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THTR 527.01: Studio Training II

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STUDIO II - THTR 527.01  3 Credits, SPRING 2014

Instructor:      DR. BERNADETTE SWEENEY
Class times:    MW 2.10-4pm
Space:          Schreiber 124
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Office:         McGill 212c
Office Hours:   Tues Thursday 11.00-12.30 and by appointment

Aim
This course will use elements of alternative theatre and actor training methods to interrogate a contemporary text.
We will work with the later physical work of Stanislavski as a beginning, and go on to consider Michael Chekhov's Psychological Gesture, Grotowski's Poor Theatre, Lecoq, Barba, Bogart, Roy Hart voice and body work and other techniques to expand the actor's range of training techniques, and approaches to text.
We will then work towards a studio staging of selected scenes of our chosen text using chosen strategies from the methodologies studied.

Outcomes
In this setting you will achieve:
- A demonstrated graduate-level knowledge of the techniques covered by the course
- A demonstrated graduate-level knowledge of alternative approaches to a canonical text
- A fuller graduate-level understanding of the potentials of these techniques in the theatre and in actor training
- A fuller experience of the graduate group as a performance ensemble
- An extension to your range of performance articulation and documentation
- The experience of leading the class on a practitioner of your choice

Evaluation
30% for class attendance, performance practice, participation, effort, attitude, and respect
30% presentation of a class on chosen practitioner
40% for end of semester performance work and 10 page written reflection.

Texts
Actor Training edited by Alison Hodge
Syllabus: (always subject to change)¹

Weeks 1   introduction, choosing texts
Weeks 2-3 late Stanislavski and Meyerhold [text work ongoing]
Weeks 4-5 Michael Chekhov [text work ongoing]
Weeks 6-7 Brecht [text work ongoing]
Weeks 8-9 Jerzy Grotowski [text work ongoing]
Week 10   Spring Break
Weeks 11-12 Jacques Lecoq and Eugenio Barba [text work ongoing]
Weeks 13-14 Anne Bogart and Roy Hart/Pan Theatre [text work ongoing]
Week 15/Exam week showing of text work and techniques

(Final examination times are posted on the Registrar’s website at the following link: http://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/finalsweek2/default.aspx. Final exams MUST be held at this time)

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.

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” a missed experience. School policies will be strictly enforced. Only documented absences will be excused. No student may miss more than one week of class. For every subsequent absence, the grade will be lowered a full letter grade.

Furthermore, besides adversely affecting your own learning, arriving late for class

¹ Please refer to the current schedule for relevant dates with regard to adding, dropping, and withdrawing. Please make contact with a colleague or two to find out what has been assigned if you miss 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. Every acting teacher reserves the right
to declare a “no lateness” policy, should the need arise. Briefly put, this means that if the
door to the class is shut and you are not inside by the time class begins, you are absent.
No exceptions.

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.

**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.

**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](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

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.

**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. No hats will
be permitted in class. Hooded sweatshirts, hats, and hair that cover the face are
detrimental to proper evaluation by the instructor, so remove them before work
commences. Please be sure to clean your shoes appropriately before you enter the
building to keep our floors as clean as possible. For this class please be prepared to
work in bare feet.)

**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.