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THTR 311.01: Voice and Speech IV

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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, metaphor 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.