

PERFORMANCE II, TPP 3103
FALL 2015
Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-11:15 FAA 117

Instructor:
Carrie Colton
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Office Hours: by appointment

Course description:

“Prerequisite: TPP 2100. Exploration and development of a range of fundamental tools of the acting process, with particular emphasis on vocal production and physical expression in the context of creating and rehearsing scenes and monologues drawn from significant modern and contemporary playwrights, ending with an introduction to the performance of classical (...) texts.”

(FSU Undergraduate Course Catalogue)

Course objectives:

All performance is an encounter. (Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999), theatre director, practical researcher, acting pedagogue)

All actual life is encounter. (Martin Buber (1878-1965), philosopher)

The aim of this course is awakening, expanding, and mobilizing your artistic work in theatrical performance. This formulation should give you a necessary freedom to question, examine, define, and redefine the work of performing art and the phenomenon of theatre in and through *doing* and *witnessing* practical work. You will constantly ask: What is theatre? What do you want from it? When is theatre an art? What can be a creative process? How to work? How to think within the art and craft of the medium? And above all, why and how does it matter in your life?

Do not expect to be fed ready-made answers, techniques, methods, or even creative ideas, but rather seek the knowledge of the craft yourself, try to steal it from the instructor, from your colleagues, and from your textbooks. Whatever you find efficacious, productive, or enlightening in the texts as well as in our practice, you should test in your own work, i.e., you should give your own answers to the questions historically posed by theatre practitioners and performance researchers. Think of this course as an apprenticeship in a performance laboratory: you are a deep-searching artist, you set your own challenge, name your own questions, and *meet us* through your own work.

While we will stay engaged in the work of the performer, we will treat performance as a site of broad, interdisciplinary learning, which invites and engages with issues across the humanities.

At the end of this class you will:

- learn through theory and practice with some elemental approaches to acting
- be able to employ in practice as a performer-director-play-builder all major elements of dramatic composition: exposition, action, conflict, turning point, dramatic climax, resolution, transition
- learn to construct and apply root action statement to plays, scenes, and your own etudes
- learn with Stanislavski the art and craft of character analysis and the given circumstances and use your understanding of these notions in your scenes
- learn Stanislavski's approach to psycho-physical action method and apply it in your work on Moliere
- be able to employ active analysis to play
- learn to find and work with subtext
- discover difficulties, challenges, and ways of development of your work on Chekhov
- be able to challenge Peter Brook's notions of deadly, holy, rough, and immediate theatre
- build partnering and collaborating skills
- learn to perceive theatre as a place of seeing oneself anew and meeting others in a new way
- discover theatre as a way to knowledge in the humanities
- apply selected concepts from modern philosophy to the work of the performer

Assignments:

Reading and writing:

This is a practical theatre class, but it doesn't mean that you will not read and write. In fact, as an aspiring theatre artist you must constantly ask basic questions about the craft and investigate the creative paths of others. You must pursue an active dialogue not only with your director, instructor, and scene partners, but also with great artists who were able to leave traces of their artistic search in writing. It is not by accident that great directors, actors, and designers are often ferocious readers and skillful writers. In this spirit, each week that you are assigned reading from the textbooks, you will write a brief personal response and email it to me by the specified deadline. In your response, you will begin to formulate your own questions about the craft. Don't be shy and, above all, don't censor yourself. Honest and simple (even naïve) questions often lead to a deeper practical process.

I will not take much class time discussing the texts, however, be prepared to answer some key questions about the readings. You will also have other short written assignments directly related to your scene work.

Practical work:

You will have practical assignments every week. Some of them you will do in class, while some others you will prepare in outside-of-class rehearsals. Refer to the class schedule for details.

Each class will begin from Initial Work, which will address the needs of the students in correspondence with the assignments. Elements of Initial Work will introduce the students to various performance styles.

Texts

To obtain by you:

Constantin Stanislavski, *An Actor's Work*, (Textbook)

Peter Brooks, *The Empty Space* (Textbook)

Available on Blackboard:

Sharon Carnicke, *Stanislavsky in Focus*, selections (PDF)

Vasily Toporkov, *Stanislavski in Rehearsal: The Final Years*, selections (PDF)

Shakespeare, William, *The Comedy of Errors*

Anton Chekhov, *The Seagull*, (PDF)

Grading Criteria/Method

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Responses. 20 pts. Each (200)

PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENTS

Silent Scene (65)

Open Scene (75)

Comedy of Errors (100)

The Seagull (100)

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

Each day is worth 15 points.

Excused absences will still result in a loss of participation points but assignments can be made up at another time as long as documentation is provided. (465 pts.)

TOTAL: 1000 POINTS

*****NO CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN TO LATE ASSIGNMENTS!!!!** This industry is about timelines, opening nights, and deadlines. If you do not turn in your work or present on the day it is due you will receive a 0.

Grade Scale (Percentage):

94-100 A	80-83 B-	68-69 D+
90-93 A-	77-79 C+	65-67 D
87-89 B+	74-76 C	below 65 F
84-86 B	70-73 C	

Course Policies (will be strictly enforced)

All students are expected to fully participate in every aspect of this course.

- Class begins on time.
- Students will be responsible for signing in at the beginning of every class meeting. Failure to sign in will result in one absence.
- After five minutes, students are considered late. Three late arrivals will count as one absence.
- Students more than 15 minutes late will not be allowed in class and will be counted absent. Any assignment due that day cannot be made up.
- On performance days, students who are late will not be allowed into the class.
- There will be no exceptions.

Cell phones and any electronic devices must be turned to the *off* position and put away at the beginning of class. Students who answer their phones or insist on text messaging during class will be asked to leave promptly and counted absent for that day. *Students awaiting an emergency call should talk to the professor prior to class to discuss need and protocol.*

By maintaining your enrollment in this course, you agree to these terms. These are the guidelines this course will follow. If you find them unacceptable, DROPP NOW.

Attendance Policy

Each student is allotted two excused absences. Every consecutive excused absence will lower your grade by 1/2 of a letter grade.

*Excused absences include: Documented illness (including those of dependent children), documented personal crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities.

University Policies

University Attendance Policy:

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy:

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>.)

Americans With Disabilities Act:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

Syllabus Change Policy:

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Instructional Recording Technology and Distribution Policy The School of Theatre at Florida State University

Recording technology is often used to further students' education in theatre courses. Faculty have relied upon these methods to further the students' educational experience and by extension to enhance their classroom effectiveness. This policy is not intended to interfere with that practice.

The purpose of this policy is to protect both student and faculty privacy. The use of recording devices, including those brought by students in any School of Theatre classroom or performances space/location, is at the discretion of the classroom instructor. Items in this category include, but are not limited to, camcorders, cameras, cellular phones, and audio recorders. Any device that stores video, audio, or still images is subject to this policy. Beyond permission of the instructor to utilize recording technology for any course content or activities, written permission must be obtained from all individuals to be recorded by filling out SOT Record/Tech form.

The School of Theatre at Florida State University policy mandates that no recorded image (still, moving, or audio) may be distributed in any way without express written permission of all individuals presented on an image or sound to be distributed. This applies to all formats of distribution including, but not limited to, print, digital, and analog. All violations will be reported to the Director of Academic and Student Services in the School of Theatre, who will retain records of all violations. Students found to be in violation of the policy a second time will be subject to sanctions beyond those associated with the class, and will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and subject to further University sanctions.

This policy does not supersede any Federal, State, Local, or Institutional policy regarding recording or distribution of materials. It applies solely to instructors and students in School of Theatre courses. Furthermore, it should not be implied that permission to record and/or distribute material from classes extends to the content presented.

Course Schedule

Week 1 First Steps

Jan 6: Introduction, Initial Work.

Week 2 Deadly Theatre

Sep 11: Practice. Physical work. **Silent Scenes**. Action. Root Action Statement. Physical work: foundations, dramatic essentials (character, conflict, objective, motivation)

Sep 13: **Silent Scenes**. Beginning, middle and end. Crafting a story. Digging deeper into given circumstances.

Homework: Read Peter Brook's *Deadly Theatre* and respond. Emails are due Sunday January 17th before midnight.

Week 3 When Acting is an Art

Jan 18: Performance foundations cont. Discussion: *Deadly Theatre*. Being in the moment.

Jan 20: More Silent Scenes

Homework: Read the first three chapters from Stanislavski ("Amateurism," "The Stage as Art..." and "Action...") Email your response by midnight, Sunday, January 24.

Week 4 Action

Jan 25: Last day for Silent Scenes.

Jan 27: Open Scene Sharing. Given Circumstances. Objectives. Tactic.

Homework: Read "Bits and Tasks," and "Belief and the sense of Truth," from Stanislavsky. Response due Sunday, Jan 31.

Week 5 Active Analysis

Feb 1: Open Scene Sharing. Checking in. Beats. Expressiveness.

Feb 3: Open Scenes

Homework: Read William Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. Response due Sunday February 7 by midnight.

Week 6 Psycho-physical Actions / Active Analysis (Shakespeare)

Feb 8: Last day for Open Scenes

Feb 10: Scene Workshop. Rehearsal. Actor's analysis, Comedy. Shakespeare Discussion.

Homework: Read Stanislavski's "Emotion Memory" and "Action and the Human Body in the Role" from Carnicke. Response due Sunday, Feb 17.

Week 7 Psycho-physical Actions cont. (Shakespeare)

Feb 18: Scene Workshop. Yoga. Language. Heightened Text.

Feb 20: Scene Workshop. Games.

Homework: Read "Inner Psychological Drives," and "Inner Psychological Drives in Action" from Stanislavski. Response due Sunday, Feb 21.

Week 8 Subtext (Shakespeare)

Feb 22: Scene Study: Goals for performers' growth. Why do we do theatre?

Feb 24: Physical Comedy!

Homework: Read "The Supertask, Throughaction" from Stanislavski. Response due Sunday, Feb 28 before midnight.

Week 9 Inner Motive Forces (Shakespeare)

Mar 3: Scene Work

Mar 5: Final Showings for Comedy of Errors.

Homework: Read and reread *The Seagull*. Learn your lines. No written response.

SPRING BREAK!!!!

Week 10 Inner Creative State (The Seagull)

Mar 14: Intro to Chekhov. Set up the space. World of the play.

Mar 16: Scene work

Homework: Read “The Subconscious and the Actor’s Creative State” from Stanislavski. Response due Sunday, Mar 20.

Week 11 The Inner and Outer Creative Process (The Seagull)

Mar 21: *The Seagull* Work

Mar 23: *The Seagull* Work

Homework: Read “General Creative State in Performance” from Stanislavski. Response due Sunday, Mar 27.

Week 12 Rough Theatre (Chekhov)

Mar 28: Scene study

Mar 31: Scene study with surprise

Homework: Read “Rough Theatre” from Brook. Respond by Sunday, April 3rd.

Week 13 Immediate Theatre (Chekhov)

Apr 4: Scene study with surprise

Apr 6: Scene study.

Homework: Read “The Immediate Theatre” from Brook. Respond by Sunday, April 10th by midnight.

Week 14 Immediate Theatre (Chekhov)

April 11: Scene Study.

April 13: Final Run Thru

Week 14 Immediate Theatre (Chekhov)

Apr 18: Directed Rehearsal

Apr 20: Directed Rehearsal

Homework: Rehearsal.

Week 15 Immediate Theatre (Chekhov)

Apr 25: Scene Presentation and critical analysis

Apr 27: Scene Presentation and critical analysis