude/Effort/Collaboration	20 pts
Scene Work	
<i>Process</i> – 4 scenes/20 pts each	80 pts
<i>Product</i> – 4 scenes /20 pts each	80 pts
Written Reflection/Documentation (5-pg)	<u>20 pts</u>
Total Course Points Possible = 200 pts	

SYLLABUS: (always subject to change and variation of dates, if necessary)¹

- Sept 1 Orientation
- Sept 6-11 Contemporary monologue work – must have a 21st-century monologue ready to perform
- Sept 13-15 Have read “Brecht” and *Mother Courage*
- Sept 18-27 Work *Mother Courage* scenes
- Sept 29, Oct 2 Perform *Mother Courage* scenes
- Oct 4-6 Have read “Method/Stanislavski (Adler/Meisner)” and “Michael Chekhov”
- Oct. 9 Have read *Little Dog Laughed* and *How I Learned to Drive*
- Oct 11-20 Work *Little Dog* and *How I Learned to Drive* scenes
- Oct 23, 25 Perform *Little Dog* and *How I Learned to Drive* scenes
- Oct 27-30 Have read “Grotowski” and *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf*
- Nov 1-Nov 10 Work *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf* scenes (and possibly *How/Drive*)
- Nov 13, 15 Perform *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (and possibly *How/Drive*) scenes
- Nov 17-20 Have read “Bogart”
- Nov 27 Have read *August Osage County*; review contemporary monologues
- Nov 29-Dec 11 Work *August Osage County* scenes and contemporary monologues

Dec 18 – FINAL 8:00-10:00 a.m.
 Perform *August Osage County* scenes and contemporary monologues

¹ Please make contact with a colleague or two to find out what has been changed/assigned if you miss class.

Written Reflections DUE

Procedure/Policy

You are expected to abide by the following School of Theatre & Dance regulations. Eating, drinking, or gum chewing during the class are not permitted. Please let me know in writing if you have a medical exception to this policy. Water in a capped container is acceptable. Absolutely no weapons, real or fake, are allowed in the classroom. Late work is not accepted; this includes late or unprepared performances. Students are encouraged to wear appropriate movement attire to class. 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.

Movement Clothes

Please wear clothing to class that does not restrict movement: tight-fitting and restrictive clothing and anything too revealing (showing skin) will not be acceptable. **We will often be warming up with yoga** and other physical exercises. Please bring a yoga mat to class, if you have one. Hooded sweatshirts, hats, and hair that cover the face are detrimental to proper evaluation by the instructor, so remove them before work commences. **For this class please be prepared to work in bare feet.**

Cell Phones

Please turn off your cell phone in class. My phone will be set to vibrate in case an emergency text message should be sent by the University.

Personal Comfort

The study of acting often requires the instructor or peers to touch each other or be in close proximity. We all have bad days when we do not want such contact. Feel free to bow out of a particular exercise if you are having a "Wounded Warrior" day. If deemed necessary by the instructor, any student with such issues will be asked to meet with the head of the Acting/Directing Division and the instructor to discuss how we might better facilitate you through the course.

School Handbook

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

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://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php.

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation. <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>.