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THTR 120A.02: Introduction to Acting I

Elisha T. Caterisano

University of Montana, Missoula

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INTRODUCTION TO ACTING I

THTR 120A Section, (02), 3 Credits

(Fall, 2018, Tuesdays+Thursdays, 11:30)

(Building and Room Number)

Final Day/Time: See Schedule

Instructor: Elisha Caterisano
Email: Elisha.caterisano@umconnect.edu
Office Hours: M: 11am-12pm T: 10am-11am
Phone: 406-243-4481 (general office number, no texts)

Aim

The purpose of this course is to help broaden your communication, presentation and personal skills. The course will also help you develop a more articulate, responsive, and expressive identity. These goals are achieved by studying the craft of acting. At the end of the semester, I hope you leave with an extended understanding of yourself, your peers, and your world.

Outcomes

At the end the semester this setting you must demonstrate you have achieved:

- A confidence in the presentation of your self—socially and professionally
- An ability to further articulate both your personal character and the character of those you take on in performance
- A basic understanding of the nature of theatre and the craft of acting
- An understanding of, and respect for, performance, including audience etiquette
- An understanding of the importance and contribution theatre makes to our world.

Tentative Schedule

This course is divided into four units:

Unit 1: Ensemble

Building trust and skill through group exercises, including warm-ups and theatre games.

Unit 2: What is Acting?

An introduction to the fundamentals of acting and live performance.

Unit 3: Scene Work with a Partner

Rehearsing and performing short scenes with a partner, creating new and original characters, writing scenes, and script analysis.

Unit 4: Applying Acting in Your Life

Forum Theatre, theatre in education, social-commentary theatre, personal performance, community performances.

Attendance and 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” missed experience. School policies will be enforced strictly. You may present documentation for two excused absences without affecting your final grade. *Further excused absences and any unexcused (undocumented) absences will drop your final grade one-third of a letter.* If an illness should cause you to miss class to the point of failing, pursue a withdrawal or incomplete. Visit the university catalog for more information on these policies at www.umt.edu/catalog.

Arriving late for class disrupts the learning process of your fellow students. Tardiness in excess of 10 minutes will be considered a complete absence. Every two instances of tardiness—of whatever duration—will equate to one absence for grading purposes. I reserve the right to declare a “no lateness” policy should the need arise. Briefly put, if the door to the class is shut and you are not inside you are absent: no exceptions. Likewise, be sure to visit the rest room before class. Leaving class during exercises or performances for a non-emergency is disruptive.

Electronic Resources

In this class, we will embrace technology. Email is the required method of communication for the course. Please check your university email and Moodle frequently.

If you have course materials stored on your phone, tablet, laptop or equivalent device, set it to “Airplane Mode” so that the functionality is limited to stored data retrieval. Silence and stow other unneeded electronic devices. I will have my phone on vibrate in case an emergency message is sent by the university. If accessing the web becomes necessary, inform me that you are doing so for the benefit of the entire class.

If your device beeps or rings accidentally during class, please silence it as *quickly as humanly possible*. Don’t be embarrassed, just turn it off and all will be forgiven. Having said that anyone caught messaging or frivolously surfing the web will be dismissed immediately from class, resulting in a complete absence for the day.

Evaluation

Your final grade in this course will be calculated based on the following areas evaluation:

Attendance and Participation - 50%

Effort and respect are two important components of participation. The effort necessary for engaging in live performance demands a solid work ethic and an openness to risk and collaboration. It requires that you commit to your actions without embarrassment, remorse, or caution. Such commitment is only possible in an environment that is comfortable and inviting. You will receive a grade daily to evaluate your participation:

- 4** The student was actively participating in class, well prepared, and positively engaged with the material and fellow classmates.
- 3** The student was late.
- 2** The student was unprepared, disruptive, or disrespectful, or absent

- 1 The student was absent but had the courtesy to notify the instructor prior to missing class. Please note, notification does not necessarily constitute documentation and your final grade may still drop.
- 0 The student was absent and provided no notification or documentation.

Students receiving low marks must meet with me to discuss the underlying cause of the problem and how it can be resolved.

Performances - 25%

Your performance grades will evaluate your understanding of basic concepts and how you apply them in practice.

A Superb Acting. The student has transcended the level of craft they brought to the course, mastered the intellectual preparation, and has begun to play imaginatively “in the moment.”

B Good Skills. The student has mastered the intellectual preparation necessary to move on to more advanced skills, made some basic advances in craft, but is not yet playing fully “in the moment.”

C Fair Work. The student is prepared intellectually for the work, and is making progress with some skills, but stronger choices and more practice are necessary.

D Poor work. The student has not or is not prepared for the work and it is painfully obvious to the both the student and audience.

F Failure. The student has not or is not prepared at all, has made no specific choices, and is wasting theirs and the audience’s time.

All students will be evaluated based on their personal growth over the course of the semester and not in comparison or competition with other students.

Writing Assignments - 25%

There are several writing assignments this semester. They are designed to stimulate your critical eye and creative instinct while also being representative of university-level writing. These assignments and course materials can be found on Moodle. You are expected to check the web daily. All written work must be properly formatted, typed, and submitted as a PDF document by the beginning of class on the date due. I will not accept paper copies unless the assignment requires a printed copy. If Moodle is down, use email as your alternate submission option.

Production Attendance

You are required to attend three School of Theatre & Dance’s theatrical performances produced this semester. Missing one production will drop your final grade one full letter. Missing two productions will drop it two full letters. If you do not attend any of the productions, you will earn a failing grade in the class. Production attendance is a part of this class—there are no exceptions and there will be graded assignments or quizzes on the productions.

The materials fee you paid when you registered for this course allows you to obtain one ticket at no additional expense. You must pick up your ticket at the UMArts Box Office, located in the lobby of the PARTV Center, in person between 10 AM and 6 PM Monday-Friday. You may pick up only one ticket—your own; you cannot pick up a ticket for a classmate. If you pick up your ticket to a production and wish to change performances, you will be charged a \$2 exchange fee before the performance date printed on the ticket. If you come in to exchange your ticket after the performance date printed on the ticket (and therefore need a new ticket), you will be charged the full student ticket price.

You must present your Griz Card to pick up your ticket and you must identify which class you are taking.

You are in section: 02

Your instructor's name is: Elisha Caterisano

Seating in the Masquer Theatre is general admission. Seating in the Montana Theatre is reserved. The fee that you have paid does not guarantee you a ticket on a particular night, nor does it guarantee that you will be able to get a ticket if the show sells out. Do not wait until the evening of the performance you plan to attend to pick up a ticket.

Required Productions

Summer and Smoke

October 3-7, 10-14 @ 7:30 PM

Masquer Theatre (PARTV)

Dance Up Close

November 1-2 @ 8:30 PM and 3 @ 2 PM and 7:30 PM

Masquer Theatre (PARTV)

White Christmas

November 20, 23-24, 28-December 1 @ 7:30

November 24-25 and November 30-December 1 @ 2PM

Montana Theatre (PARTV)

Procedure/Policy

You are expected to abide by the following School of Theatre & Dance regulations. Eating, drinking, or gum chewing are not permitted during class. Water in a capped container is acceptable. Please let me know in writing if you have a medical exception to this policy. 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.

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.

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the [School of Theatre & Dance Student 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](#).

Accessibility

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Students registered with [Disability Services for Students](#) (DSS) may request reasonable accessibility modifications by contacting me directly.