

DIRECTING THEORY AND PRODUCTION I

Macalester College-Spring 2004

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12-1:30 PM

Instructor: **Mr. Harry Waters Jr.**

Office: Room 112 Theater and Dance Department
Numbers: **651-696-6256 office 612-281-5418 cell**

Office Hours:

Monday 10:30 AM-12 noon

Wednesday 10:30 AM-12 noon

Friday 10:30 AM-12 noon

Course Objectives: Students will have exposure to the comprehensive history, discipline, and execution of the craft of directing theater. In addition the students will get to practice and present their creative and investigative work within the confines of guided, limited presentations.

Inclusive in this course will be mandatory outside research motivated by the work discovered in class and the plays we will be reading.

There will be three (3) projects that are required for completion of the course. You will receive an **incomplete** if these are not presented in full and on time.

1st Project— creating/staging a scene based on picture/ad selection—this is going to be called the *Imagistic Movement Piece*

2nd Project— Staging of two versions of sample scene presented with text and analysis—this is going to be called the *Juxtaposition Style Piece*

3rd Project— mounting a small 10-15 minute piece (mutually selected by student and instructor) with your director's book including: research history, viz, and script breakdown.

Grading: This course is a reflection of the work that you put in, the prior experience you possess and the growth that you exhibit throughout the semester. There are no rewards for respectful behavior and being on time. These things are expected and required. Insightful contributions and thoroughly examined questions are welcome at all times.

Participation: 15%

History Research Assignment: 10%-team assignment

Text Analysis Assignment: 15%

Visual Presentation Assignment: 15%

1st Project: 10%

2nd Project: 15%
3rd Project: 20%

These topics and projects will be discussed and re-evaluated as often as needed in the class. Your adherence, however, to the work is paramount to completing the course in good standing.

Thank you in advance for your hard work this semester.

WEEKLY BREAKDOWN

Week 1:

January 26

Introduction of course, materials, objectives, and expectations

Read: *A Sense of Direction, Some Observations on the Art of Directing* by William Ball p.3-69

January 28

Discussion of *A Sense of Direction...* by William Ball
Begin discussion of personal goals and technique defined by the world of each director's personal vision.

Read: *A Sense of Direction, Some Observations on the Art of Directing* by William Ball p.70-177

January 30

Discussion of *A Sense of Direction...* by William Ball as well as discussion of Mr. Ball's personal history.

Read: *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller **and** *Backwards and Forwards, A Technical Manual for Reading Plays* by David Ball p.3-36

Week 2:

February 2

Discuss *Death of a Salesman* as well as *Backwards and Forwards*; select research teams.

Read: *Backwards and Forwards, A Technical Manual for Reading Plays* by David Ball p.39-78

February 4

Continue *Death of a Salesman* discussion in historical research/dramaturgical focus

Read: *Great Directors at Work* by David Richard Jones p.15-77 Konstantin Stanislavsky and *The Seagull*

February 6

Discuss Stanislavsky and technique/period of history/long lasting effects of theory.

Bring in at least 5 selections of "scenes" from magazines, newspaper pictures, art books, advertisements, etc.—with or without TEXT.

Week 3:

February 9 Historical Research on “Death of a Salesman” due today—**topic to be team selected.** Presentation will be made by each team jointly.

Read: *Great Directors at Work* by David Richard Jones p.138-199 Elia Kazan and A Streetcar Named Desire

February 11 Discuss Kazan and bring in any information regarding his personal history. Begin discussion of breaking down a script by beats and units of actions. Defining the actions and connecting them to the text.

Read: *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams

February 13 Discuss *A Streetcar Named Desire* and other issues with the history of the play. Everyone please prepare to read in class, not for auditioning, but for clarity of meaning and story line.

Week 4:

February 16 Discuss both Kazan and Williams and their working together as Playwright and Director

February 18 **NO CLASS—work on *Imagistic Movement* presentation for Friday’s grading.**

February 20 Presentation of 1st Project: Imagistic Movement Piece

Week 5:

February 23 Continue Presentation of 1st Project: *Imagistic Movement* Pieces

February 25 Discuss breaking down of script into beats (for the actors), units (for the designers) and “actions.” We will be examining specifically *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

February 27 Continue discussion and examination of script, with intensive interior analyses.

Week 6:

March 1 Text Analysis of Scene from *A Streetcar Named Desire* due today.

Read: *Great Directors at Work* by David Richard Jones p.78-137 Bertolt Brecht and *Couragemodell 1949: Meaning in Detail*

March 3 Discuss Brecht and the chapter on “Meaning in Detail”. Review questions and concerns about *Imagistic Movement* and text analysis.

March 5 Continue discussion of Brecht and consider comparisons with his work and your own as a director in contemporary context.
Disperse scenes for 2nd Project and discuss detail of presentation.
Read: *M. Butterfly* by David Henry Wang.

Week 7:

March 8 Discuss *M. Butterfly* and look at the images and historical context of the play. Discuss the impact of images in directing a piece of theater that is dependent on style and a specific look to interpret or translate the material.

March 10 Continue discussion and the presentation of images in a theatrical context. View Video of “Fantastique” or other appropriate material.

March 12 Discuss the presentation of the 2nd Project assignment.

Week 8:

SPRING BREAK

Week 9:

March 22 Presentation of VIZ for images of *M. Butterfly*

March 24 Continue presentation of VIZ for images of *M. Butterfly*

March 26 Presentation of *Juxtaposition Scenes*

Week 10:

March 29 Continue Presentation of *Juxtaposition Scenes*

March 31 Continue Presentation of *Juxtaposition Scenes*

April 2 **Read:** *Baltimore Waltz* by Paula Vogel

Week 11:

April 5 Discuss *Baltimore Waltz* and talk about staging, theatrical storytelling as well as actual theater production. In addition, begin bringing in one acts, scenes, or alternatives for Final Projects.

April 7 View THE THIRD MAN during class. This may run over into the next session.

April 9 NO CLASS

Week 12:

April 12

April 14

April 16

Week 13:

April 19 Discussion of mixed media within theatrical formats as well as the use of multiple disciplines within your concept and execution. Focusing on the themes and ideas in *Baltimore Waltz* examine the choices of the playwright and the director.

Presentation of *Baltimore Waltz* proposed concepts including a short paper and accompanying support materials.

TO BE DISCUSSED

April 21

Examine unique conceptual thoughts provoked by theater such as Paula Vogel's writing

TBD—Preview of Mother Courage

April 23

TBD—PERFORMANCE WEEKEND OF MOTHER COURAGE

Week 14:

April 26

TBD

April 28

TBD

April 30

PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PROJECTS BEGIN
SIGN UP SCHEDULE WILL BE AVAILABLE

Week 15:

May 2

PRESENTATION FOR FINAL PROJECTS

May 3

PRESENTATION FOR FINAL PROJECTS

May 4

PRESENTATION FOR FINAL PROJECTS

**THERE WILL BE NO FINAL EXAMINATION
IN THIS COURSE**