Spring 2-1-2017

THTR 315.01 - Physical Performance Skills I

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Recommended Citation
Bouma, Kelly, "THTR 315.01 - Physical Performance Skills I" (2017). Syllabi. 8798.
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AIM: The purpose of this course is to introduce the actor to the multiple ways in which story and character can be effectively communicated using the body as the primary tool. To do this, students will focus on developing an increased awareness of their bodies and movements and of the movements of others.

OUTCOMES: In this workshop setting actors’ will:

- Begin to understand and appreciate how the body needs to be used in performance.
- Cultivate an understanding of the relationship between inner and outer expression.
- Demonstrate an ability to be a productive member of an ensemble.
- Strengthen their physical abilities and work to overcome physical and mental limitations.
- Understand how parts of their body and psychology relate to and depend upon each other.
- Experiment and explore character and story using physical techniques.

CONTENT: This course will focus on the basics of physical theatre performance including: concentration, imagination, communication, presence, centeredness, balance, agility, strength, endurance, anatomy, physical dramaturgy, and collaboration. Students will work with the practices of major influential practitioners and their respective companies including: Konstantin Stanislavski, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Michael Chekhov, Jerzy Grotowski, Arnold Artaud, Rudolph Laban, Jacques Lecoq, Fay Simpson, Tadashi Suzuki and Anne Bogart.

EXPECTATIONS: Each actor is required to:

- Attend every class on time – this means being in the space ready to work at 11am;
- Commit to all exercises and assignments with interest and effort;
- Wear appropriate movement attire to each class (students will be asked to sit out if they are wearing non movement clothing)
- Respect their body, their classmates, the environment and the process;
- Consistently work toward creating an open and safe atmosphere for everyone working;
- Take risks and support their peers as they do the same.
EVALUATION: The final grade will be a reflection of the actor’s effort, progress and development of skills covered. Regular evaluation will come in the form of:

- Participation and attitude toward the work
- Attendance
- Self-analysis and journaling
- Clarity and strength of choices made throughout all assigned tasks; growth through the semester

POLICY:

- No eating or chewing gum. No food or beverages other than water in the space. Bring an environmentally friendly container of water to each class- hydration is necessary and there is little time to use the fountain outside.
- Actors must wear appropriate movement attire to class. No skirts, jeans or restrictive/revealing clothing. Black or neutral leggings and a fitted and comfortable shirt are best.
- Academic Misconduct and the Student Code of Conduct: 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 Code of Conduct.
- All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance Student 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.
- Due to safety considerations, at no point during a student’s time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student without my consent. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student’s grade.
- 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.
RESOURCES:


The Frantic Assembly Book of Devising Theatre 2nd Edition by Scott Graham and Steven Hoggett


Theatre of Movement and Gesture, Jacques Lecoq, edited by David Bradby

Towards a Poor Theatre by Jerzy Grotowski, 2002


PHYSICAL THEATRE COMPANY WEBSITES

http://www.complicite.org/index.php

https://www.dv8.co.uk/

https://franticassembly.co.uk/

http://www.siti.org/

http://tectonictheaterproject.org/

ARTICLES

Bridel, David. “In the Beginning was the Body” In American Theatre, January 1 2011.
**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:**

| Week 1: | Jan 24/26 | Ensemble and Environment: Creating our Space |
| Week 2: | Jan 31/Feb 2 | Proprioception |
| Week 3: | Feb 7/9 | Viewpoints |
| Week 4: | Feb 14/16 | Mechanics of Movement |
| Week 5: | Feb 21/23 | Mechanics of Movement, cont’d |
| Week 6: | Feb 28/Mar 2 | Storytelling |
| Week 7: | Mar 7/9 | Characterization |
| Week 8: | Mar 14/16 | Composition |
| Week 9: | Mar 21/23 | In-class showing of WORKS IN PROGRESS |
| Week 10: | Mar 28/30 | SPRING BREAK [Self Study] |
| Week 11: | Apr 4/6 | Devising Process |
| Week 12: | Apr 11/13 | Theatricality and Moment Work |
| Week 13: | Apr 18/20 | Now what? (Boredom) |
| Week 14: | Apr 25/27 | Problems of Physical Theatre: Recommitting to Action and Training |
| Week 15: | May 2/4 | In-class rehearsal/feedback |
| Final: | Tuesday, May 9* | 8:00-10:00 am WORKS-IN-PROGRESS SHOWING (OPEN TO PUBLIC) |

* [http://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/finalsweek2/default.php](http://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/finalsweek2/default.php)